

Party policy briefing

Years of cuts have left our country with a threadbare health and social care service with overstretched and under-paid staff, and massive unfairness around the ability to live long and healthy lives. The Green approach to healthcare means investing in our NHS - a universal, free health service to give individuals the support they need to improve their health, particularly in the aftermath of the covid pandemic. The historic underfunding of social care, worsening mental health crisis and scandalous de-prioritisation of maternity and women's health are key barriers to this.

Properly fund our health and social care

- The Green Party would increase funding for the NHS by at least £6bn each year by cancelling schemes like the government's road building programme (£5bn per year), and support the trade union campaign for a 15% pay increase for health care workers.
- Ensure social care is free at the point of use for all adults and put social care on a par with the NHS. This would mean the end of a system in which many people have to pay for private social care, which has been estimated to cost £11 billion per year, while even those who receive publicly-funded social care end up paying a total of more than £3 billion towards their support.
- We would replace private sector involvement in the NHS with community-led services which can offer better care and value for money with funds spent on local priorities.

Mental health

- The pandemic has exposed the inadequacy of mental health services in the UK. We would focus our funding on major improvements to ensure mental health has equal importance alongside physical health.
- Mental health therapy services would be able to be accessed by anyone who needs them within 28 days of a request, with more specific provisions made for particular difficulties experienced by those from BAME and LGBTIQ+ communities, children, adolescents and older people.
- Put an end to the postcode lottery around access to mental health services.

Maternity and women's health

- The Green Party would work to redress the gender skewed balance of funding in the healthcare system, making sure that spending on specific women's health issues is given equal weighting to other services. Linked to this, we would take steps to dramatically reduce waiting times for specific women's health services which have built up during the pandemic.
- The Green Party would improve access to high quality care during pregnancy and ensure that all expectant parents are entitled to the care of a single midwife through prenatal care, birth and the first month of postnatal care. Baby clinics will be expanded, so that women can get access to health visitors and take their babies for regular check- ups at a location and time that is convenient for them.
- The Green Party would focus funding to provide better reproductive health services making sure that all forms of birth control are free, to give women a real choice what works best for their family.

- We would develop and implement a UK-wide strategy to tackle gender-based violence, including domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and trafficking. This would include investment in support services for refugees.