

Working people £2,300 worse off under Theresa May's watered down National Living Wage

The Tories are today claiming that they will 'continue increasing the National Living Wage'. However, hidden in the small print of their press release they let it slip that they are planning to water down the existing National Living Wage.

This change would leave the average full-time worker on the National Living Wage £2,283 worse off by 2020.

Earlier in the Parliament, George Osborne announced that the Tories' so-called National Living Wage (NLW) was to hit £9 per hour by 2020. To get here the Tories promised that it would reach the level equivalent to "over 60 per cent of median hourly earnings" by 2020.

Today, they've broken this promise and changed their commitment to increasing the National Living Wage only "in line with median incomes".

This means that the National Living Wage will be £8.20 in 2020 as opposed to the promise of £9 per hour under Osborne.

In contrast, Labour is committed to a Real Living Wage of £10 per hour by 2020.

Ian Lavery, Labour's National Campaign Co-ordinator, commenting, said:

"Theresa May is taking working people for fools.

"This morning she claimed she was standing up for working people, but hidden in the small print of her announcement is a cut to working people's incomes.

"The Tories cynical ploy to pull the wool over voter's eyes won't work.

"Today's ridiculous claims are yet more evidence that this election is a choice between a Tory party that fails working people and a Labour Party that will stand up for working people and deliver a

better, fairer Britain.”

Jeremy Corbyn speech at the Royal College of Nursing Annual Conference

*****Check
against delivery*****

**Jeremy
Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party**, speaking at the Royal
College of Nursing Annual Conference, said:

I
want to say thank you.

Thank
you to the nurses gathered here today.

And
thank you to everyone in the nursing profession.

And
to all National Health Service staff across Britain.

Our
National Health Service, of which we are so proud, would be nothing without
you.

Our
politicians owe you a duty.

A
duty to ensure you can work with dignity.

A
duty to ensure you are not held back from providing the best possible
standard
of service to all your patients.

That
is what Labour offers.

And
let me make it clear today – Labour is ready to step in and save the NHS from
cuts and privatisation.

Every day our General Election team is reminded of the central

importance of this.

At our headquarters in London, the walls are decorated with the original poster from the 1940s saying 'Labour's health service covers everyone

– Tories voted against it.'

Nothing embodies our campaign theme – 'for the many not the few' – better than the NHS.

Universal,
life-long health care, free at the point of need.

However it is being dismantled by stealth.

Over the past seven years, our NHS has been driven into crisis.

A&E departments are struggling to cope. Waiting lists are soaring and, as we saw last week, Tory cuts have exposed patient services to cyberattacks.

I would like to pay tribute to how all NHS staff have responded to this terrible cyber-attack. The stress you must have faced trying to keep patients safe must have been intense, this was just another example of the extraordinary lengths you go to every day to keep our country healthy.

And we know our NHS is under threat from privatisation, brought in by the Health & Social Care Act. The Tories are forcing through NHS privatisation on a huge scale – £13 billion of taxpayers' money was handed over

last year to private companies to profit from NHS services.

Nye Bevan once said of the NHS:

"It will last only as long as there's folk with faith left to fight for it."

Be in no doubt that there are those folk.

I am one of them.

And in hospitals, health centres, and communities all across the land there are thousands of us.

People for whom working for the NHS is a privilege and a pleasure.

Like so many in public service everywhere.

People believe in the founding principles of the NHS.

A service like no other.

Not a service which checks your bank balance before it checks your blood pressure.

A service for the many not the few.

But Britain is not being run for the many, for the majority.

Across our country people are being held back.

If you're a student nurse without a bursary, doing a second job to make ends meet; you're being held back.

If you worry about your children because they can't get together the deposit for a home or afford the rent; then you are being held back.

If you manage a ward and can't free up beds because of the cuts in social care; the Government is holding you back – stopping you from doing properly the job you were trained to do.

In Britain – the sixth richest country in the world – this cannot be right.

It cannot be right that trained nurses are leaving the profession for other jobs.

It cannot be right that tax giveaways for the rich and big business have been put before funding for the NHS, Social Care and fair treatment of NHS staff.

The RCN has found that nursing shortages have doubled in just four years.

We could have 40,000 fewer nurses than we need by 2026.

Your pay has fallen 14 per cent in real terms since 2010, but you don't work any fewer hours.

That is the Tories' record.

I wish there could be a public debate on this record with Theresa May.

Did you hear her on a radio phone in last week?

A doctor from Leeds called Romena told her that she was considering quitting after 12 years of service – because of 'crippling frontline staff shortages which have worsened as a result of the government's failure to invest properly in the NHS'.

Romena asked why Jeremy Hunt was reappointed since he'd demoralised the entire workforce.

Theresa May simply dodged the questions.

She doesn't want to recognise the truth.

Or the real scale of the crisis.

Theresa May isn't listening and doesn't care.

She herself called the Tories the nasty party.

And now she's trying to masquerade as someone who cares about working people.

She's taking us for fools.

Theresa May and her Tory Government have failed to stand up for the hundreds of thousands of workers not being paid the minimum wage

She has failed to tackle zero hours' contracts and employment agency malpractices.

She's done nothing for the thousands of workers who have been unfairly treated but can't afford to pursue a claim because of tribunal fees – introduced in the first place by the Tories.

They are still the nasty party.

And if they win this election, the people of Britain are in for some nasty surprises.

Imagine what would happen to the NHS if the Conservatives under Theresa May were to have another five years in power.

It would be unrecognisable: a national health service in name, cut back, broken up and plundered by private corporations.

Only Labour will put the NHS back on its feet. To move towards a National Social Care Service to give everyone the care and dignity they deserve and finally make parity of esteem for mental and physical health a reality.

Today we are pledging an extra £7.4 billion a year for the NHS throughout the next Parliament, including £2 billion annually to modernise buildings and IT systems.

This funding settlement will allow Labour to:

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Guarantee access to treatment within 18 weeks, cutting one million from NHS waiting lists by the end of the Parliament.

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Ensure those needing A&E services are seen within four hours, helping another million people each year.

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Deliver the Cancer Care Strategy for England in full by 2020,

helping 2.5 million people living with cancer.

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Create a new £500m Winter Pressures Fund to protect patients from the problems we saw earlier this year.

This is Labour's New Deal for NHS Patients.

It will give NHS staff the support they need – and deserve – to give the best possible service to patients.

And we will guarantee that level of service.

We will ensure the standards the Tories have failed to deliver – and to which patients are legally entitled – are met under Labour.

But Labour also recognises that great services depend on retaining staff by rewarding them properly.

You go above and beyond every day, and your ballot result yesterday showed how angry and frustrated your members are after a 14 per cent cut in real pay under the Tories.

Labour will not put you in that position.

We will lift the public sector pay cap.

And hand back decisions on pay to an independent review body.

Labour wants nurses to be paid a decent wage.

And we will fund training. We will restore the bursaries for nurses – the vital funding that the Tories chose to end.

This election will define the future of the NHS as no other.

You can't trust the Tories with our NHS. It's too much of a risk to take.

Labour founded the NHS and we will restore it to good health.

This is central to our plan to transform Britain – our plan to create a fairer Britain for the many not the few.

We will set out our policies in full in our manifesto tomorrow.

The scale of our ambition will be clear – it will be inclusive, fair and costed.

We are going to transform Britain, together, for the better.

Only a few weeks remain to take that message to the people of Britain

To show how we will hand power back to you.

So that everyone in this country has a stake in their future

A future, a Britain, for the many, not the few.

[Under Theresa May and the Tories we've seen seven years of failure on housing- Healey](#)

John

Healey, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Housing, responding to Theresa May's

announcement that the Conservatives will build more affordable homes, said:

"This is political spin, with no substance. There's no commitment on the number of new affordable homes or on new funding.

"Under Theresa May and the Tories we've seen seven years of failure on housing, with the level of new affordable housebuilding now at a 24-year low.

"The number of government funded social rented homes being built has fallen to fewer than 1,000 last year from almost 40,000 under Labour in 2009-10.

"Theresa May has been at every cabinet since 2010 and can't sidestep her share of the blame for the Tory housing crisis. The number of home-owners has fallen by 200,000, homelessness has more than doubled and new affordable housebuilding is at a near-record low.

"After seven years of failure, the Conservatives have no plan to fix the housing crisis. A Labour government will back first-time buyers and build the homes we need, including 100,000 genuinely affordable homes to rent and buy a year by the end of the next Parliament."

ENDS

Notes to editors

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Affordable housebuilding has fallen to a 24 year low:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/595369/Live_Table_1000.xlsx

The number of government funded social rented homes started each year has fallen from almost 40,000 to fewer than 1,000:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572767/Live_Table_1012.xlsx

Home-ownership has fallen by 200,000 since 2010 after rising by a million under Labour:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/595786/2015-16_Section_1_Households_Annex_Tables.xlsx

Labour will protect state pension as Tories fail to commit to Triple Lock

A Labour

Government will protect the incomes of twelve million pensioners by legislating to keep the 'triple lock', Jeremy Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party, will say today.

Under the

Conservatives' watch 300,000 more pensioners are in poverty, yet the Conservative Party has failed to commit to the 'triple lock' on state pensions; a policy which protects pensioners' standard of living by guaranteeing that their incomes rise to meet the cost of living.

A Labour

Government will protect pensioners by legislating to guarantee the triple lock, and committing to keep the Winter Fuel Allowance and free bus passes.

Meeting

pensioners in Norwich on Saturday, Jeremy Corbyn will say:

"The

Conservative's failure to guarantee a decent standard of living for older people, Tory cuts to social care and their failure to protect the NHS are proof that the Tories' are abandoning older people.

“With more pensioners in poverty under the Conservatives, it is clear that a Labour Government is necessary to provide a secure and dignified retirement for the many who have contributed all their lives.

“Labour will legislate to guarantee the triple lock on state pensions over the next parliament, and we’ll protect the Winter Fuel Allowance and free bus passes.”

[Labour calls for action over NHS cyber-attack](#)

Jonathan Ashworth, Labour’s Shadow Health Secretary, has today written to Jeremy Hunt condemning “the cyber criminals whose flagrant disregard for our health service has placed patient wellbeing at risk”.

Jonathan Ashworth said:

“The incident highlights the risk to data security within our modern health service and reinforces the need for cyber security to be at the heart of government planning.

“As Secretary of State, I urge you to publicly outline the immediate steps you’ll be taking to significantly improve cyber security in our NHS. The public has a right to know exactly what the Government will do to ensure that such an attack is never repeated again.”

The letter from Labour’s Shadow Health Secretary, calls on the Government to set out:

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Why NHS organisations failed to act on a critical note from Microsoft two months ago?

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What

additional resources are being given to the NHS to bring the situation under control as soon as possible?

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What arrangements are currently in place to protect our NHS, and its sensitive data, against cyber-attacks?

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Whether the Government will launch a full, independent inquiry into the events of yesterday?

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Reassurance for patients that no patient data has been accessed or compromised in yesterday's attack?

Ends

**Notes
to editors:**

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Please see below for full text of the letter:

Dear
Secretary of State,

I am writing to ask for urgent clarification regarding yesterday's major ransomware attack on our NHS. I hope you'll join me in condemning the actions of the cyber criminals whose flagrant disregard for our health service has placed patient wellbeing at risk.

As you know, the attack has had a serious impact on services, with some hospitals diverting emergency ambulances and cancelling elective operations. A large range of IT services have been affected, including pathology test results, x-ray imaging systems, phone and bleep systems, and patient administration systems.

In total more than a third of NHS Trusts have been impacted, and NHS England has consequently declared a Major Incident. This is terrible news and a real worry for vulnerable patients and our hardworking staff.

The incident highlights the risk to data security within our modern health

service

and reinforces the need for cyber security to be at the heart of government planning.

As

Secretary of State, I therefore urge you to publicly outline the immediate steps you'll be taking to significantly improve cyber security in our NHS.

The

public has a right to know exactly what the Government will do to ensure that such an attack is never repeated again.

However,

this is not the first time NHS Trusts have been attacked. In February,

Freedom

of Information Requests found that 79 English Trusts, more than 33 per cent, had suffered ransomware attacks since June 2015.[\[1\]](#)

For

example, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust was attacked 19 times in 2016, and the Leeds Teaching Hospital faced five attacks in the past year.[\[2\]](#)

In November, a major ransomware

attack on the Northern Lincolnshire and Goole Trust affected three hospitals, forcing the cancellation of hundreds of routine operations and outpatient appointments.[\[3\]](#)

As

recently as in January, the largest NHS Trust in England, Barts Health Trust, was infected with a ransomware virus affecting thousands of sensitive files.[\[4\]](#)

I am

therefore extremely concerned that extensive warning signs appear to have been

ignored by yourself and your department.

Moreover,

your own colleague Ben Gummer, the Minister for the Cabinet Office, warned in October that "large quantities of sensitive data" held by the NHS and the Government were being targeted by hackers, with the potential for significant disruption.[\[5\]](#)

Speaking

about the threat to the health service, Mr Gummer stated: "The Government has a

clear responsibility to ensure its own systems are cyber secure. We hold and the rest of the public sector- including the NHS- hold large quantities of sensitive data and provide online services relied on by the whole country."[\[6\]](#)

Furthermore,

in March a joint report from the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and the

National Crime Agency (NCA) warned that cyber-criminals could increasingly lock computers, phones and watches to run cyber extortion and blackmail rackets.

At the time, Ian Levy, technical director of the NCSC, warned that the best defence against ransomware was to ensure software on devices was up to date.[\[7\]](#)

However, it appears that many of those hospitals affected by yesterday's attack had not updated their Windows operating systems to include a security patch. This unacceptable cybersecurity neglect has clearly made the NHS extremely vulnerable to an attack.

NHS Trusts have been running thousands of outdated and unsupported Windows XP machines despite the Government ending its annual £5.5 million deal with Microsoft, which provided ongoing security support for Windows XP, in May 2015.[\[8\]](#)

It effectively means that unless individual Trusts were willing to pay Microsoft for an extended support deal, since May 2015 their Operating Systems have been extremely vulnerable to being hacked.

Given your Government's sustained underfunding of our NHS it is of little surprise that many Trusts have reported taking minimum action. Indeed, research through previous FOIs has found that at least seven NHS Trusts, which treat more than two million Britons, spent nothing at all on cyber security infrastructure in 2015.[\[9\]](#)

This is extremely serious and as Shadow Secretary of State of Health I share the public's concern at these revelations.

Yesterday's attack is unprecedented in scale, but it is abundantly clear that our NHS should have been better prepared for ransomware attacks.

Therefore, will you firstly explain why NHS organisations failed to act on a critical note from Microsoft two months ago?

Secondly, what additional resources are you giving the NHS to bring the situation under control as soon as possible?

Moreover,

will you clarify publicly what arrangements are currently in place to protect our NHS, and its sensitive data, against cyber-attacks? Will you ensure that every single NHS organisation receives an on-site assessment from CareCERT to improve security?

Will you additionally launch a full, independent inquiry into the events of yesterday?

Finally, will you reassure patients that no patient data has been accessed or compromised in yesterday's attack?

Secretary of State, the prevalence and sophistication of cyber-attacks on our NHS is only set to increase. I therefore urge you to take immediate action so that a crisis on this scale is never repeated again.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Ashworth

Shadow Secretary of State for Health

[1] <https://www.ft.com/content/e96924f0-3722-11e7-99bd-13beb0903fa3>

[2] <https://www.ft.com/content/b9abf11e-e945-11e6-967b-c88452263daf>

[3] <https://www.ft.com/content/b9abf11e-e945-11e6-967b-c88452263daf>

[4] <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/13/largest-nhs-trust-hit-cyber-attack/>

[5] <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/10/31/nhs-at-risk-of-cyber-attacks-minister-says-as-he-warns-hackers-a/>

[6] <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/10/31/nhs-at-risk-of-cyber-attacks-minister-says-as-he-warns-hackers-a/>

[7] <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/03/14/smartphones-tvs-watches-could-held-ransom-hackers-cyber-security/>

[8] <http://www.silicon.co.uk/security/nhs-hospitals-data-risk-outdated-windows-xp-201761>

[9] <https://www.ft.com/content/b9abf11e-e945-11e6-967b-c88452263daf>