

- Provide the right to an *assisted death* within a rigorous framework of regulation and in the context of the availability of the highest level of palliative care.
- End *mixed-sex accommodation* in hospitals.
- Improve *hospital food*.

### Green councillors will stand up to fast-food chains...

After KFC applied to open a drive-through store close to a primary school in Solihull, Green councillor Andy Hodgson persuaded the Council to toughen up its planning rules to allow refusal of fast-food chains near schools.

## WE WILL RESTORE A PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH TO THE NHS

### The Green Party listens to knowledge and experience, not political dogma

The introduction to this sub-section has been written by Dr Jillian Creasy, who worked as a GP in Sheffield for 25 years. It draws on her real experience of the NHS over that time. Jillian is also Green Party Health Spokesperson and candidate for Sheffield Central.

Patient care has been damaged by two policies:

1. punitive governance based on arbitrary targets;
2. over-management by numbers to achieve those targets, leading to a climate of fear among managers and frustration among professionals.

The NHS should have the needs of the patient at its heart. Ultimately, healthcare is provided by a professional to a person in need. Every interaction should begin by connecting with that person to really understand their needs. Interventions – from simple advice or booking an appointment, to planning complex medical treatment – will then be more appropriate and efficient, of real value to the user and economic for the organisation.

The NHS has been subjected to 20 years of ideological tampering by successive governments (marketisation, targets and performance-related pay) to the point where professionals are often prevented from responding appropriately to an individual's needs. This has also driven up the cost of care. Fragmentation of care, especially outsourcing, has led to a loss of continuity, so the human relationship between professional and patient is diluted. Professionals can no longer make the overall care of the patient their primary aim. Huge amounts of time and money are wasted on 'failure demand' – where the patient goes round in circles trying to get an answer to their problem and often has unnecessary investigations and treatment.

More problems are created by so-called 'economies of scale' where, in an attempt to emulate industry, common services have been merged into larger entities regardless of the nature of the variety of demand. Individual and local knowledge are lost and problems are dealt with according to protocols and pathways, not what is best for the patient. This has to change. The system must be designed around what the patient needs, not what Monitor (the sector regulator for health services in England) or the Care Quality Commission demand. Professionals must be given the time to care, rather than ticking governance boxes.

The 'human-centred' approach also applies to NHS staff. The vast majority of NHS workers are highly committed, caring and careful individuals, but current systems often put them under stress and prevent them doing the right thing. We need a culture in which all staff are able to shape the system they work in and to openly share learning from mistakes and 'near misses'. It should be a source of pride and joy, not fear and frustration, for those who work in it.

The Green Party would:

- Place the *quality of patient care*, especially patient safety, at the heart of the system. Reducing costs would not be the primary driver of behaviour but would be the outcome of best practice.
- Evolve the *best system of care* with the help of the service providers.
- *Engage, empower and hear patients* and carers at all times, treating both with dignity.
- Foster whole-heartedly the growth, development and *training* of all staff, including their involvement in improving the systems in which they work.