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(letter  
only)

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NS

Telephone 01-210 3000

*From the Secretary of State  
for Health*

Andrew Turnbull Esq  
Principal Private Secretary  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1

4 April 1989

*Dear Andrew*

My Secretary of State has asked me to let you have a copy of the letter he has sent today to Parliamentary colleagues about gps' contracts and the BMA's leaflet campaign attacking the Government's proposals for reform of the NHS. I also attach for information, copies of the letters he sent on these subjects on 14 March.

There has been a very wide distribution to MPs and throughout the NHS of the White Paper, booklet and leaflet "Working for Patients" (copies attached). The booklet and leaflet is also readily available to members of the public; demand for them continues to be heavy and we are ensuring that it is quickly met. They are available from the Department in any quantity and the leaflet is also sent out with all standard correspondence about the proposals.

Clearly, there are a number of options for presenting the details of the Government's proposals. This is a continuing priority and the Secretary of State is keeping the options under close review.

I hope this is helpful.

*Yours ever*

*Flora*

FLORA GOLDHILL  
Private Secretary



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**Personal Message from Your Doctor:**  
Dr S Ebrahim, Dr H Graver, Dr B Essex  
Dr A Platman, Dr J Sikorski, Dr S Thomas  
Sydenham Green Health Centre SE26

D and M Hakeman  
30 Caber Rd

RA - NHS

Dear Patient

### The Government's Plans for the NHS — How it will Affect You

As doctors in your Group Practice we have, over the years, been trying hard to provide the best possible service to you. We are very concerned that the Government's latest health care proposals will affect our ability to continue serving you.

We will have *less time* to spend with you because:

- more time will have to be spent making a much more complicated system work;
- the way that doctors are paid will change so that they will have to care for more patients for the same amount of money.

There will be *less choice* for doctor and patient because:

- the local Health Authority or your GP will be forced to make contracts with certain hospitals for tests, X-rays and treatment, so you will have *no choice* as to where you go for these.

There will be *less money* for health care because:

- administration of the new scheme could take up to one fifth of NHS costs. The present system is cheap because it is simple and takes less than one-twentieth of costs;
- there is no commitment to keep pace with increased costs due to advances in treatment or inflation.

There will be *less trust* between doctor and patient because:

- we will have a budget set by the Government and you may well wonder whether the advice we give you is the best or simply the cheapest.

The system will be *less democratic* because:

- the Health Authorities are to be appointed from Whitehall;
- there will be no local voice as to how services are to be delivered.

There will be *two standards of service* because:

- there could be government pressure on people to save on local budgets by "going private". But remember, this will not cover the elderly, the chronic sick, the mentally ill, the handicapped, expectant mothers and new-born babies or emergency treatment.

It could be difficult for some people to get health care because:

- certain kinds of treatment are very expensive and GPs may be unwilling to take some people on their list because it may make them overspend their budget!

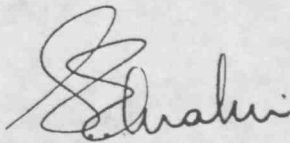
## ACTION

Like most GPs and health workers, we are very worried about the new plans. We have always tried to prescribe economically and, indeed, our drug spending is less than average. But health care is much more than drugs or simple operations, and you cannot put price tags on most of the things we do. **The new plan marks the beginning of the end of the NHS to which we have been committed all our working lives.** If you are worried too, there are two things you can do:

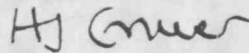
1. We would like *as many of you as possible* to join us for a meeting at the Health Centre on Wednesday, 12 April at 7.30pm so that you can find out more about this.
2. Write to your MP (for most of you in Lewisham West this is John Maples, but for those in Beckenham it is Sir Phillip Goodhart) at the House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA, and tell him about your concern. The letter could be similar to the example we give below.

Yours sincerely

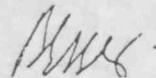
Dr S Ebrahim



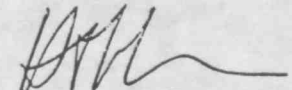
Dr H Graver



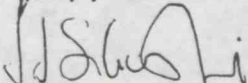
Dr B Essex



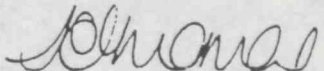
Dr A Platman



Dr J Sikorski



Dr S Thomas



### Voice Your Concern to Your MP. Write Now!

This is an example of what you could say.

Dear.....

I am concerned at the Government's plans for our NHS. I am worried that my doctor will have less time to spend with me as a result of having more patients and spending more time on administration.

I am worried that the NHS will have less money for my health care and that my doctor will be forced to consider whether some forms of treatment are too expensive.

I am worried that I may have no choice in the place and manner of my treatment.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely