

# Speech: Learning from post-accident investigations to ensure patient safety

Last week we published the draft [Health Service Safety Investigations Bill](#), which represents a landmark moment for safety and transparency in the NHS, and a victory for the many campaigners who in the wake of the Mid Staffs and Morecambe Bay scandals have called for major change.

Among many others, I particularly credit [Martin Bromiley](#), the airline pilot who lost his wife, Elaine, in a terrible and wholly avoidable tragedy. He has spent a huge amount of his time since then helping the NHS to understand how we can learn from the way airlines have used human factors research to improve safety.

The Health Service Safety Investigations Bill aims to take Martin's insights on post-accident investigations in the transport industry and apply them to healthcare. It will establish, for the first time, a fully independent investigations body responsible for finding answers and embedding new practices across the NHS in the wake of a healthcare error.

It will not replace the individual investigations that have to happen following any tragedy. But it will use a no-blame approach to try to understand patterns of harm and how they can be avoided by replicating the 'safe space' that bodies such as the Air Accident Investigation Bureau benefit from when investigating airline crashes. They are able to get to the truth quickly because all participants in investigations can share information freely in the knowledge that it will not be disclosed without a court order.

This is the 'black box thinking' that author Matthew Syed has been championing as a way to improve standards of safety and care in the NHS – and Matthew also deserves a lot of credit for challenging the medical profession over the supposed inevitability of avoidable harm.

So an important step forward. But overall how well is the NHS doing on patient safety?

There are clear signs of progress. MRSA and C. Difficile infection rates have continued to fall – in fact, [rates for 2016 to 2017](#) have been cut to almost half those of 2009 to 2010. Avoidable harm in hospitals is down 8% over the last 3 years, with estimates suggesting that 86,000 more patients would have experienced some form of avoidable harm in hospital had rates stayed as they were in 2013. That means 200 fewer patients being harmed every single day.

And the public's view of how safe their NHS care is has never been higher – nearly [4 in 5 people say that they would feel safe](#) if they were seriously ill in an NHS hospital, compared to just over half of people a decade ago.

But perhaps the biggest impact has been the new CQC inspection regime, which makes safety one of the [5 key domains](#) and has focused the minds of hospital boards on safety in a way that simply never happened before. Professor Sir Mike Richards, who recently stepped down as our first ever Chief Inspector of Hospitals, deserves enormous credit for this change alongside his fellow chief inspectors.

What shocked him – and all of us – was the extraordinary variation in standards across the NHS. That is now changing, with 35 hospitals put in special measures – and of the 20 that have come out, no fewer than 8 moved straight to a ‘good’ rating.

Internationally this progress has been recognised. The Commonwealth Fund said the NHS “excels in safety” and was the safest (as well as the best overall) of 11 major healthcare systems.

But... we still have 150 deaths every week where there is a 50% or higher chance they were preventable according to the [Hogan and Black analysis](#).

‘Never events’ are not really falling – more than 1,000 in the last 4 years. Indeed in the last year of reporting we transfused the wrong type of blood into one patient, removed someone’s ovary by accident and left a surgical needle inside someone else by mistake.

And every week [4 claims are made for babies born with brain injuries](#) following potentially preventable mistakes – leading to unbelievable human hardship for the families involved.

This says to me that we are at a crossroads. We can either say that we had our ‘Mid Staffs moment’ and successfully reset the dial to focus more on patient safety, but that now it’s back to other priorities. Or we can say that even after sustained efforts, our levels of avoidable harm are still way too high.

A Johns Hopkins University study says [medical error costs 250,000 lives in the United States every year](#) – the biggest killer after cancer and heart disease – so this issue is by no means unique to the NHS.

What could be unique to the NHS is solving the problem once and for all and blazing a trail across the world by showing how standards of safety really can be transformed in modern healthcare.

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**[Speech: DFID Ghana Health Adviser’s speech at the launch of Family](#)**

# Planning week in Accra

Health Adviser of Department for International Development Ghana delivered a speech at the launch of Family Planning week in Accra

It's great to be here at the launch of Family Planning week – thanks for invitation to speak.

I would like to start by saying a few words about the UK's commitment to supporting voluntary family planning across the world. Providing women and girls access to contraception is transformational – it enables women and girls to make decisions about their health and their future, to complete their education, create or seize better economic opportunities and fulfil their potential. Investing in the health and wellbeing of women and girls makes countries stronger, more stable and more successful. That's why it's a top priority for the UK's Department for International Dev – DFID.

It was great that Ghana was represented at the London FP Summit in July, hosted by the DFID, with UNFPA and the Gates Foundation, by the Deputy Minister, Honourable Tina Mensah, and the Second Lady Samira Bawumia, who has been a great champion for the health of young people.

And it was great to hear such transformational commitments from Ghana – to increase the number of women using modern contraception from 1.4 million to 1.9 million in 2020 – that's 500,000 extra women and girls each year who will access services that can change their lives. Ghana is also looking to ahead to greater self-financing of family planning commodities, which to date have been primarily supported by donors. DFID believes that Ghana is ready to take on more of the financing needs of its health sector, including for FP commodities, although we will continue to support Ghana to meet its FP 2020 commitments in other ways.

One of the themes at this year's Summit was adolescents. Adolescence is a formative period – a crucial opportunity to set young people on a path to a healthy future. When countries prioritise youth-friendly reproductive health services, young people are far more likely to reach their full potential. Over the past 3 years, DFID has been working with GHS to increase access to information and services for young people, through the Ghana Adolescent Reproductive Health programme in Brong Ahafo and Ashanti, with Palladium, Ghana Health Services, the National Population Council, Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana, Hope for Future Generation, and district assemblies.

The programme has reached 190,000 adolescents, developed 54 new youth corners which have created a safe and supportive environment. 2.2 million viewers were reached by the TV show 'You Only Live Once' – YOLO. We've worked with GHS to develop innovative technologies – mobile app for adolescents and service providers, a new Resource Book for teachers, and a revised Adolescent Health Policy and Strategy that will pave the way for the future.

The programme has seen doubling in contraceptive use in BAR and there has been a decline in the percent of adolescent girls who become pregnant each year. I'm confident that the regional health teams will carry on this important work.

Over the next few years, Ghana's success in Family Planning will be measured by how we have reached adolescents and other vulnerable people – this will be a deciding factor in the future prosperity for the country. We all have a responsibility to ensure that all adolescents have the tools and information they need to protect their health and plan their futures.

Thank you.

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## [News story: Transport Secretary honours courageous British Transport Police officer who confronted terrorists](#)

A British Transport Police (BTP) officer who single-handedly tackled the 3 knife-wielding London Bridge terrorists has been presented with a special honour for his courage by Transport Secretary Chris Grayling.

At an emotionally-charged National Rail Awards 2017 in London on 21 September, PC Wayne Marques received the special Gold NRA trophy award from Mr Grayling.

On a night when staff and officers from both BTP and Arriva Northern were honoured for their bravery in the Manchester and London Bridge terror attacks earlier this year, Mr Grayling was joined by Rail Minister Paul Maynard and paid tribute to the work of the BTP across the country.

Mr Grayling said:

“We are hugely fortunate to have a dedicated team of officers, fantastically-led, who do a brilliant job for this industry and I think we all owe them a huge debt of gratitude.

“Transport police officers and station staff went above and beyond the call of duty when handling the aftermath of the terror attacks in both Manchester and London Bridge this year.”

PC Marques suffered major stab wounds and nearly lost an eye after confronting the terrorists in Borough Market on 3 June this year (2017). He is still recovering from his injuries.

The awards, sponsored by Rail Magazine and held at the Grosvenor House Hotel, were hosted by BBC presenter Huw Edwards.

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## [Speech: Country Director of DFID Ghana's speech at EDGECon 2017](#)

Honourable Minister of State for Business Development Mr. Chair – Chief Executive Officer of the Private Enterprise Foundation Country Director of TechnoServe Distinguished representatives of Government Chief Executive Officers and other representatives of private sector institutions Members of the Press Corps, Ladies and Gentlemen.

A very good morning to you all. It is a pleasure to deliver the opening remarks to launch the 2017 Enhancing Development of Ghanaian Entrepreneurs conference series – EDGECon 2017.

As the recently appointed Country Director for the UK's Department for International Development in Ghana, I am honoured to be joining you to attend an event with such a well-chosen focus – Enterprise Growth and Jobs.

EDGECon was conceptualised by the UK Government and Technoserve in 2015 as part of the Enhancing Growth in New Enterprises (or ENGINE) programme.

EDGECon has the objective of bringing together a network of entrepreneurs, Government, financial institutions and business development service providers to find common solutions to entrepreneurship development challenges.

Ladies and Gentlemen, This morning we will hear positive stories of how entrepreneurs have grown their businesses. These stories will highlight the real opportunity that exists to transform Ghana's economy.

I arrived in Ghana only 2 months ago, but I've been struck by the sheer entrepreneurial spirit in evidence here. In my travels around Ghana, whether in Accra or Tamale, I have come across many hard working Ghanaians operating small corner shops, table top businesses and small enterprises. Ghana is in fact one of the top ten countries in Africa in terms of the likelihood of young people starting a business.

Despite this, we know small businesses in Ghana face many challenges and often fail to grow their businesses. The entrepreneurs who will speak this morning will highlight some of these challenges: the high cost of energy, regulatory challenges, business acumen and, unsurprisingly, the high cost of finance.

These challenges are contributing factors to why enterprises in Ghana are failing to grow and scale their business ideas. In this regard the theme of

the conference Scaling Businesses in Ghana: Finding needles in the haystack is apt.

In Ghana, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) make up the bulk – around 70% – of the private sector. SMEs are critical to Ghana's sustainable economic development story. SMEs have the potential to create the jobs that could transform the lives of the growing number of young people in Ghana entering the job market with limited employment opportunities. It's also in the broader development interest of Ghana for these enterprises to be successful so they can contribute to government's domestic tax resources for development.

And whilst Ghana has achieved good growth over the last decade, this growth has been skewed towards extractives and related services. Manufacturing is declining as a proportion of the economy. Ghana's economy is characterised by a few successful very large companies, and lots of very small firms stuck mainly in small scale ventures. It is this low success rate of transformation from micro firms to larger scale companies that concerns the conference today.

Honourable Minister, We are appreciative that the Government is actively addressing these challenges. We note the ambitious plans your government has outlined for SME development, industrialisation for jobs initiatives and improving the enabling environment through rapid regulatory reforms.

We are also keenly following ongoing reforms in the energy sector as well as steps taken to stabilise the economy which will in the long-term help reduce the cost of finance and energy in Ghana.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Before I hand over to the Honourable Minister who will further outline Government's plans for SME development, I would like to talk briefly about the UK's partnership with Ghana on private sector development.

Advancing economic development is a hallmark of building Global Britain. DFID's Economic Development Strategy, published at the beginning of the year, recognises the critical role of the private sector in creating jobs, supporting economic transformation and contributing to income growth and therefore poverty reduction.

In Ghana, DFID is focussed on supporting Ghana to stimulate investment, improve the ease of doing business, mobilise Ghana's own domestic resources and move beyond aid.

Our ENGINE programme, delivered by TechnoServe, and launched in 2014 is helping small businesses to scale. Our support has helped 421 small businesses to develop and implement their business ideas resulting in over 250% revenue growth of these firms who in turn have created 1,203 new jobs.

Many of the ENGINE entrepreneurs are now exporting products – ranging from indigenous beauty products like Black Soap and Shea butter based cosmetics, to environmentally friendly bamboo bicycle frames – across Africa and into Europe and North America.

To help achieve these successes, ENGINE has partnered a range of institutions including the Private Enterprise Federation, Barclays Bank, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Business School, Fidelity Bank, Ghana Food and Drugs Authority and the Young Leaders Africa Initiative.

Tomorrow the British High Commissioner will be handing out awards to 82 competitively selected entrepreneurs who will receive business development support under the ENGINE programme in 2017.

We anticipate that by the time ENGINE ends in 2018, 500 SMEs will have been helped to overcome barriers to growth and build competitive businesses in Ghana with firms supported growing by 400% and creating 1,770 new jobs.

DFID is also working with the Government of Ghana to improve the business enabling environment for businesses here in Ghana through the Business Enabling Environment Programme (BEEP), recognising that the policy and regulatory environment for doing business is also important for business growth.

BEEP is helping Government streamline business regulation making it easier and less costly for businesses to comply with these. For example the programme is helping Government undertake tax, customs, business registration and licensing reforms.

A third DFID programme focuses on the North. Ghana's growing economy, and rapid urbanisation in the south, has led to a significant reduction in poverty, however there is high level of poverty in the Northern Region. The three northern regions combined account for more than half of those living in extreme poverty (52.7%). Through our Market Development in Northern Ghana (MADE) programme we are working to link smallholder farmers to markets in sectors like rice, groundnuts and vegetables.

And we want to do more. DFID is currently developing a new Economic Development programme to support job creation in line with the Government's ambitious industrialisation strategy. More details will be announced over the next few months.

To conclude ... The size of the challenge – and the opportunity to support budding entrepreneurs in Ghana – is huge. The UK Government can help, by supporting events like EDGECon and programmes like ENGINE – but it's not our role to do this alone. We believe that the core role of entrepreneurship development lies with the private sector – through the banks, business development networks, with the Government providing a sound enabling environment and the regulatory framework for businesses to operate.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish you all the best in your deliberations during the next two days and I hope together we can identify innovative solutions to the challenges that entrepreneurs face in increasing investment and jobs and catalysing economic transformation in Ghana.

Thank you.

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## News story: Thousands more children on track to become fluent readers

[Figures out today](#) show 155,000 more six-year-old children are on track to become fluent readers compared to 2012.

The Phonics Screening Check, is taken by all Year 1 pupils across the country in June. As part of the check, pupils are asked to read as many of 40 simple words as they can to their teacher.

By encouraging teachers to use phonics – where pupils are taught to read by breaking words down into their component sounds – the government is getting closer to a time when all pupils are reading fluently and accurately by the age of six.

Today's figures show that for 2017, 81 per cent of pupils met the expected standard at the end of Year 1 – up from 58 per cent in 2012.

Those who did not reach the standard in Year 1 took the Phonics Check again in Year 2, with 92% of seven-year-olds then reaching the standard.

Alongside the results of the Phonics Screening Check, the department has also published national data for Key Stage 1 (KS1), showing that the proportion of 7 year olds reaching the expected standard has increased across reading, writing and maths.

This year, 76 per cent of pupils reached the KS1 expected standard in reading, 68 per cent of pupils in writing and 75 per cent of pupils in maths as government reforms continue to bring higher standards to primary education.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

We want every child to reach their potential and this means ensuring all pupils can read fluently by the time they leave primary school.

Thanks to the hard work of teachers across the country, and this Government's continued focus on raising standards and increased emphasis on phonics, 6 year olds are reading better than ever before. Today's results show there are now an additional 155,000 six-year-olds on track to becoming fluent readers. This is a huge achievement, improving the lives and education of hundreds of thousands of children.

But there is more to do for the youngest children which is why, as we said in our manifesto, we will strengthen the teaching of literacy and numeracy in the early years. We are determined that all children, whatever their background, should have the rich vocabulary needed to fulfil their potential at school.