

organised by DCTU & ICTU Youth Committee

campaign
for a
**decent
public
health
service**

29.03.08

Parnell Sq.

15:00



Protest

**Workers & Patients Unite!
Stop For-Profit Medicine!**

www.wsm.ie/health

supported by :

**Workers
Solidarity
Movement**



Demand Quality Healthcare For All

Why you should protest on the 29th March

The Irish health system is a shambles. Long waiting lists, overcrowded wards and A&E units, over-worked and under-resourced frontline staff... The list is familiar to anyone who has been unlucky enough to have to avail of the public health system in recent years. The case of Susie Long who died last year of treatable bowel cancer because of a late diagnosis due to long waiting lists is but the best known example of a system in crisis.

But there's another side to the Irish health system. For those wealthy enough to be able to afford private care, there are no long queues or overcrowded hospitals. Those with health insurance or the ability to pay are treated straight away. It's an apartheid system which discriminates against those with least money.

This hasn't happened by accident. Nor is it due to incompetence on the part of public health workers. Our government is pursuing an agenda that is unashamed about its belief that a profit can and should be made from everything. This ideology openly declares 'Private good, Public bad'. It believes in low taxes on wealth, leading to low public spending on services such as health and education. This is why there is a deliberate run-down of the public health system in order to open the way for even greater amounts of money to be made by the profiteers.

So it is time for us all to raise one loud voice against this privatisation agenda. One loud voice, fuelled by the anger of thousands of mistreated patients, victims of the two-tier health service, and by the frustration of thousands of health workers who try their best in a system that is skewed to favour of the rich, can send a very clear message. It can send a message that we will no longer be divided between urban and rural, between patient and doctor. We will stand united and demand change.

A Strong and United Campaign

It is time to build a strong, united and persistent campaign in every town and suburb in Ireland – a campaign that will challenge the politics of the two-tier health system. This march can be one of the first steps in starting to bring that united campaign together.

We need a campaign that is based on the principle that "Solidarity is Strength". For too long, groups who have tried to bring about change in our apartheid health service have been isolated, focusing on their own particular needs. The aim of the campaign should be to bring together and unite health workers and their trade unions, patients' groups, regional hospital campaigners and the general public to demand a quality public health service for all.

The campaign was kicked off by the Dublin Council of Trade Unions and Irish Congress of Trade Unions Youth section. Roughly 400 people attended the launch of the campaign in Liberty Hall, Dublin in February, which included moving contributions by Conor MacLiam (the husband of Susie Long) and Janette Byrne (from Patients Together).

The march in Dublin, on 29th March is the next step in building the campaign. Its aim is to demonstrate the popular support among the public of the ideas behind the campaign and to send a clear message to the government. Add your voice to that message by attending the march, and by encouraging your friends and workmates to do so.

This leaflet is produced by:

Workers Solidarity Movement

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