

No Beds Available **Money Needed** **To Pay PFI Debt**



Demonstration **Against** **Privatisation Of the NHS**

Saturday, 3 March, 12:00 Noon to 2:00 p.m.
Front of the Royal Liverpool University Hospital

Supported by a coalition of Keep Our NHS Public, Royal Staff-Side Unions, UNITE Merseyside and Cheshire Health, UNISON Liverpool Acute Hospitals, Merseyside Pensioners Association, Liverpool Trades Union Council, Merseyside CND, Liverpool Socialist Singers, Liverpool Against the Cuts, Trade Union Socialist Party, Women Against the Cuts, Socialist Labour Party, University of Liverpool Guild of Students and Trade Union Socialist Coalition.

- **Stop the Health and Social Care Bill**
- **Keep the 2% cap on private patients in NHS Hospitals**
- **Build the Royal with public sector finance, not PFI**

Everybody Welcome

Bill, Bed Cuts & Banks – No Thanks!

Doctors, nurses, public health experts, health unions, academics, pensioners and the public are up in arms against the Health and Social Care Bill, now passing through the Lords while the NHS faces £20bn in cuts. The Bill has one main aim.

It will end the NHS as a comprehensive, publicly provided, publicly accountable, tax-funded system free to all patients when they need it. Instead, private companies, the voluntary sector, and NHS hospitals will compete in a "regulated" market with no requirement to provide healthcare for all. GPs will commission care from "any qualified provider", while accountants, lawyers, and multinational firms queue up to "advise" them. EU Competition Law will be enforced through Monitor, whose Chief Exec David Bennett told The Times last February:

"We did it in gas, we did it in power, we did it in telecoms, we've done it in rail, we've done it in water, so there's actually 20 years of experience in taking monopolistic, monolithic markets and providers and exposing them to economic regulation."

Does it matter? It will when you can't get the treatment you need unless you pay, or when hospitals go bust, or things go wrong and everyone sues everyone else. We know what happened with rail privatisation. Who wants that again?

Beds

Currently, private patients get around 0.5% of NHS hospital treatment nationally. Foundation Trust hospitals are limited by law to the proportion they spent on private patients in 2002-3, normally around 2% of their budget. But the Bill will let Foundation Trusts spend up to 49% on private patients. The Royal Liverpool, like all NHS hospitals, will be forced to become a Foundation Trust.

Does it matter? It will do when private patients are in the bed you need.

Banks

The Private Finance Initiative is a get-rich-quick scheme for banks and construction companies. Paying off PFI debt has first call on hospital budgets, ahead of clinical need. Last month, the government had to bail out Whiston and St Helens along with 6 other NHS Trusts drowning in PFI debt. But the Royal is ploughing on with its own PFI, which everyone now knows will not provide Value for Money. We can't bank on anyone bailing us out when it goes wrong.

Does it matter? It will do when health budgets across Merseyside are raided to pay the debt. *What's the alternative?* Don't pay higher interest rates on private loans. Join together now to demand the government borrow the money themselves, perhaps from RBS in which they hold 84% of the shares, to build the hospital we need.

Stop NHS Privatisation Now!