



PRIME MINISTER

FILE  
DA

NHS REFORMS: HOUSE OF LORDS

You might like to look at some of the interventions in the House of Lords during the Second Reading of the NHS Bill. A number of speakers urged a phased introduction, particularly for the internal market, e.g. Lord Ennals, Cols. 1268-69, Lord Walton, Cols. 1369-70, Lord Carr, Col. 1298 and Lady Cox, Col. 1321. Lord McColl, in a speech which was generally supportive, set out the counter-argument to phasing in reforms region by region. The effect would be to stand down the enthusiasts in the regions not selected - see Cols. 1307-08.

Most of the discussion about phased introduction assumes that this should be done geographically. An alternative would be to involve all regions but to confine the internal market initially to a limited number of treatments. One could start with relatively straightforward and easy to cost operations such as hip replacements and cataracts, move on after a year or two to some more sophisticated treatments, and then finally to complex treatments such as cancer therapy. The advantage of this would be that no region was completely excluded.

(ANDREW TURNBULL)

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