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PRIME MINISTER

20 January 1989

Prime Minister

NHS REVIEW: WHITE PAPER SUMMARIES

A more reduced
possibility for
the PoP booklet
would be simply
to print
Chapter 1 of
the White
Paper.

Comments on the Draft PoP Version of the White Paper as follows:

1. Page 1, first sentence

unimpaired

'All in all, Britain's Health Service is the best system of its kind anywhere in the world' is a rather over-dramatic statement. And comparisons are made difficult by the NHS's uniqueness. I suggest the following introduction to replace the first two sentences:

"Patients enjoy a very high standard of health care in the United Kingdom. And our Health Service has a skilled and dedicated staff, backed by substantial and growing resources".

2. Page 1, first paragraph, last sentence

As a standalone sentence, the statement 'And to take just one example, the NHS now ^{cares} ~~covers~~ for 1½ million more in-patients each year' could give the impression that health standards have fallen. This could be replaced by 'And in view of advances in technology and improved efficiency, the NHS now cares for 1½ million more in-patients each year'.

3. Page 3, first line

✓ Change 'major hospitals' to 'hospitals' as previously agreed.

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4. We may want to include a reference to tax relief for insurance premiums (people in retirement).

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omission.
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Comments on the Draft White Paper for NHS Staff as follows:

1. Para 9, second indent, line 1

Change 'major hospitals' to 'hospitals' as previously agreed.

2. Self-Governing Hospitals - fourth indent

Take out the last sentence 'Initially, major acute hospitals will be the most suitable candidates but in due course other hospitals may come within the scope of the proposals'.

Otherwise this statement will send negative signals to non-acute hospitals keen to opt-out.

3. New Funding Arrangements - last sentence

'GPs will still be able to refer a patient to whichever hospital or consultant they think best'.

In the new funding system, GPs will have some discretion. Districts may keep a reserve budget for referrals to hospitals outside their contractual list. But GPs will not have complete freedom of referral. To be on the safe side, we should exclude this sentence.

4. GP Practice Budget - third paragraph

We should be careful with the rather vague reference to 'at least £600,000 - £700,000' for the size of GP budgets. We have yet to decide a full list of treatments and their cost.

To be on the safe side, this may need to be changed to 'at least £500,000'.

5. Paragraph 15, first sentence - in brackets

'There will be no wholesale administrative reorganisation of the NHS'.

This sentence should be removed.

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