

FTGA National Development Day, Understanding Crises

14 March 2013, in London

Jamie Reed MP Shadow Health Secretary, MP Copeland West Cumbria replaced Andy Burnham MP Shadow Health Secretary who was attending a Parliamentary debate.

What follows is an attempt to capture some of the main points put forward by the speaker.

Labour has begun a review of health and social care policy, to effect change away from regulation and competition. Foundation Trusts will have a key role to play in the debate. Regardless of their Politics the Shadow Minister urged Governors to participate by identifying problems and suggesting solutions to the review team.

As part of the review the questions posed are:

- How do we support families?
- How do we remove the stigma of mental health?
- How do we keep costs down?

Members of the Shadow health review-team, are speaking to NHS staff and patients, to develop their thinking. Wards are not staffed to cope with the number of elderly people in their care; Hospitals are still operating at 20th century standards. In mental health the physical health of patients can be overlooked, shortening their life expectancy. Local Authority Councils face difficult targets, and social care services are being whittled away. The question is: "Is it time for full integration of Health Care service?" One budget for Physical, Mental, and Social care combined, would work. This would be a radical change.

The NHS must change to reflect the change in demographics of an aging population when families are scattered. It needs to integrate physical, mental, and social care, in a combined pathway. Mr. Reed quoted the example of Torbay, which has broken the Primary and Secondary care divide, with a single point of contact for all care needs including an Occupational Therapist assessment, which enables patients to return home ASAP with the necessary aids.

"Labour wants to support Health Watch Boards and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) with advice. **We will repeal the Health and Social Care Act (HSCA) 2012** and this contributes to evolutionary change."

Mr Reed concluded by stressing the importance of the Governor role to deliver improved services and the need for openness, before he took questions from the floor.

The whole day was thought-provoking. The opportunity to attend was much appreciated.

Elaine Blatchford. March 2013