

Please Donate to the 'Keep Gloucestershire's NHS Public' Appeal

Dear Friend,

The 'Keep Gloucestershire's NHS Public' Appeal is part of a campaign being organised by Stroud Against the Cuts (SATC). The campaign is supported by many individuals and organisations including Gloucester and Districts Trades Council, Unite and Unison and aims to stop plans to transfer a number of key local health services to a Social Enterprise Trust, called Gloucestershire Care Services (GCS), on October 1 2011. The services to be transferred include 9 local hospitals, district nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, podiatrists, sexual health, and wheelchair services.

A legal process known as a Judicial Review has been initiated to stop the proposed transfer. See overleaf for more information on why we are opposed to the plans.

Why should I donate?

Legal proceedings are expensive. As the case is being brought by a client who is eligible for legal aid, the Legal Services Commission will cover some of the costs of the case but will also expect a contribution from those who might benefit. Most legally aided cases benefit only the people who bring the case in their own name. This case is different: those who bring it will be representing the whole communities' interest, including your own. As a result we are required to raise a 'community contribution', likely to be thousands of pounds.

How can I donate?

We have set up a bank account (details for making bank transfers are below). You can make a cheque payable to 'Keep Gloucestershire's NHS Public Appeal', and send to: Keep Gloucestershire NHS Public Appeal c/o Dr. Bernice Boss - Treasurer, The Exchange, Brick Row, Stroud, GL5 1DF. You can also give donations direct to local campaigners who will pass them to the campaign fund treasurer, Dr. Bernice Boss.

We would like you to supply your name, address, telephone number and the amount contributed as we will keep a register of donors.

What will happen to my donation?

If the claim is unsuccessful the money will be used to pay solicitors & barrister costs. If the challenge is successful NHS Gloucestershire will have to pay most of the costs. We would like then to pass on the balance of contributions to other ongoing campaigns to maintain the NHS in public hands, unless people are keen to have their donation returned. If you wish to have your donation returned can you please notify the campaign, and we will keep a record of this on our donor register. Make sure you include your name, address and telephone number as without these details, money cannot be returned.

Please also ask any organisations of which you are a member to contribute to the appeal.

For further information, please see the Stroud Against the Cuts website at www.stroudagainstcuts.co.uk, or contact John Marjoram direct on 01453 750962.

Thank you

Dr. Bernice Boss, Treasurer - Keep Gloucestershire's NHS Public Appeal

Why is SATC doing this?

As a social enterprise, GCS will be run like a business; it will have HIGHER COSTS - including becoming liable for VAT and substantial administration costs to replace the "back office" services currently provided from the central resources of the NHS. This money will have to be found from savings on the current budgets for staffing and patient care.

GCS is a FIG LEAF FOR PRIVATISATION of our health service. The contract will run for a maximum of 3 years (it could be less, if commissioners judge it to be 'failing'). After that, all services will be opened to bids by any private company that wants to run them for profit. In Hull, where the services provided by the NHS Primary Care Trust were the first to be transferred to a social enterprise, administration costs mushroomed and several award-winning clinics were privatised within months, resulting in the end of TUPE (the legal protection of staff pay and conditions on transfer), shortages of staff and even of bandages.

The proposed changes will mean POORER CARE AND FEWER SKILLED STAFF as corners are cut to turn a surplus and to pay for administration. Nationwide, plans to cut £20billion from the NHS budget have already been set in train. As a small and isolated 'social enterprise', GCS will be poorly placed to resist substantial cuts. Instead, GCS admits that services will become more reliant on income from private patients, and that staff conditions will be poorly protected. New staff will not be allowed to stay in or join the NHS pension scheme.

All decisions about care, contracts and future cuts could be made in secret. GCS is already using the excuse of 'commercial confidentiality' to hide its plans from staff.