

[Julie Wassmer Keep Our NHS Public \(KONP\)](#)

15 Feb 2017

My column in today's Canterbury & Whitstable Times exposes a shocking conflict of interests concerning the NHS STPs and challenges Julian Brazier MP to investigate. The full text follows here if you cannot read the Jpeg and I urge EVERYONE to attend tonight's NHS meeting in Whitstable. Pls share this post. J x <3  
"A Piece of my Mind

By Julie Wassmer

A recent letter in this paper, from Mr Higman, of Canterbury resonated for many of us with his "deep concerns about the Government's treatment of the NHS" and how "abysmal underfunding and undermining" has led to a public service "starved of the necessities that it needs to function." Mr Higman also wrote: "Our NHS has gone from being THE world leader in healthcare to being a shadow of its former self and for what? So that a few people can swell their bank accounts by running private health care services."

Ironically, this letter sat directly beside an article by our local MP, entitled "Why our healthcare system needs to adapt." Within it, the newly knighted Sir Julian Brazier acted as apologist for the "important" Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) in our area, while in stark contrast, NHS campaigners all over the UK are warning of the impact of all 44 secretive STPs - drawn up to achieve drastic "efficiency" savings.

In plain-speak this means "old fashioned cuts": closing hospitals; wringing more "productivity" from already pressured hospital staff; redundancies and dumping more unpaid tasks onto GPs, primary care services and family carers. The door will be opened to the government to sell off NHS estate, as well as enabling further privatisation by contracting out for US-style "accountable care partnerships".

While researching the local Kent and Medway STP, campaigner Diane Langford sent me important material last week which I immediately passed to a very grateful national investigative journalist.

This showed that the Independent Chair of the recently constituted STP Programme Board for Kent and Medway is Dame Ruth Carnall, a former NHS chief named by the Sunday Telegraph as one of the highest paid NHS 'fat cats' who earned more than the Prime Minister.

After leaving the NHS with a pension pot of £1.2 million, Carnall set up Carnall Farrar, a consultancy that works closely with McKinsey, a global consulting firm, exposed by Jacques Peretti on BBC2's Who's Spending Britain's Billions as having mugged off councils with uninformative template advice.

To find out whether Kent County Council had paid any consultants regarding the Kent STP, Diane made a Freedom of Information request and was "astounded" to discover that: "an external consultancy (Carnall Farrar)... has been commissioned by the NHS to assist in the development of the STP...as a key partner to this process KCC has contributed to this arrangement but does not hold the details as the contract is let by the NHS in Kent and Medway."

Diane says: "I've learned that Dame Ruth Carnall is Independent Chair of at least

three STP boards, which, as with Kent and Medway, her own company is also getting paid to advise, so it would be in the public interest for this conflict of interest to be urgently investigated, as huge sums are involved which amount to a drain on our NHS."

Bank accounts are indeed being "swelled". But as there is no overall body responsible for STPs, and therefore no overall accountability, will Sir Julian investigate or simply continue to applaud the policies of the government which has just rewarded him with a knighthood?

NB: A public meeting about the NHS is being held TONIGHT (Wednesday 15th) at St John's Church, Argyle Road, Whitstable at 7.30. All welcome."

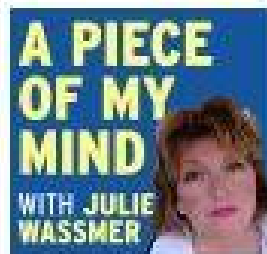
# New plan will just lead to old-fashioned cuts

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