

THE NHS IN THE UK AT 75: ON LIFE SUPPORT OR DEATH WATCH? : IT'S THE POLITICS, STUPID (TO MISQUOTE BILL CLINTON)

Calum Paton¹

¹Keele University

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Abstract

This Perspective argues that the NHS in the UK is facing a critical ‘tipping point’ which means that its very survival is at stake. The article considers the political responses to this crisis - (briefly) from the Conservative government; (briefly) from the ‘anti-NHS’ Right in politics; (briefly) from the ‘centre’ in politics in the form of the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change; and (in depth) from the left-of-centre, the Labour Party. Labour is likely to form the next government, which is why its approach (in terms of both political strategy and the substance of health policy) is considered in depth. It is argued that Labour’s approach, derived from an understandable desire by leader Sir Keir Starmer to disown its ‘unelectable’ recent past, is currently inadequate for the task of putting the NHS on a secure footing for the future.

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