Labour's leader)

the will and the [illegible] and reform the NHS."

Poulter, who served as a health minister

strikes," he said.

Jacqui Wise, Kent

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2024;385:q983

Doctors will shape Labour's 10 year plan, says Streeting

Labour's shadow health secretary has told the Royal College of Physicians' annual conference he wants doctors to help write a 10 year NHS plan to "deliver the decade of change and modernisation patients and staff are crying out for."

Wes Streeting said on 25 April that if Labour won the upcoming general election he will launch a consultation so clinicians can "shape the next decade of reform, that will take our NHS from the worst crisis in its history, get it back on its feet, and make it fit for the future."

Doctors' input

Some of Labour's announcements for the NHS, including the promise of £1.1bn in additional funding for staff to provide an "extra two million more operations and appointments at evenings and weekends" to cut NHS waiting lists, have already come from doctors, he said.

Investment and reform of the NHS must go hand in hand

Wes Streeting

Speaking to *The BMJ* in an exclusive interview after his speech, Streeting said he had so far outlined over "£2bn worth of investment" in the NHS, with that money ringfenced for tackling issues such as waiting lists and the lack of dental appointments, along with providing 8500 extra mental health staff and a doubling of CT and MRI scanners.

In light of Labour not making many spending commitments ahead of the general election because of the "state of the public finances," Streeting said this "tells you something about Labour's spending priorities." But he also said that investment and reform must "go hand in hand." As part of this reform Streeting said he would be looking to "achieve a shift in the proportion of funding, particularly, that goes into primary care." Focusing on secondary prevention in primary care was "better value for money" and better for patients, he said, adding that "instead of spending £400 for someone's A&E attendance, we'd be spending £40 on their GP appointment."

Public health grant

However, when asked whether he would reverse the cuts to the public health grant given to local government, Streeting would not commit to doing so, explaining, "This falls very firmly into the category of the tight fiscal constraints that we'll be operating under."

The public health grant is provided by the Department of Health and Social Care and is used to fund addiction, smoking cessation, weight management, children's health, and sexual health services. It has been cut by 28% per person in real terms since 2015-16, the Health Foundation has estimated.



INSTEAD of spending £400 for someone's A&E attendance, we'd be spending £40 on their GP appointment

What you need to know about Labour's plans for the NHS, according to Wes Streeting: see the 11 May issue of your *BMJ* for more

Elisabeth Mahase, *The BMJ*

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2024;385:q980