



Surrey County Branch

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**Interim Guidelines Consultation,
Cooperation and Competition Panel
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ**

21st April 2009

Our ref: PC/ NHS

Dear colleagues

Re: Competition and Private Profit in the NHS

I am writing on behalf of my trade union branch, Surrey County UNISON (with 4,000 members in local government).

Our Branch Committee wishes to raise in the strongest possible way our opposition to competition and commercial values in the NHS. We would also like to ask the following questions regarding the consultation:

- 1) Will the panel ensure that the alternative of a publicly led service is included in consultations about future tenders?
- 2) Is the duplication of services to produce choice a good use of resources, which constitutes economic efficiency, especially given that benefits of competition in healthcare are unproven?
- 3) Will the tendering process be fair and transparent, with no discrimination against NHS organisations in favor of either the commercial or voluntary sector?
- 4) Will the public and trade unions be consulted on an ongoing basis about local tenders?

Yours faithfully

Paul Couchman
Branch Secretary