

# NHS Held To Ransom

## WELCOME

This week has been a busy one for news, and we cover some of the main stories that campaigners are discussing, the most recent of which is the cyber attack. This has not yet been sorted out, and as we go to press it is not clear when the affected hospitals will be functioning properly again. It makes us realise again how important our health services are to us.

I have also put some initial information about the election in June. SOHS is a non-partisan organisation which means we do not support any particular party. Our members have various political affiliations or none. If anyone does feel that any kind of bias is evident in *Redlines*, then it is entirely coincidental as I try hard to keep things neutral. Indeed, my own political views do not align with any of the current parties, and maybe there is an element of truth in the line, "I'm voting for nobody, because nobody gets it right." I'm not saying don't vote, just a good quote.

A welcome to new members once again this week. Welcome aboard the SOHS ship..

Material for future newsletters  
[editor@sohs.co.uk](mailto:editor@sohs.co.uk) by Thursday  
 SOHS-Save Our Hospital  
 Services  
 (A non- party group whose aim is  
 to campaign to protect our  
 health services in North Devon)

There can be few people who have not yet heard the news that an alarming number of hospital computers have crashed, following a cyber-attack on Friday. Not all computers have been affected; Derriford Hospital was apparently affected and staff worked diligently to ensure the system was re-instated by next morning but some regions have been hit much harder. With hospitals heavily dependant on computers the attack has led to temporary hospital closures, cancelled appointments and operations, and chaos.

Because the computer virus can spread quickly across a network, even computers that are not infected have to be shut down for fear that they can also be infected as the virus spreads over the LAN (Local Area Network). Stand alone computers, should not become infected, so laptops and even desktop machines that are not connected to a network should not be at risk. Of course, in a large organisation much of the data is stored on central servers. The virus is said to be called WannaCry, and it is affecting computers of all types throughout the world.

WannaCry is a cryptovirus, a type considered to be the most dangerous to affect computer

systems. It works in this way: a loader is attached to an email and sent to a target. When triggered (such as by opening an infected email) it silently downloads components unnoticed and then starts work on encrypting the entire data system of the host computer. It uses a method known as a two-part key. A public key is sent to the host computer by the hacker. This can only be used for locking data, and although this can be readily retrieved, data cannot be unlocked unless you are in possession of a private key. This is retained by the hacker and only released on payment of the ransom they demand, usually around £300-400.

There are at least certain good points about this ransomware. Data is not compromised or shared with the hacker. There are absolutely no data leaks, as the data is simply encrypted. The hacker is not interested in stealing secrets. They just want to get paid. Generally, if the ransom is paid then the hackers do actually release your data, so it is not a double scam. You may have wondered why the amount is set at such a low amount, when they could be asking thousands of pounds. The answer is simple, it is cheaper to pay up than fix the

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# Pheep Pheep

Tucked away amongst the stories coming in this week is one which I believe deserves much greater significance as it is an important story and has significance for our own campaign. It concerns a junior doctor, Chris Day.

Chris had a great unblemished medical record and was working hard towards fulfilling his dream of becoming an A&E consultant. He was exactly the person that should be doing that work: dedicated, keen, and reliable. His life changed one day in 2013. At the time he was working at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Woolwich, South East London, He had a wife, Melissa, a nurse, and two young children, so was in a comfortable family position, even though the long hours he had to work exerted a toll on his family. One night, working a long night shift he felt that the staffing levels in his Department were unsafe, and as a conscientious doctor he did what he thought was right. He made a telephone call to report to the duty manager and reported the situation, saying that in his opinion patients with life-threatening conditions might be left 'dangerously' at risk.

You would have thought that the management would be grateful to receive useful

feedback from "the coal face", especially as there had been two unexplained night-time deaths on the unit around that time. (These were deaths that were not explained by the medical circumstances alone and might have been preventable.) Instead of a positive response, Chris was



immediately branded as a troublemaker, and he was accused of having 'personal and professional conduct issues'. His right to training was withdrawn, and the NHS started a legal battle against him, **using public funds**. Remember this is the same NHS that is claiming it is short of funds, and presumably can't fund sufficient staff to maintain safe levels. Some might consider that is not surprising, if they are squandering money on

unnecessary prosecutions, and throwing away the money that has been spent on training.

Chris has had to give up his dream and now accepts, resignedly, that he will never get back to where he was. Instead of training, he now takes whatever locum (temporary) jobs he can get.

In the meantime, the case has dragged through the Courts and in a landmark ruling delivered on 5 April 2017, the Court of Appeal ruled that Chris is finally allowed to bring his case to an employment tribunal. Until this point, there was no protection for whistleblowers, and if they were hounded out of their job that was considered to be their problem: *they should have kept quiet*.

At all points, it would appear that Chris acted in the correct manner, following the laid down procedures. Guidelines from the Intensive Care Society recommend a doctor-patient ratio of around one to eight, and when Chris made his report the department was two doctors down as two locums had failed to show up. As for his so called "personal issues" Chris has discovered that they only appeared three days after his report, and had never been recorded before. Although he has asked for clarification as to what these were, the NHS has been unable or unwilling to provide any further clarification or substantiation. Many would conclude that the two matters are related, and the allegation was simple a vehicle to force Chris out.

The case is still ongoing and will go on to an employment tribunal. It also paves the way for other junior doctors, 74,000 of them, to be protected by proper employment laws and to have redress if they have been unfairly

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## Diary Dates

Visit the diary page on the website for more dates, fuller details and maps  
There are also a number of other events. Details on the website news page

**Wednesday 24 May** SOHS campaign meeting 19.00 Venue to be confirmed.

**Tuesday 6 June** ND Health Trust Board meeting 10.00 – 17.00, Chichester Boardroom, North Devon District Hospital

**Thursday 6 July** 13.00- 17.00, NEW Devon Clinical Commissioning Group meeting venue to be advised

**Don't forget to send us your dates to include in the diary. If people don't know, they won't attend**

**Tuesday 1 August** 10.00-17.00, Northern Devon Healthcare Trust Board meeting, Chichester Boardroom, North Devon District Hospital

**Wednesday May 24 2017** from 18.30 BBC Radio Devon is recording an election debate at the Exeter Chiefs rugby ground, Sandy Park, Sandy Park Way, Exeter, EX2 7NN The programme is scheduled to be broadcast the next day, Thursday May 25, from 13.00. To take part in the audience see details and apply at <http://tinyurl.com/mylv893>

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problem so the hacker is more likely to receive the ransom money.

The virus could be fixed manually, if you have a complete and uncompromised backup of the data files. In essence, you would have to reformat the computer hard drive and start again.

You may wonder if the files could be decrypted. In essence the answer is probably, but it would require hours, days of processing on a very fast computer, at the very least. Any encryption can be decrypted, the only question is how long. The answer is likely to be too long to be a practical solution.

It is said that the virus mainly affects computers running on Windows XP, although most antivirus software should prevent it triggering. It is not clear to me whether this is completely accurate, or whether the virus may be avoiding those things meant to track it.

Worryingly, the virus is based upon a hack devised by the US government agency the NSA (National Security Agency). It is not clear what they were using it for.

Critics have been quick to claim that the problem in the NHS was exacerbated by underfunding, and lack of attention to the ageing computer systems. I think it is probably early days to jump to this

conclusion, but it does show the devastation that can be caused by the modern reliance on computers over written records. Time will tell whether the problem only affects ageing computers or software, but I do not think that will be the case.

A more worrying aspect is news emerging from the security community, who are suggesting that this attack was a rehearsal for a main event to follow at some later stage.

One hopes that perhaps this will be a spur to rethinking security policies and providing backup systems that do not rely on a single method. An effect at least as devastating could be caused by a long-term power shortage. Batteries and generators are good for a short term solution, but not for very long.

The attack has had awful consequences for many patients and put an additional strain on the NHS service. It is not just about data, but about real people and sometimes life-changing situations.

These are big issues that need decisive and incisive leadership to protect our future. Remote cyber attacks are difficult to thwart, and the perpetrators hard to catch, but there are steps that can be taken which will reduce the risk and help to keep both our data and our patients safe.

*Stephen*



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treated. The Daily Mail writes, "Chris had inadvertently exposed an even greater scandal: that no junior doctor was protected by whistleblowing laws. Perhaps even more troubling, the Government was effectively content for that to be the case. It was an outcome which raised concerns over the safety of all NHS patients."

There is more to this story. The dirty, underhand tactics used to threaten and deter Chris from proceeding with his legal case, threats of huge legal bills: and on the positive side, many people who have chipped in to help crowdfund the legal bills. In this writer's opinion it is entirely wrong that the NHS, a public body, should be allowed to use public funds, to defend that which is morally indefensible. Even the government – our government – were involved in the case, paying for top level lawyers, to prevent Chris from winning. This is reprehensible and is the action of morally bankrupt and desperate people.

No doubt there will be more on this and you may want to watch out for information in the press.

Let's now look at the wider issue. Chris represents just one of the many dedicated professionals working in the NHS who have become aware of a problem and tried to do something about it. However it appears that, from the official point of view, whistleblowers are evil people who should be punished for daring to speak out. During our campaign, we in SOHS have become aware of many NHS staff who are deeply unhappy about the situation, but are afraid of speaking out, realising the huge cost that they would have to pay for doing so. Many keep quiet, not just for their own sake but, for the sake of their family. There have been countless stories of those who

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# Legal Action on STP

999 Call for the NHS & Stop the STPs are putting up a legal challenge to the STP. They write:

In 2014 we marched from Jarrow to London to reclaim the NHS. Now we must march into the law courts.

## What we are doing

We are raising funds to cover costs of a judicial review of fixed pre-set NHS and social care budgets and contracts that are geared toward privatisation and insurance funding.

These contracts will prevent flexible responses to need, as we are used to in the NHS. Top-up payments and insurance will become essential but only the relatively wealthy and healthy will be able to afford them. The rest of us will have a second class public safety net as in the USA.

Imagine going to your doctor and finding that instead of a consultation based on trust, and the desire on both sides to decide on the best treatment for your ailment, an accountant stands between you and the doctor: dictating what care the doctor can provide for specific conditions, and whether or not they can offer it to you, on the basis of whether your treatment will be a good return on investment.

Imagine that the organisation that holds these block contracts - an Accountable Care Organisation - has instructed your doctor to deny care to

growing numbers of patients, and you are one of them.

This is already happening. It will get much worse once these fixed pre-set budgets are in place.

In the light of this deliberate destruction of the NHS, that we all rely on in our most vulnerable moments, 999 Call for the NHS have been working with Leigh Day (a firm of personal injury solicitors based in Manchester) to challenge these "pre-set population" contracts by a judicial review.

For the sake of simplicity Leigh Day are focusing on one particular STP - West Yorkshire and Harrogate - on the grounds that anything unlawful in one will be unlawful in most of them.

## What we need to pay

We have set an initial fundraising target of £5,000 to cover Leigh Day's costs of:

- sending an initial letter to one of the West Yorkshire Clinical Commissioning Groups
- if their response shows grounds for a judicial review, sending a pre-action letter.
- identifying from the Clinical Commissioning Group's response to this letter if there is a better than 50:50 chance of winning a judicial review and whether to go ahead on the basis of a conditional fee arrangement (i.e. Leigh Day only get paid if they win).

If it turns out there are no grounds for this to proceed to



Judicial Review, we will donate any remaining funds to another Sustainability and Transformation Plan legal challenge that is going ahead.

If there are grounds for a Judicial Review, we will then have to do another, bigger crowdfunder for that.

We hope you will join us for this new 'march' to take the STPs to court. A bit different to the 300 miles from Jarrow to London - but it equally depends on many people to make it happen.

The fundraising page is here: <http://bit.ly/999JudicialReview>

More information on these websites:

[www.999callfornhs.org.uk](http://www.999callfornhs.org.uk)  
[www.stopthestps.org.uk](http://www.stopthestps.org.uk)

SOHS have also been wondering about the possibility of taking legal action, and when we have any definite information on this, we will share it with you.

Below: Advertising banners for putting on social media. We will add them to our website for download

**JUSTICE FOR THE NHS**  
The legal battle

A corporate organisation instructs your doctor to deny your treatment  
A corporation has control of your health budget  
This is already happening and it's about to get much worse  
We have to challenge this

**JUDICIAL REVIEW**

[www.crowdjustice.org/case/challenge-stp](http://www.crowdjustice.org/case/challenge-stp)

**PLEASE JOIN US**

**Stop the Sustainability & Transformation Plans**

A corporate organisation instructs your doctor to deny your treatment  
A corporation has control of your health budget  
This is already happening and it's about to get much worse  
We have to challenge this

**LEGAL CHALLENGE**

[www.crowdjustice.org/case/challenge-stp](http://www.crowdjustice.org/case/challenge-stp)

**THROW A SPANNER IN THE WORKS**

**PLEASE JOIN US**



# Torrington May Fair

*The SOHS dragon makes its way through the streets of Torrington followed by a procession of people in red. The May Fair is a traditional event held annually.*



*David Chalmers, the Liberal Democrat Candidate, standing against Geoffrey Cox, was a welcome supporter to the SOHS Dragon with red flashing eyes, who roared and called "Save Our Hospital Services" for two hours as we paraded through the Torrington Carnival on 6th May 2017. Hmm, I think that means the dragon had the flashing red eyes, although maybe David roared the "Save Our Hospital Services" along with the dragon and other supporters.*



*The SOHS dragon and the STITCH float in front of it. I think this was taken when they were waiting for the order to go.*

*The STITCH and SOHS float. An attractive looking display, I'd say, and look at all those red balloons and flowers.*



STITCH and SOHS would like to thank all those who came forward to support the cause and help with the procession

## Candidates standing in the General Election June 2017

### North Devon

Peter Heaton-Jones - **Conservative**  
 Nick Harvey - **Liberal Democrat**  
 Mark Cann - **Labour**  
 Ricky Knight - **Green**  
 Steve Crowther – **UKIP**

### Torridge and West Devon

Geoffrey Cox - **Conservative**  
 David Chalmers - **Liberal Democrat**  
 Vince Barry - **Labour**  
 Chris Jordan - **Green**  
 Robin Julian – **Independent**



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### North Devon Previous Election Results (2015)

Party	Candidate	Total Votes	Percentage of Votes
<b>Conservative</b>	Peter Heaton-Jones	22,341	42.7
<b>Liberal Democrat</b>	Nick Harvey	15,405	29.4
<b>UKIP</b>	Steve Crowther	7,719	14.8
<b>Labour</b>	Mark Cann	3,699	7.1
<b>Green</b>	Ricky Knight	3,018	5.8
<b>Communist</b>	Gerry Sables	138	

### North Devon Previous Election Results (2010)

Party	Candidate	Total Votes	Percentage of Votes
<b>Liberal Democrat</b>	Nick Harvey	24,305	47.4
<b>Conservative</b>	Philip Milton	18,484	36.0
<b>UKIP</b>	Steve Crowther	3,720	7.2
<b>Labour</b>	Mark Cann	2,671	5.2
<b>Green</b>	L'Anne Knight	697	1.4
<b>BNP</b>	Gary Marshall	614	1.2
<b>Independent</b>	Rodney Cann	588	1.1
<b>English Democrat</b>	Nigel Vidler	146	0.3
<b>Communist</b>	Gerry Sables	96	0.2

*It can be seen that the LibDem vote fell away from 2010 by 18%. For the LibDems to regain the seat from the Conservatives it would be necessary for them to get those back from UKIP and Labour. Would the Brexiteer-UKIP people desert UKIP to vote for Remaining-LibDems? What do you think?*

### Torridge and West Devon Previous Election Results (2015)

Party	Candidate	Total Votes	Percentage of Votes
<b>Conservative</b>	Geoffrey Cox	28,774	50.9
<b>UKIP</b>	Derek Sargent	10,371	18.3
<b>Liberal Democrat</b>	Paula Dolphin	7,483	13.2
<b>Labour</b>	Mike Sparling	6,015	10.6
<b>Green</b>	Cathrine Simmons	3,941	7.0

### Torridge and West Devon Previous Election Results (2010)

Party	Candidate	Total Votes	Percentage of Votes
<b>Conservative</b>	Geoffrey Cox	25,230	45.7
<b>Liberal Democrat</b>	Adam Symons	22,273	40.3
<b>UKIP</b>	Robin Julian	3,021	5.5
<b>Labour</b>	Darren Jones	2,917	5.3
<b>Green</b>	Cathrine Simmons	1,050	1.9
<b>BNP</b>	Nick Baker	766	1.4

*LibDems lost an astonishing amount of ground between 2010 and 2015, a fall of 27% of the votes. A lot of these went to UKIP who became the strongest challenger. As UKIP are not fielding a candidate those votes would be redistributed, but would Brexiteer-UKIP supporters vote for Remaining-LibDems or would their votes go to Conservative?*

have spoken out, being vilified and dismissed.

Whistleblowers do not act for personal gain. Indeed, usually their actions lead to huge personal loss, and not just the whistleblower but their family suffer. They usually speak out because they have a conscience and a moral code that prevents them from hiding things which they see to be wrong. Rather than oppose such things, we should provide a means by which these actions can be channelled and used for positive gain. We accept that there are always opinions, and sometimes something is seen in one way, without the advantage of being able to take into account other factors. Yet in a fair and democratic society equal debate and discussion should be made welcome.

I, for one, applaud those who still have a moral compass and speak out for what they believe to be correct. It makes a change from the great many politicians who have the morality of a bowl of porridge and the principles of a snake, changing sides and opinions as they follow the money trail to what they think is wealth and happiness. How wrong they are! Let's have more whistleblowers.

<http://tinyurl.com/n73orrq>  
 (links to Daily Mail)  
 @drcmday Twitter  
<http://tinyurl.com/k2a6a4>  
 (links to crowdfunding page:  
 has a summary of the case and  
 a lot of interesting and  
 useful links)  
<http://www.54000doctors.org/>

Stephen

*Image on page 2 by adil113 on Flickr.com*