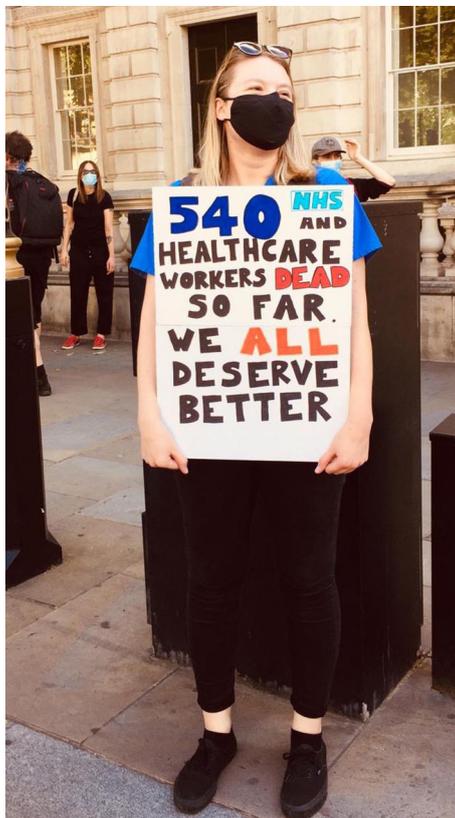


NHS STAFF VOICES



Pay rise for ALL Health & Care Workers

The government has now announced a pay rise for some public sector workers. However, it notably excludes nurses, one of the biggest health & social care workforces in the UK. Understandably, this has gone down like a lead balloon.

Nurses aren't just angry because of pay. We're angry for a lot of reasons. We're angry because of years of brutal cuts to health and social care in the name of austerity. Cuts cost lives – patients and staff. It's that simple. We're angry because nurses, carers and support workers are being paid less than a living wage and constantly told their professions are 'vocations'.

We're angry at the ongoing privatisation of public services which has resulted in job losses, service cuts and the deaths of our most marginalised and disadvantaged. We're angry that nurses and carers have the highest suicide rates in the UK due to huge workloads, unsafe staffing ratios, lack of support and media pressure.

Before Covid-19 when was the last time you heard about a nurse or carer in the media unless they'd done something wrong?

- We're angry at the fact we have to pay thousands of pounds to work full time, for free, to train and graduate with tens of thousands of pounds worth of debt (in England, anyway).
- We're angry at relying on food banks and charities such as the Cavell Trust to survive day-to-day.
- We're angry, and heartbroken, that we've lost colleagues, loved ones and friends to Covid-19.

The death toll has been huge. We've lost over 540 health and social care workers in the UK so far - especially care home and BAME nurses & care workers.

Thousands more are still suffering from the illness and its complications. We've lost some to suicide from the trauma of what they've seen and dealt with during the pandemic whilst the survivors struggle with PTSD. Many will carry the scars for the rest of their lives.

The truth is, all public sector workers (& many more besides) deserve a pay rise.

The government wants us divided so they can watch us fight each other rather than uniting and fighting them. We cannot turn on each other. We have to stand together & say enough is enough. No more cuts. No more privatisation. No more excuses. We deserve fair pay, all of us, and now is the time to push for it.

Jemma James, Staff Nurse and member of Nurses United

Where's our PPE?

The Government continues to claim that there is enough PPE for hospitals and care homes as the coronavirus pandemic rumbles on.

If there is enough PPE, then maybe they should explain to my colleagues and I why we are only allowed to have one set of full PPE on our emergency crash trolley. Should we have a cardiac arrest on the ward, whether a patient, staff or a visitor, then we are unable to offer an optimal level of resuscitation.

It should be noted that we do not have access to a crash team.

Many of our staff are deeply unhappy at the situation and how it could compromise care; we have been advised that there is insufficient PPE to provide additional sets even for an emergency. When staff have escalated this to, a frankly uninterested, senior management, the response, when we receive one, is one of deflection.

We had insufficient PPE when we began receiving patients with Covid-19 onto our ward. This, combined with a lack of testing, resulted in the virus working its way through our patients and our staff. A situation replicated across the country.

Many of our patients are over 70. Some of them have 'DNAR' status; those that do not are literally putting their lives on the line to be cared for by a medical and nursing staff who are unable to manage a cardiac arrest appropriately.

So, is there enough PPE or not? Or is this indicative of the attitude the government has towards the elderly, like its early decision to force hospital trusts to send patients into nursing and care homes without testing.

A decision that allowed coronavirus to ravage the elderly and has resulted in many deaths. We would like an answer, we are unlikely to receive one.

Writer anonymous

Parliament v The People

There has never been a moment of parliament versus the people as there was on 20 July 2020: a hushed battle of ideology. It was on this date that 340 conservative MPs voted down "New Clause 17"; an amendment to the post-Brexit trade deal to protect our NHS from foreign interference.

This was despite three quarters of the British public wanting to protect our NHS from this insidious interference. These MPs, all Conservatives, are willing to sell out our NHS, along with every single one of us in the process.

Subsequently, the NHS will be put at the mercy of US pharmaceutical companies who have long complained about the NHS not paying the ransom for their drugs. This despite UK drugs spending rising by 22 per cent in recent years. Currently a health technology assessment by NICE details the cost-effectiveness of drugs, making a balanced decision whether to procure the drug. This too is threatened by the US trade deal.

The NHS has endured many battles emerging in a tired and beaten state. Now, her very survival is in question.

The narrative of the NHS is the narrative of all of us. How many of us were born in an NHS hospital? How many of our lives and our families' lives has it saved? The NHS is more than a set of buildings or a mere organisation, it is every one of us. A living, breathing establishment made up of 1.5 million dedicated workers and 66.6m patients. She is ours, and we are hers.

And now, she needs us more than ever, we must keep our NHS public.

Jatinder Hayre, medical student and member of NHS Staff Voices



Car Parking Scandal

There's lots to be angry at the government for when you work in the NHS - their failure to prepare for the pandemic, their failure to respond to the pandemic, the fact they blame us when it goes wrong, the staff shortages, the removal of the training bursaries, pay restraint, pensions cuts, privatisation of workplaces, blaming immigrants when we should be thanking them for working tirelessly, and so on, right down to the most recent addition to that list... reinstating car parking charges.

If ever you needed a sign that the Conservative government lives and works on a different planet from us, it is this.

Throughout the pandemic, I have seen friends move into hotels so they can continue to work on the frontline and not expose their families to risk. People have been changing out of work clothes in the hospital changing rooms, then changing again in cars and on doorsteps to make sure we keep the virus from infecting loved ones. Hospitals, homes and public transport have been the tinder boxes for this wildfire pandemic, so NHS staff have been doing all we can to keep those three places as separate as possible - even though we must go into the hospital.

So it is incredible that at the same time the hospital in the Prime Minister's constituency had an outbreak among staff, he intends to make a workforce of a million people start cramming back on trains and buses. Not only is that unsafe, but he clearly does not understand how difficult it is to get trains and buses at the right time for the early starts and late finishes. Buses are restricting the number of people allowed on and trains are reducing their timetables - which has added an hour to some of my busiest days' journeys.

The only thing the government got right was applauding the NHS and social care staff who deserved it - it's just a shame they've followed it up with another kick in the teeth.

Iain Wilson, Nurse and member of NHS Staff Voices

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we own it

Amend the Trade Bill and stand up for our NHS

In under a week more than 260,000 people have called on the House of Lords to amend the Trade Bill and stand up for our NHS.

Will you join them?

Last week, Boris Johnson betrayed the British people. He promised to "take back control" and "keep the NHS off the table", yet over 300 of his MPs voted against amendments that would have done exactly that.

This is our last chance at stopping Donald Trump from getting his hands on our NHS. That's why we need as many people as possible to sign this petition.

We are calling on the House of Lords to step up, amend the Trade Bill, and protect our NHS.

At a time when we are more dependent than ever on our NHS, MPs voted to sell it down the river. A reminder of what happened last week in Parliament:

**248 MPs voted to protect our NHS
337 voted against**

**260 MPs voted for parliamentary scrutiny of trade deals
322 voted against**

If you're outraged by this, you're not alone.

You're with an army of a quarter of a million people, and the louder we shout, the less they can ignore us.

**Don't let them get away with it
- sign the petition now
<https://weownit.org.uk/lords-NHS-trade-bill-petition>**

NHS Workers say NO! to Public Sector Pay Inequality

The facebook group 'NHS Workers Say No!' was set up in response to the government's decision not to include nurses and healthcare workers in the recent public sector pay rise.

As a registered nurse and nursing lecturer, this felt like a slap in the face for the healthcare workforce, particularly nursing as in recent years the government have made every effort to make the nursing professional not only unattractive to people wanting to start a career in nursing, but also unsafe.

The government's decision to remove the student bursary has impacted the nursing profession greatly making recruitment difficult but also increasing the financial hardship many of our nursing students face. As a nurse educator, I have seen more students resorting to working over their recommended hours.

I have also seen more students seeking financial hardship support, which in turn impacts wellbeing and mental health, in fact there has also been an increase in students seeking help in relation to their own wellbeing.

We know from the Mid Staffordshire Inquiry that there is a direct correlation between stress and mental health issues and how this contributes to poor patient care, particularly when services are already at breaking point as a result of years of government cuts.

This is the time for the government to finally put right what for too long has been wrong.

The government need to invest in the healthcare workforce now, particularly as we find ourselves at the beginning of a second wave of COVID19, and without a fully functioning fully protected workforce there is no healthcare system.

Ness Woodcock-Dennis, Registered Nurse and Registered Nurse Teacher

WHO WE ARE

NHS Staff Voices is a network of NHS workers, from medical to domestic staff, all interested in fighting for a better, safer, more inclusive NHS. We are part of a wider campaign called Keep Our NHS Public, the largest NHS campaign in the UK.

We all know there is a huge crisis in the NHS and that we are at a point where the service is very compromised. Coronavirus has exposed this, and now is the right time to campaign for better pay and working conditions for staff, as well as improving outcomes for our patients.

Find out more by visiting our facebook page which has all the up to date information, including links to our meetings which we encourage you to join: <https://www.facebook.com/NHSStaffVoices/> You can sign up to our mailing list by emailing us at NHSStaffVoices.KONP@gmail.com



Whether you simply want to get organised, let us know how things are in your workplace, volunteer or write for us, send an email to NHSStaffVoices.KONP@gmail.com



**Next organising meeting
6.30 September 8th**

We look forward to hearing from you. Together we can save the NHS.