

Labour's Health Manifesto - 2015

Political Intelligence has collated and analysed the key announcements contained within the Labour party's health manifesto and what they could mean over the life time of the next Parliament. We hope you find our analysis useful, and please [get in touch](#) if you require any further information.

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Health and Social Care Act

Labour committed several years ago to "repeal the Health and Social Care Act" and "to scrap David Cameron's privatisation plans", and this is now enshrined in ink on the introductory page to the manifesto.



Health and Social Care Act 2012

The manifesto pledge that will be contained within Labour's first Queen Speech will bring a bill to repeal the Health and Social Care Act, but stressing that it will not be another top-down reorganisation but working "through the structures we inherit".

The key points are;

- Repeal Section 75 of the Act that allows for "competitive tendering for the provision of services"
- Enhanced role for Health and Wellbeing Boards "to become vehicle for system leadership"



- Put in place the NHS as the "preferred provider"
- Where private companies are involved in the provision of services, to "impose a cap on any profits they make from the NHS"
- Removing the role of Monitor and the Competitions and Markets Authority
- Strengthening the role of the Secretary of State for Health "to provide a comprehensive health service"

Legislation to encourage medical innovation

Medical Innovation

A section of the manifesto focused on 'Medical Research and Innovation'. This has been a strong focus of the previous coalition government, with the Accelerated Access Review currently on-going on how to ensure the timely up-take of new and emerging technologies.

Labour has committed to;

- Support the work of the Health Research Authority to "streamline the process for setting up clinical trials"
- Ensure that the improvements set out in the European Clinical Trials Regulations are realised
- Commit to maintaining the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme as it "provides certainty on drug prices and enables the NHS to budget effectively for the medicines that it uses"
- Ensure that NICE is "fit for the future", which will include considering whether to set tougher rules on implementing NICE guidance, and "ensuring there is a clear route into routine commissioning for innovative treatments"

Access to new technology, and data, was referenced in Chapter 2 on 'Joining up care from home to hospital' and is a key plank of the Labour party's plans to integrate health and social care services;

- Labour plans to allow patients and carers access to their medical records and have the ability to communicate with patient services online, "making it easier for people to manage their own conditions and stay at home for longer"

Comment

NHS England, NICE and the coalition government focused heavily in the last Parliament on medical innovation and technology. In the new NHS and social care landscape, the need to find new approaches and service delivery models is paramount and will lead to more efficient and effective care.



Cancer care and treatment

Labour announced last year at their party conference a £2.5bn 'Time to Care Fund', which contained multiple proposals for cancer care and treatment. These have now been confirmed in the manifesto;

- The party recognises the need for early diagnosis, promising that by 2020 to ensure there is a "minimum one-week wait for cancer tests and results"
- They also aim to introduce a one-week maximum wait for all urgent diagnostic tests by 2025

Both of these initiatives will be paid for by an extra £150 million extra a year; paid for by a levy on tobacco firms. In regards to this announcement, the diagnostic tests that Labour will focus on are abdominal ultrasound for ovarian cancer and endoscopy for bowel cancer. They would then look to widen this list.



In addition, Labour Party will create a new *Cancer Treatments Fund*, which would allow people to get access to the latest drugs, radiotherapy and surgery, once the Cancer Drugs Fund ends in March 2016. The Cancer Drugs Fund only allows people access to the latest drug treatment for cancer, and Labour have announced that anyone in receipt of a drug from the Cancer Drugs Fund, when it comes to an end, will continue to be able to receive the same drug in the Cancer Treatments Fund.

In addition;

- There are plans for more public awareness campaigns. The manifesto specifically mentions the Teenage Cancer Trust's programme that they plan on making available to every school in England
- Labour want to ensure that every GP has access to the right training and support they need in order to diagnose cancer
- The manifesto outlines plans to roll out the Bowel Screening programme across the country, whilst mentioning that they may introduce new lung and ovarian cancer screening programmes
- Labour will publish a new cancer strategy within six months of entering government, which will include ways in which to address ageism in cancer treatment

[Political Intelligence](#) works across the health sector with pharmaceutical companies, medical device and technology companies, charities and patient groups. If you would like to know more about Labour's proposals and how they may affect you and your business – please [email us](#).