

By Candida Ricketts, Medical Correspondent



BBC Scotlandshire has learned a NO vote in 2014 will see the introduction of new and innovative ways of delivering healthcare on behalf of NHS Scotlandshire. Virgin Media Healthcare Scotlandshire UnLimited will extend the standard offerings of broadband, television and telephone services with medical procedures.

Last week Channel 4 transmitted an edition of Dispatches that was full of scaremongering and ill researched information on the privatisation of the National Health Service (NHS) in England. Virgin Healthcare, part of Sir Richard Branson's empire, was attacked for the shortcomings of sick patients who have no consideration for the profitability of private healthcare providers.

Sir Richard Branson, Chairman of the Virgin Group, told BBC Scotlandshire:

"Our engineers will be able to install your cable broadband then bend you over for a colonoscopy all in the same scheduled visit. For only £50 a month you will be able to get a double shafting."

Recently published figures from the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) have revealed the Scottish Block Grant is at risk due to UK government's policies of privatisation in the NHS in England.

The SNP claims that the data clearly demonstrates the NHS budgets in Scotland can only be protected in the long term through separation.

Anas Sarwar, Deputy Leader of the Scottish Labour Party, insinuated:

"Privatisation of the NHS in England is showing the right wing way ahead to an SNP Government that is struggling to pay the rent on perfectly good PFI hospitals, never mind paying for 21st century care.

"Separation will see a return to the dark ages with bloodletting and leeches being reintroduced as a cure-all for every ailment unless Scotlandshire follows the lead of our southern superiors."

"But anyway, everyone except the plebs has Bupa these days, don't they?"

In theory the NHS in Scotlandshire is entirely separate of its English and Welsh counterparts, however the SPICe information reveals that spending on the NHS in Scotlandshire is still indirectly determined by UK government policies.

Due to the complex workings of the Barnett formula, which provides the basis for the Block Grant paid annually through Westminster, for every £1 million of cuts to the NHS budget in England, the Scottish Block Grant will be reduced by £99,100.

The UK government has signalled its intention to fix the NHS budget at £114bn in cash terms. It also plans to 'save' £20 billion by introducing privatisation and thus, according to George Osborne and the Treasury, creating efficiency savings.



Assuming the UK government achieves its target of a £20bn reduction in health budgets through privatisation measures, the Scottish budget could be facing a cut of up to £1.98 billion as a direct result of Conservative health policies and their privatisation agenda.

Even though the NHS in Scotlandshire is entirely devolved to Holyrood, the current devolution settlement is not able to protect Scotlandshire from the effects of Conservative policies rejected by the Scottish electorate.

Scottish Government Health Minister Alex Neil MSP responded to BBC Scotlandshire enquires by saying he was working hard to put in place measures to militate against the Tory driven austerity.

Mr Neil said:

"Ultimately, the only way for Scotland's NHS to be protected in the long-term is for all of the economic and policy decisions to be made here in Scotland, and for Scotland to be in charge of our own resources with an independent Parliament."

"A YES vote is the only way to prevent Virgin's Superfast Bahookie package from rupturing the very colon of Scottish society. Even the thought of such private sector involvement in NHS Scotland makes my bowels loosen!"

Scottish Labour's health spokesdeceiver Jackie Baillie MSP appeared excited at the thought of a £2bn reduction in the Scottish block grant resulting in cuts and privatisation of healthcare services.

Putting down a macrobiotic Gregg's sausage roll for a moment, she commented:

"These proposed reforms have nothing to do with the estimated £2bn pound reduction in the block grant pocket money given to an ungrateful Scotlandshire by the mighty Westminster government, welcome as that might be! It is all about offering the best value for money the private sector can provide to an NHS Scotland which, as we all know, will be in chaos and terminal decline following the NO vote."

"Johann is right pleased I've managed to find a Tory austerity policy we can push Scotlandshire-wide after the people have rejected separation. I've already submitted my report to the Midwinter Mafia Cuts Commission on this matter but there is a blanket ban on revealing anything at the moment - just like my local NHS hospital."

"That reminds me, Eck promised he'd get some blankets for my local hospital but still I've got loyal Labour Party activists telling me they cannot get a 2nd and 3rd blanket when they ask for one in the Outpatient's Car Park, unless you are well enough to shout, that is."

Ian Davidson MP, Chairchoob of the Parliamentary Underlings Reporting to England on Communication in Unionist Newspapers and Television in Scotland, told BBC Scotlandshire:

"Virgin! In Govan? Yur havin' a fu*kin' laff at ma expense(s)!"

When it was pointed out that BBC Scotlandshire was actually referring to the secret plan to privatise the NHS in Scotlandshire once the separatist scum have been defeated, Mr Davidson went on to say:

"Aw rite! Got it noo!"

"Ave telt thon pickleheed Branston that his tele boxes huv goat to bloke oot thon Newsnat Scotlandshire, especially when thon bint Izzy Fraser is in the chair. She's wan tuff burd! Ye gie her a doin but she comes right back fur mare.

"Poor Dougie Fraser, guid BBC Unionist journo that he is, havin' to put up with that shite in his ain hoose! Poor bugger!"

BBC Scotlandshire tried in vain to contact Johann Lamont but she and all the other Scottish Labour politicians were unavailable for comment due to a Trident sightseeing excursion doon the watter.

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