

THE HANDOVER

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FAIR PAY FOR THE HCAs

HUGE VICTORY for the HCAs at St Georges Hospital in South London.

Healthcare assistants (HCA) across St Georges, Epsom and St Helier's have won their fight for fair back pay after negotiations following strike action in late January.

HCAs have been doing essential work that keep the hospitals running such as taking bloods, running ECGs, and cannulating. This is skilled work and the trust management agreed HCAs had been doing tasks beyond their pay grade. They were rightly put up a band but management had previously refused to pay for past work done while on the incorrect band.

Around the country, 40,000 HCAs have had backpay deals settled in other trusts since 2021.

The picket line was vibrant. Workers were out early and showed plenty of determination throughout the strike days. There were huge amounts of support from other staff as well as patients coming and leaving the hospital. Members of the public stopped by to express solidarity.

The ballot on the deal had an impressive 69% turnout and 90% acceptance rate.

The win includes: backpay to August 2021 and no clawback on unsocial hours; staff with 2 years experience go to top of Band 3; bank rates increase; and pay protection.

HCAs have proved what is possible when we organise together. They're not alone. Porters, cleaners, and caterers at Epsom and St Helier's won big last year and showed what's possible when we act collectively. The resident doctors have also managed to force some concessions through their campaign, although there's more work ahead.

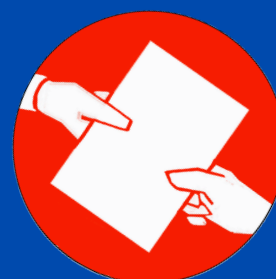
The height of the strike wave in 2022-23 saw multiple unions striking simultaneously. Back then, workers made massive gains when they coordinated campaigns across different unions. We can continue that trajectory by connecting the different struggles in the NHS today.

Congratulations to the HCAs!

What is The Handover?

A bulletin by workers, students, patients and community members of St George's. We're raising concerns about privatisation, workplace power, and who controls patient data. We aim to inform, question, and organise to defend an NHS rooted in ethics, equity, trust, and public control, not corporate interests.

Decisions about our health service must be transparent and shaped by the people who deliver and rely on care.



PATIENT DATA IN DANGER: NO TO PALANTIR



Palantir, a US AI and tech firm, is set to roll out a platform for amalgamating all patient data in NHS England. In 2023, they were awarded a £300 million contract for the project. And yet three years on, just 15 % of NHS trusts are using it, and there is sizeable pushback from NHS workers and patients. So who is Palantir? How did we get to where we are now?

Palantir was set up in 2003 by US tech czars Alex Karp and Peter Thiel. Early investment came from the CIA and they cut their teeth providing intelligence and AI services for US agencies such as Homeland Security, ICE, state police forces, and the FBI.

Palantir took its services to occupied Palestine, where they are now deeply involved with the IDF. A UN report suggested their software is being used in 'real-time battlefield integration for decision making.' In other words, Palantir's AI tools are being used to analyse areas and identify targets for the IDF. Karp boasted of Palantir's role in providing intelligence for the 2024 coordinated pager attacks in Lebanon. The attack was significant not only for its egregious disregard for civilian life and international law, but also for how technically sophisticated its planning and execution was.

THE NEW FRONT: HEALTHCARE

Palantir has also started working in civilian sectors in recent years. During the 2020 pandemic, they secured a contract to build a covid database for a token sum of £1. Regular procurement procedure was abandoned, and the NHS execs rushed the deal through. With one foot in the door, Palantir's remit massively expanded with the deal a year later to build a nationwide platform for all patient data known as the federated data platform (FDP). Up to now, patient data is organised at a trust level, making it clunky to transfer information if patients move trusts, or if someone has to

attend A&E while travelling to another part of the country, for example. Palantir being the chosen firm to 'fix' this very real issue raises several serious issues. Human rights organisations, health worker organisations, and even the Swiss Army agree working with Palantir risks sensitive data being accessed by US agencies. The NHS risks being administratively dependent on Palantir and therefore locked into using the FDP long term.

DESTRUCTION OF THE NHS

In the 10 Year Health Plan from July last year the government finally owned up to actively seeking 'partnership' with private providers. A report by Keep Our NHS Public found private sector outsourcing of NHS clinical care, support staff, and administration has a litany of general consequences including compromised patient safety, wider health inequalities, poorer work conditions for staff, and it's not even cost effective. The trend continues in this massive sell off of patient data.

Palantir has developed specialist expertise in intelligence gathering of an enemy in war. Their presence in the health sector is not only morally depraved, it brings the most violent and punitive parts of the British state into the hospitals and GPs around the country. One feature of Palantir's project is the so-called 'drag-and-drop' function between its civilian software and military software (known as Foundry and Gotham, respectively). Integrating the two means that one person's health record could be linked, through the FDP, to their other records in the police, immigration, or welfare, for example. In the US, this looks like ICE agents using health data to identify, track, and deport people. We cannot let this happen in Britain and weak assurances from the government are not enough when the record is so egregious.

FIGHTBACK

Health workers are organising a fightback. Health Workers for a Free Palestine is working with Corporate Watch, Keep Our NHS Public, and other grassroots groups to prevent the rollout of the Palantir contract. There have been some significant wins along the way. Trusts in Manchester have refused to use the FDP after staff and patients led a mass campaign in the area. The BMA passed a motion last year which rejected the FDP and is issuing guidance to their members on when and how to refuse to use it at work. This has opened opportunities for rank-and-file members to carry the campaign into their local Trusts. Activists in other unions are following suit. Patient-staff alliances are growing across the country to try and replicate these successes. Such connections will be critical in the broader push to re-nationalise the NHS under the control of workers and users.

Solidarity Wins: Migrant NHS Workers Secure £10M Justice Deal

A 98% strike vote, community organising, and unity across migrant and non-clinical staff forced a landmark NHS agreement.



Over 500 cleaners, caterers, porters, and patient transport workers at St Helier and Epsom Hospital have won a £10 million NHS deal after years of being denied full NHS pay, pensions, and conditions. These pivotal workers were not receiving standard NHS terms and conditions of their contracts and were kept out of such conversations for years.

UVW investigated and revealed more than £32 million in missing pay and benefits and £6 million in withheld pensions. A survey revealed a two-tier system in which predominantly white staff had full rights, whereas the majority of black, brown, and migrant workers were excluded. The investigation identified 'institutional racism' inside GESH as a result.

The campaigners described months of organising, a march

FIGHTING FOR YOUR DATA SECURITY

The Handover is calling for:

NHS Trusts to stop the rollout of the FDP and communicate clearly to staff and patients that they will not implement the FDP or any other Palantir products

Staff and patients to build alliances to defend the NHS from Palantir

Keep up to date with the campaign at: <https://nopalantir.org.uk/> and @hw4fp.uk on Instagram.

Sign the petition below:



98% vote for strike action that the GESH board finally yielded to. UVW notes that this is believed to be 'the only dispute in the country where in-house NHS workers have had to vote to strike for full equality with NHS colleagues.'

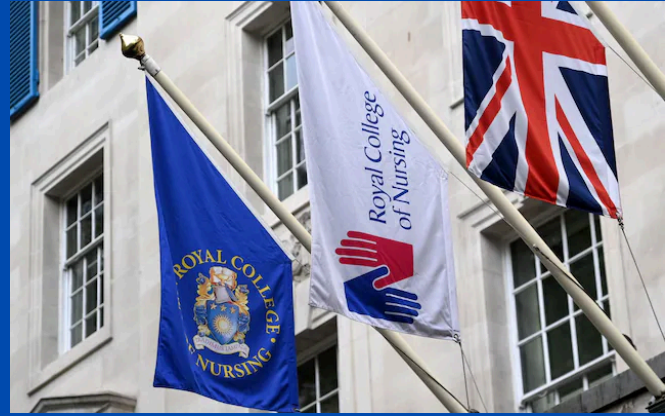
"We kept spreading the word and talking to each other, and one by one we became hundreds. We got united, and that gave us the power to get a deal."

Min Chale, cleaner of 9 years at St Helier Hospital and UVW member

Health workers are struggling against anti-immigrant and anti-worker policies across the world. There are exciting moments of organisation all around us. To win durable change, staff must build practical solidarity and break down the arbitrary barriers between clinical and non-clinical, immigrant and citizen, in-house and outsourced workers.

Royal College of Nursing: Investing in genocide?

A critical report collaboration by Nurses 4 Palestine (N4P) and Corporate Watch has found damning evidence of business dealings with companies that are supplying the Israeli military and those that the UN have found to be complicit in Israel's genocide, apartheid and occupation in Palestine. Despite claiming to avoid investing in companies that violate human rights, the RCN's investment managers Sarasin & Partners LLP and Legal & General Investment have cut deals with the worst of the worst using RCN member's membership dues. These include weapons manufacturers Elbit Systems, military surveillance technology Palantir, and Chevron - an energy company that fuels 50% of Israel's military and illegal settlements. N4P highlighted that these investments fail to adhere to the RCN's own ethical standards. Over 1,700 healthcare workers have been killed in Gaza (BMJ, Oct 2025) and it is widely documented that since the Nakba (the



ethnic cleansing of Palestinians to create the Israeli state, 1948), healthcare workers and their families have been purposefully targeted (The Lancet, 2023). While our Palestinian colleagues are targeted and illegally detained, subject to sexual violence and torture, the RCN need to ensure nurses in the UK that we are not paying fees towards investments tied to human rights abuses and atrocities in Palestine and across the world.

What can we do?

- Talk and share information with colleagues, friends, and family
- Contact your MP to demand the UK government sanctions and ends all arms sales to Israel
- Boycott companies complicit in and profiting from apartheid, occupation and genocide (BDS movement) as much as we can
- Join a group or support a campaign such as #NoPalantirInTheNHS, or your local group e.g. Wandsworth Friends of Palestine

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH **THE HANDOVER**



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ARTIST SPOTLIGHT - @HOLLIE.MOLY

TALENTED NURSE AND ACTIVIST IN AUSTRALIA.

HUMANITY

