

PRIME MINISTER

NHS REVIEW: CENTRAL MANAGEMENT OF THE NHS

Following your talk with Ken Clarke early this week, you decided it was no longer necessary to hold the planned meeting with the full NHS Review Team to discuss the two papers prepared in July:

- Ken Clarke's progress report on the main review package
- the Department of Health report back on the central management issues for the NHS.

I have now written out confirming that you see no need for a discussion of those papers at this stage.

The one loose end is whether there are any detailed comments you want to make on the central management issue. I attach the original Department of Health paper, which you have already seen a couple of times.

At an earlier stage Ian Whitehead did raise some detailed points on this. You touched on them briefly in your talk with Ken Clarke, but I sensed that you were in general reassured by what he told you. Certainly Ken Clarke and the Department are now very keen to get on with implementing their plans.

I assume that you do not want the Department to feel that they have no continuing commitment to keep you in touch with that implementation process. So one approach would be for me to minute out saying that you were content for the Department to proceed on the basis set out in the paper, but you would be grateful for a detailed progress report by, say, May 1990. That would then give you an opportunity to keep a close eye on developments.

Content for me to minute out in these terms?

f PG *JK*
8 September, 1989.

Yes