

PRIME MINISTER13 DECEMBER 1988

PAPER 5

DRAFT WHITE PAPER

The style of the draft white paper is improving. But the structure of the sections will need more thought. And the conviction behind the reforms will need to show through far more clearly.

Chapter 2: Delivering a better service

Quite rightly, the introduction dwells briefly on the successes of the NHS so far. But we need to explain the necessity of reforms before they are discussed in detail in Para 2.8 onwards. The current problem of in-patient and out-patient waiting times - highlighted in Para 2.13-15 - should be addressed after the introduction.

Para 2.9 This section on GP budgets needs rewording. The size of each practices' budget already depends on how many patients can be attracted.

Para 2.15 The sub-paragraph on appointment systems will need to be changed. It states that waits of two or three hours in out-patient clinics are unacceptable. Surely, a wait of an hour and a half is also unacceptable.

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Chapter 4: Self-Governing Hospitals

This section should be discussed in the next meeting when the two important gaps - Capital and Pay - are filled in.

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