



Year 8, St Joseph's RC High School

10th March 2016

NHS strikes: Justified?

Junior doctors all over England are on strike because of a new contract being imposed by the health secretary for Britain, Jeremy Hunt. The contract will entitle them to the same pay on weekends as week days where they used to have more and that pay increases will take longer to happen.

This is obviously an issue for the junior doctors as overall they are getting less pay for possibly more work. At the moment this contract will only affect the junior doctors in England. However the Welsh government are proposing more weekend hours for diagnostic tests, pharmacies and therapies; these are the areas that are thought to need it most.

It has been found that Jeremy Hunt has not been to a hospital on a weekend in the last 12 months and can not really know that junior doctors don't work weekends. It is generally the junior doctors that make up most of the weekend staff and because of these extra hours they are able to make extra money.

This is going to be changed when the new contract is imposed because they will receive the same salary for weekends as they do for week days. These are thought to be money-saving cuts and these will supposedly make the NHS cheaper to run and will require less money from the government.

There are also predictions that eventually the users of the NHS will have to pay a small fee and there are already ideas for the fees. One idea by the author of *'The NHS: Things That Need To Be Said'* has said to *The New Day* that *'Other countries (like Ireland) impose charges to see GPs and, let's face it, the revenue could be used to meet part of the funding shortfall. It would also make people think twice before booking an unnecessary appointment or cancelling with no good reason. Surely a £10 charge wouldn't be unreasonable, with opt-outs for anyone on benefits.'*

However others still maintain that the NHS are able to live on without public fees and with just taxes. This opinion is generally taken by consultants within the NHS but can be backed up with facts so is quite accurate. One such consultant, Jacky Davis, has said in today's *The New Day* *'The prestigious commonwealth fund examines health systems in developed countries and recently ranked it [the NHS] number one for value for money and cost-effectiveness'*

Personally I think that the contract should be re-thought with more accurate statistics as one of the main reasons for the contract is the higher death rate on weekends but the government overlooked the statistic saying that generally people with more serious diseases are admitted to hospital on the weekends.