

JET Library Policy Briefing - Spending on and availability of health care resources

- The King's Fund compared health spending in the UK to other OECD countries (excluding the U.S.)
- The UK has 2.8 doctors per 1,000 population - below the OECD average of 3.6
- The UK has 7.9 nurses per 1,000 population - also fewer than average. Germany has 13.3 and Switzerland 18
- The UK has 2.6 beds per 1,000 population compared to an average of 4.4. This is similar to Canada and New Zealand but far below Germany and Austria
- The UK has fewer residential beds for long-term care than average. We are just ahead of Spain and just behind Canada. The Netherlands and Switzerland have the most
- We have the fewest CT scanners per 1,000,000 population. Australia and Denmark are top
- We also have the fewest MRI scanners per 1,000,000 population
- Spending on drugs - outside drugs in hospital - makes up about a sixth of spending
- We spend £500 per person per year - below the average amount but this might be due to more efficient purchasing
- Some countries finance their health service via taxation - the Beveridge model. These include the UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand
- Others have compulsory health insurance, the Bismarck model e.g. Germany and France
- Since 2008 most countries have tried to contain health expenditure to some extent
- Social care spending is now included in our health spending meaning the spending as a percentage of GDP has gone up from 8.7% to 9.8%
- This is about average. Germany, France and Sweden spend about 11%
- There are around 100,000 vacancies for clinical staff in the English NHS
- Nearly half of nurses do not think there are enough staff to let them do their job properly
- The UK is one of the best systems in the world at using cheaper, generic medicines
- Thanks to more efficient use the number of hospital beds has halved in the last 30 years
- BUT more than 90% of hospital beds are now occupied, higher than the recommended 85% level
- Budgets for adult social care fell by 8% in real terms between 2009/10 and 2015/16