

George Eliot hospital is at a crossroads



Private

NHS

**The direction it takes is
up to YOU**

**Tell the board that big business
has no business in our NHS**

**2 April – get the facts,
join the debate**

**Public meeting: Bermuda Phoenix Centre,
Bermuda Road, Nuneaton CV10 7HU,
7pm-9pm**



Take action: www.unitetheunion.org/geh

The future of George Eliot Hospital is under threat – not of closure, but from PRIVATISATION



Two private companies and one NHS trust have been given the green light to bid to run George Eliot Hospital in partnership with the trust. If Circle or Care UK wins the bidding war a profit driven company will be making money from our ill health. It is a million miles away from the founding principles of the NHS - despite the board's denials, this is privatisation.

Big business has no business in our NHS or the George Eliot. You ought to be very worried.

The NHS is being transformed from Britain's greatest social achievement into a series of competing businesses. The government wants all hospitals to become Foundation Trusts by 2014 – but George Eliot Hospital is too small and not financially strong enough to achieve the status on its own.

Taxpayers' money should be re-invested in improving NHS services – not lining the pockets of hedge fund managers, company bosses and shareholders. It is not in the interests of patients, staff or the local community for Circle, Care UK or any other private healthcare company to run our local hospital. There is not a scrap of evidence that private means more efficient or cost effective. In fact, the opposite is true; costs increase and services are fragmented.

Why not a private company?

- 1 Private puts profit before patients** – profit-driven companies are all about maximising income, for shareholders and company bosses – not meeting the social needs of sick people. It does this by cutting staff and their pay and conditions, as well as services.
- 2 Private is not publically accountable** – public bodies are subject to freedom of information rules of disclosure - private companies are not, even when they are given public funds to run public services. For profit companies can hide behind 'commercial confidentiality' to keep their secrets secret.
- 3 Private distorts the patient/doctor relationship** – a commercialised healthcare market undermines medical professionalism. There is an inevitable conflict of interest between a doctor's duty to put the needs of the patient before personal gain.
- 4 Private costs more** – there is not a single shred of evidence that costs go down or efficiency rises when a private company runs healthcare services. In fact the opposite is true; in the US, the world's biggest private healthcare 'consumer' the government spends 17.9% of GDP on health, compared to the UK's 9.3%. But whereas we get universal, free at the point of use healthcare, there are 48 million Americans without any healthcare coverage whatsoever.
- 5 Private goes against the founding principles of the NHS** – 65 years ago Britain said that no person would be denied good healthcare on the grounds of wealth. Today's pro-privatisation Tory-led government has ushered in a full blown commercial healthcare market. Don't let the private sector into the George Eliot. The future of free of at the point of use healthcare is at stake.

What you can do?

Get involved in the Hands off George Eliot campaign

Speak to your family, friends and colleagues, share this flyer. Tell the Trust board to keep the private sector out – you can do this online and find about more actions at uniteunion.org/geh. **Be part of the debate – join the public meeting.**