

# Stop Gloucestershire Hospitals & services leaving the NHS

## DEMONSTRATE - Sat 24<sup>th</sup> Sept

Assemble on Park Road, (below Maternity Hospital)

at 10.30am, march to Sub Rooms

Called by Stroud Against the Cuts

[www.stroudagainstcuts.co.uk](http://www.stroudagainstcuts.co.uk)

Backed by Unite, Unison and Gloucestershire Trades Council

We believe that the transfer to social enterprise is a step to privatisation. It is being forced through without proper consultation of staff or the public.

We make the following demands:

- **Keep our NHS Public: don't hand our services to a Social Enterprise Trust**
- **Stop the Process - Social Enterprise No Way, We Demand Our Say**
- **Oppose the Health & Social Care Bill - say NO to a US style market based health system**

On 1<sup>st</sup> October, if Gloucestershire NHS Management has its way, all 9 local hospitals in Gloucestershire, and 4,000 NHS workers including nurses, health visitors, physios, & podiatrists, will all leave the NHS and be forced into a secretive 'Social Enterprise Trust', a registered company which will then 'compete' with other 'providers'. Council social care staff are next in line.

Everywhere that has balloted on such changes has resulted in rejection by 90% of staff, but there's been no ballot here. NHS management is racing ahead, refusing to consult or inform either public or staff and even saying they'll deduct a penny from wages to make staff 'penny shareholders', without asking first! Real ownership of the NHS comes from using and working in it, not from powerless penny shares.

A social enterprise in the Forest of Dean quickly went bust losing £200,000. These changes are unnecessary, expensive, and dangerous. We demand that the process is STOPPED (as it has been elsewhere). Management is under pressure as the campaign has built, but local communities along with health workers trade unions need to work together to build a major offensive to demand a publicly owned NHS.

### The 'Social Enterprise Trust' - What does it mean?

- As a private company, it will be run as a business; it will have HIGHER COSTS including at least £3MILLION A YEAR in unnecessary VAT, and massive administration costs to replace the back office services it currently gets free from the central NHS. This money will have to come from staffing budgets and patient care.
- It is a FIGLEAF FOR PRIVATISATION of our health service. The contract will run for a maximum of 3 years (or much less, if commissioners judge it to be 'failing') and then all services will be opened to any private company that wants to run them for profit. The body representing social enterprises admits they are being used in a way that means the 'risk of a slide into the mass privatisation of services' (Guardian 18.8.11). In Hull, where the NHS PCT services were the first to be transferred to social enterprise, admin costs ballooned and several award-winning clinics were fully privatised within months, resulting in the end of TUPE protection, shortages of staff and even bandages.

- It will mean POORER CARE AND FEWER SKILLED STAFF as corners are cut to turn a surplus and to pay for admin. £20billion of cuts to NHS jobs and services have already started, and this isolated 'social enterprise' will be poorly placed to resist them. Instead, they have admitted services will become much more reliant on income from private patients, and staff conditions will be poorly protected.
- All decisions about care, contracts and future cuts could be made in secret. They are already using the excuse of 'commercial confidentiality' to hide the plans from staff.

**The Health and Social Care Bill - How does it fit in?** Currently the government is trying to force its Health and Social Care Bill through parliament. Trusts which have left the NHS to become a social enterprise will then be the most vulnerable to takeover by the vast healthcare multinationals. Whether the bill passes or not, they are using Gloucestershire and the SW to try and take our NHS off us anyway - led by Sir Ian Carruthers, Chief Executive of SW NHS, who is one of Cameron's closest health advisors.

**'The NHS will exist for as long as there are people left with faith to fight for it'**

**Nye Bevan, founder of the NHS**