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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SECURITY

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From the Secretary of State for Social Services

Andrew Turnbull Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street

30 October 1984

Dear Andrew

THE HEALTH SERVICE IN ENGLAND
ANNUAL REPORT 1984

My Secretary of State reported last month, and the Prime Minister welcomed, his intention to publish the first of a new series of annual reports on the health service in England. The report is being published tomorrow and I enclose three copies of the report for your use together with copies of the Press Notice which we will be issuing with it.

The purpose of the report is to illustrate the improvements in the performance of the health service in recent years and to outline the policy achievements and objectives which the Government is pursuing in each area of the service. A central aim of the document is to focus attention on the outputs achieved by the service - essentially the numbers of patients treated and the services provided - rather than simply the resources put into it. As the report shows, the health service has in fact made real progress in these terms.

My Secretary of State hopes that his colleagues will find the report a useful reference point in explaining the Government's record on the health service. I am therefore sending copies of the report to Private Secretaries in the Departments listed below.

Yours

S A Godber

S A Godber
Private Secretary

Copies of Report distributed to Private Offices of Departments listed below:

	<u>No of copies</u>
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Department of Health
and Social Security

**PRESS
RELEASE**

Alexander Fleming House
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31 October 1984

THE HEALTH SERVICE IN ENGLAND

Norman Fowler, Secretary of State for Social Services, has today (Wednesday) published an annual Report on the Health Service in England. This report looks at the developments in the last five years and some of the longer-term trends over the last decade.

In his foreword to the report Mr Fowler said:

"The Government has shown that it is committed to sustaining the Health Service as the backbone of health care in this country. We are determined to make sure that the record of improvements continues in future."

"I want to see a Health Service more responsive to those who use and pay for it."

"There is no doubt that there have been real advances in recent years, with more and better services to more patients than ever before. Health Service staff can take great pride and credit in their performance in the face of increasing pressure for services. The Service will continue to face major challenges in the future, for example, in meeting the health needs of the growing numbers of old people, in providing the new and better forms of treatment made possible by medical and technical advances, and in responding to the health implications of social problems such as drug misuse. To meet these challenges the Health Service must change and develop, as it has in the past; but in particular it must look to get improved value from the money provided by the taxpayer so as to give the best possible services to patients from the resources available. That is the biggest challenge of all."

Chapter one highlights main points in the report and records that, for example:-

- * the money available to the Health Service in England has doubled since 1978/79 - to nearly £13 billion cash in 1983/84, with the Health Service receiving high priority in public expenditure (paragraph 1.13);
- * more patients have been treated than ever before - in-patient cases rose by 12 per cent between 1978 and 1983: people are spending less time in hospital and advances in treatment mean that more is done to help them (paragraph 1.3);
- * professional staffing has increased - with, for example, over 13 per cent more consultants in 1983 than in 1978 in the acute hospital services and supporting specialties, and 25 per cent more in geriatric medicine; nursing staff in mental illness and mental handicap services have increased substantially (paragraphs 1.5, 1.9);
- * striking reductions in the rate of perinatal mortality - down by about a third over this period to 10.3 deaths per 1,000 births in 1983 (paragraph 1.7);
- * substantial progress is being made in improving services for old people, and mentally ill or handicapped people, away from concentration on long-stay hospital care and towards more care in the community; community care has been encouraged including trebling of the cash available for "Joint Finance" and launching of a special Care in the Community initiative (paragraph 1.10);

- * the hospital building programme has increased so that spending in 1983/84 was 23 per cent more in real terms than in 1978/79; 35 new schemes in excess of £5 million each will be completed between 1980 and 1984 and over 70 other major schemes are in planning or construction (paragraph 1.5);

- * the management of the NHS is being improved, including improving accountability of health authorities, and more recently, implementing the Griffiths Inquiry to get better management (paragraph 1.26).

Later chapters of the report describe main developments in:-

- * Prevention and Health Education;
- * Primary Health Care;
- * Services for Elderly People, Mentally Ill and Mentally Handicapped People and People with Physical or Sensory Handicaps (the Priority Groups);
- * Acute Hospital Services;
- * Maternity and Child Health Services;
- * Health Building and Estate Management;
- * Health Service Management;

This report is the first of a planned series of annual reports to show the development of the Health Service.