

Unite must lead fight to **SAVE THE NHS**

Elect Ian Allinson as Unite General Secretary

Written by healthworkers

As NHS workers we know first-hand about the crisis in the NHS. The NHS is failing and it is having a real impact on peoples' lives. As NHS workers who care about our patients we know that following the Tory cuts we simply cannot offer the level of care and support that our patients need and deserve.

We are constantly trying to offer the same level of care without enough beds, without enough staff and without enough care. The cuts have also affected the wages and conditions of all those working in the NHS.

In some trusts cleaners, catering workers, porters and healthcare assistants are on poverty pay and zero hour contracts. Poverty and uncertainty also affect qualified staff, there are nurses who basically rely on payday loans. The Tories caused the crisis but we need a Union that will fightback. That's why we will be voting for Ian Allinson and we urge you to do the same.

The Tories plan yet more austerity for our NHS. More cuts, community hospital closures, accident and emergency closures and the cuts to maternity services. The Tories are ideologically opposed to the NHS and we know that while they slash and burn on the one hand, they are paving the way for privatisation on the other hand.

Teresa May has promised Trump that the NHS is for sale to US multinational companies.

Up and down the country there have been big local campaigns to save services. UNITE has

to continue to work with them and encourage all its members to get involved. UNITE needs a strategy to beat the Tories on the NHS.

That means working with patient groups, anti-cuts campaigns and other health unions, as well as Unite's community branches in other sectors. That's why it was disappointing that UNITE didn't offer more solidarity when the junior doctors went on strike. UNITE could have played a pivotal role when the government were already on the ropes.

The truth is that under Len McCluskey too many opportunities have been squandered. Unite wasted the opportunity of the public sector pensions dispute.

When we have fought over pay (in 2014) members were treated like a stage army. Members could see no plan to win. The result was a poor deal which made the government more confident to introduce more cuts. More of the same under McCluskey isn't enough, without a more militant strategy we are in real danger of losing the NHS.

The NHS is Unite's fastest growing sector with over 100,000 members – that's a lot of people who could make a real difference to the battle for the NHS. The national demonstration called on March 4th is a positive move and we welcome it wholeheartedly. However it is not enough. We need to ensure that UNITE Health branches are built in every hospital. We need to encourage health workers to become active members of the Union and we need to ensure that we have layers of qualified and unqualified members of staff as shop stewards.

ELECT IAN ALLINSON



Ian is a workplace activist who has built union organisation in a badly organised sector. He knows just how hard this can be at the grassroots. Just this week Ian was on strike over jobs, union recognition, pay and pensions, with colleagues in Fujitsu across the UK.

From a completely different sector Ian shares the frustrations of building an organised fight. He supports a fully-funded NHS not weighed down by market ideology and a decent standard of living for the very difficult jobs health workers undertake day in day out.

No General Secretary candidate can save the NHS for us – it will take millions of us. But it would make a huge difference if we stopped missing opportunities when they arise, and if we could shake up Unite to make it more effective.

Ian is the only candidate to clearly support workers' right to free movement. This is a vital issue in our NHS. Not only could the NHS not survive without immigrants. The fight to defend the NHS is weakened if we give an inch to the idea that it is migrants rather than Tories causing the health crisis. On top of this we have pressure on health workers to act as border guards. We need leaders who will fight to defend migrants and not fudge the issue. Unite should support any member who refuses to implement any aspect of nationality checks.

We want our union to defend health workers and the NHS which belongs to us all.

Vote Ian Allinson for a fightback in our health service to resist privatisation, to defend migrant workers and to stand up to racism.

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