

STATEMENT FROM DR ROSENA ALLIN-KHAN to the SHA

The NHS means everything to me. When I was growing up, I never wanted to be a politician - I always wanted to be a doctor. Having failed my A-levels because of pressures at home, it was a Labour Government that gave me the chance to turn my life around and study medicine at Cambridge, aged 24. So I understand the horrendous pressures facing our health service as well as anyone, because I see and experience it for myself working A&E shifts at my local hospital, St George's in Tooting.

A&E is a microcosm of society - here everything is on show and it's clear to me how austerity is affecting people every day. Likewise, growing up poor and cold while my single-mum worked three jobs to support my brother and I, taught me the reality of day-to-day life for many people in the UK. My mother always told me though that there were people worse off than us - I have never forgotten that and it drove me to fight to become a doctor, spurred me on to work as a humanitarian aid doctor in conflict zones across the world, and work as a doctor in my local A&E.

Watching the terrible results of the election roll in on the night of 12 December broke my heart, because I saw the door close on a whole generation of people growing up like I did, but who'll never get the same opportunities I did. But it also lit a fire in my belly to do something about it. That's why I'm running for Deputy Leader of Labour - because now is the time to stand up and fight for our values, to rebuild our Labour Party from the grassroots up and to fight for the future of our NHS. We know the terrible damage Boris Johnson and the Tories want to do to our health service - they want to increase privatisation, opening our NHS up to Donald Trump and private US healthcare companies, and with Brexit piled on top of years of chronic underfunding by successive Tory governments, the NHS is now more vulnerable than ever before.

So the fightback starts here. I've already pledged to offer reduced membership rates for NHS staff who want to join Labour, because I want them to make their voices heard in our Party and make sure the NHS is at the heart of everything we do. The only way we'll save our NHS for future generations is to stand up together and fight for it. That's what I do every day as an MP and as a frontline NHS doctor, and that's what I'll continue to do whether or not I'm elected as the next Deputy Leader of the Labour Party. I hope you'll join me and support me in this fight

Doctor Rosena Allin-Khan
MP for Tooting