



PRESS RELEASE

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PANORAMA LIFTS LID ON DANGERS OF HEALTH SERVICE PRIVATISATION

Action against Medical Accidents (AvMA) - the charity for patient safety and justice – has welcomed the broadcast of tonight's Panorama Special "Dying to be treated" (BBC1 8 pm). The charity, which helped with the research for the programme, has been warning the Department of Health for years of the dangers of outsourcing NHS care to the private sector, and claims that the programme confirms some of its worst fears and experience.

AvMA Chief Executive, Peter Walsh, said:

"Patient safety should never be allowed to be compromised due to initiatives which are more about political dogma and gimmicks. There should always be a robust assessment of risk, and if this had been done prior to the Independent Sector Treatment Centre initiative, things may have been very different. It is difficult enough to get a consistent approach to patient safety within the NHS, leave alone to expect it from various companies whose main motivation is profit.

To add insult to injury, it is an absolute disgrace that the lack of proper planning has led to some injured patients or their families receiving NHS funded treatment having to take on private corporations to get compensation. Every NHS patient should be covered by NHS indemnity. The Government have left NHS patients who they re-direct to private facilities in a worse position than other NHS patients".

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