

15-Jun-2017

Dear Mr. Sutaria

BMJ.2017.039006 entitled "The end of the NHS and local government in England as we know them"

Thank you for letting us consider your resubmitted manuscript, which we read with interest.

It has been reviewed again by the editorial team and by our statistician.

If you are able to amend it in the light of our comments, we would be happy to work towards publication.

The statistical review is at the end of this email.

The editors' comments are listed below:

1) Editors felt that your revisions have improved the paper - it is now much focused, clearer, and easier to follow.

2) We felt in parts there is still some overstating of how much outsourcing and privatisation will ensue. We would prefer the article to be more open about uncertainty in this area, and note that reviewers had made this same comment on an earlier version of the manuscript

We have made adjustment to the manuscript to indicate such uncertainty and overtly expressed that the future is unknown and adjusted the manuscript to indicate how the changes we describe may facilitate privatization rather than will lead to privatization.

3) We would like to emphasise the points from our stats editor and ask that you make all data sources used in the article very clear

see notes below

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I hope you will find the comments useful. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

Navjoyt Ladher
nladher@bmj.com

****IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO INCLUDE IN A RESUBMISSION****

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:

Reviewer: 1

Recommendation:

Comments:

This is an interesting article, and though quite dense, I think the arguments are well presented and supported by the tables and figures.

The text within the figures is too small and the font size needs to be increased. Perhaps using alternate years in the x-axes would help.

Adjusted, please see note below.

The main text needs to refer to the tables.

As per BMJ author guidance, we have provided each graph with the accompanying raw data table, so that the editing/publishing team can recreate the graph to whichever format/style is acceptable for publishing. The graphs design illustrates our preference for portraying the data (however we are

happy for alternative methods of portraying the tabulated data) and has been entered into the manuscript as jpeg format.
We do not seek to publish both graph and accompanying tables, hence have not referred readers to the tables.
We have changed the format type of the figures in the manuscript so that the text/colours should be clearer.

For example, page 5 line 26 "LA expenditure on adult social care increased annually" needs to refer to table 4; line 56 on page 4 needs to refer to table 3.

As above, the tables replicate the figures and are just meant for the editing team.

I couldn't see the home care line within Figure 3.
The new format type has made this line clearer.

Table 1 would benefit from a totals column.
Done

It was not possible to check all of the figures presented, for example those from LaingBuisson. It would be helpful to provide links to data sources where possible.

Some of the data sources are historical and not available online.
LaingBuisson are not available online.
Other data were obtained by combining annual adult social care activity data collected and published by the former Health and Social Care Information Centre –we have provided the link where applicable and specified what data returns we used.

Page 4 line 31 - should be six-fold, not seven-fold.

Not in current manuscript

Page 4 line 42 - "The expansion or and switch to private provision was the results of policies..." is not justified given the data presented. "coincided with" would be better.

This is phrased differently in the current manuscript as:
This was driven by policies that incentivised LAs to outsource care;"

Page 6 - please define what is meant by spending power.

Spending power measures the core revenue funding available for local authority services, predominantly from council tax and locally retained business rates.

We have an explanation in parenthesis after the first use of the term 'spending power'.

Additional Questions:
Please enter your name: Katie Harron