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1. Mulholland
2. Prime Minister

This is likely to be seen as a hint
that the review will not lead to a radical
revamp of the NHS. MSA 29/4

RT HON JOHN MOORE MP

19.30 hrs. Friday 29
Release Time: April 1988. 183/88

Extract from a speech by the Rt Hon John Moore MP, (Croydon Central), Secretary of State for Social Services, to the Macclesfield Conservative Association, on Friday 29 April 1988. ms

JOHN MOORE REAFFIRMS GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO THE NHS: "We'll build on its strengths"

Speaking to the Macclesfield Conservative Association today John Moore said:

" Health care is a vital issue for everyone. We fully recognise this and are determined to secure the best possible care for our people as we face up to the challenges of the next century. We need a system of health care which combines choice with compassion, efficiency with quality.

" Our current review is designed to provide the means of getting to these ends. But I want to emphasise one thing above all else. We will build on the strengths of the existing system. We want to make a good Health Service even better, not try to start again with a blank sheet of paper. We want to retain the comprehensive coverage provided by the NHS - so that the old, the sick and the frail need have no fear about obtaining the care and treatment they need. And we want access to health care regardless of the ability to pay. These are the central principles of the Health Service - they will not be jettisoned now.

" But nor will we be complacent about the future. All health systems face similar pressures. From the vastly increasing numbers of old people. From the amazing advances produced almost daily by medical science. And from the understandable wish of patients to have the latest treatments. We have to ensure that our health system can meet these challenges."

/.. Mr Moore also

Mr Moore also spoke about waiting lists and the nurses' pay award:

" It is the dedicated staff of the Service - particularly the doctors and nurses - who deserve such a large share of the credit for the enormous increase in the number of patients treated over the past few years, supported by the huge resources put in by this Government. The fruits of their work were shown again this week with the publication of the waiting list figures for September 1987. They revealed a drop of 4 per cent on a comparable basis to the March 1987 figures. This is an excellent result for a six-month period and it shows the value of our special drive to get waiting lists down, backed by our fund which this year has been increased to £30 million.

" We are also keen to equip the staff of the Health Service for the future. We want them to have the skills that are necessary for an increasingly complex job. That is one reason why we accepted a major new pay award for nurses last week. That award will give over nine out of ten nurses a pay rise this year of between 6 and 34 per cent. Some may get as much as 60 per cent. I believe these large increases are fully justified because they are linked to the introduction of a new grading structure which will give better rewards to those nurses, midwives and health visitors who have special skills, qualifications or experience. So a highly skilled staff nurse working with very sick children in a intensive care unit could see her pay go up by over £40 a week, more if she works in London.

" This award should go a long way towards encouraging nurses to stay in direct contact with patients, rather than having to go into administration to further their careers. That is why it's such a significant step forward for the nursing profession, for patients and for us all. And in fully funding these latest pay awards - to the tune of an extra £750 million - we have raised the resources available to the NHS this year to around £23.5 billion - nearly £1/2 a billion a week! If actions speak louder than words this tremendous record deserves to be shouted from the rooftops."

ENDS