

General Elections 2019 – Political Parties Manifestos

The three main parties have published their election manifestos and they are all proposing to increase health spending¹:

- Conservatives: increase the NHS spending by 3.2%. The conservative manifesto does not provide a fully costed social/health care policy therefore a like-for-like comparison with other parties is not possible.
- Labour: increase NHS spending in England by an average of 3.8% per year between 2019–20 and 2023–24. Overall spending on the Department of Health and Social Care would increase on average by 4.3% per year.
- Liberal Democrats: increase the NHS spending by 3.7% and overall spending on the Department of Health and Social Care by 3.8%.

Conservatives

In the last Parliamentary session the Conservatives were the biggest party in Westminster, with 298 MPs out of 650 seats. Their manifesto commits to:

- Deliver parity of esteem and to “legislate so that patients suffering from mental health conditions, including anxiety or depression, have greater control over their treatment”.
- Enshrine into law the long-term NHS plan within three months of forming a new Government and an additional 34 billion per year in NHS funding.
- £5 billion in short-term funding for “social care for disabled, sick and elderly people” and pledges to work with opposition parties to “come up with long-term proposals.”

The full conservative manifesto can be accessed [here](#)

Labour

Labour had 243 MPs, making it the second largest party in Westminster. The manifesto commitments include:

- Advancing parity of esteem with an extra £1.6 billion a year for mental health care.
- Expanding choice, autonomy and availability of the most appropriate treatment by implementing the full recommendations set out in the [independent review](#) of the Mental Health Act.
- An £845 million "Healthy Young Minds" plan to focus on early intervention by increasing annual spending on child and adult mental health services (CAMHS), introducing 300,000 mental health hubs and delivering 3,500 school counsellors for secondary schools and a qualified counsellor in all primary schools.

The full Labour Manifesto can be accessed [here](#)

¹ <https://www.ifs.org.uk/election/2019>

Liberal Democrats

The Liberal Democrats were the fourth biggest party with 20 MPs. The manifesto commits to:

- Treating equally physical and mental health and increasing access to a broader range of clinically effective talking therapies with equal access regardless of gender, sexuality, age and disability.
- Ensuring that LGBT+ mental health services receive funding and support.
- Investing an extra £35bn into health and social care over the next five years paid for by a 1p rise on income tax.
- Implementing all the recommendations of the Independent review of the Mental Health Act.
- Ensuring that public funding has a specific focus on research into mental ill-health, including research into the different mental health needs of different communities.

The full Liberal Democrats Manifesto can be accessed [here](#)

Green Party

In the last Parliamentary session there was 1 green MP in Westminster. The manifesto commits to:

- Increasing funding for the NHS by at least £6 billion per year each year, until 2030 (a 4.5% increase on the 2018/2019 NHS Budget).
- A specific pledge to increase funding to enable significant improvements to mental health care so it is put 'on an equal footing with physical health care'
- Ensuring that everyone who needs it can access evidence-based mental health therapies within 28 days from referral.

The full Green Manifesto can be accessed [here](#)

Scottish National Party

Health is a devolved issue in Scotland. The Scottish National Party (SNP) was the third largest party in Westminster, with 35 MPs. The manifesto commits to:

- A new National Health Service Protection Act to protect the founding principles of the NHS in any future trade deals.
- Closing the health spending gap between Scotland and England and increase investment to NHS Scotland to more than £17 billion by 2024/25.
- Supporting the review of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to facilitate 'a publicly owned, publicly operated, and publicly commissioned NHS in England'.

The full SNP Manifesto can be accessed [here](#)

DUP

Health is a devolved issue in Northern Ireland. The DUP was the fifth biggest party in Westminster and had 10 MPs out of 650 seats in the last Parliamentary session.

The DUP pledges to increase spend on health by at least £1bn to address the problem of waiting lists and increase investment.

To access the DUP Manifesto when published please click [here](#)

Sinn Féin

Sinn Féin had seven MPs when Parliament dissolved. Sinn Féin has confirmed that any party's candidates elected in the upcoming General Election will continue the Party tradition not to take their seats in Westminster. The party has not published its manifesto.

To access Sinn Féin policy documents please click [here](#)

SDLP

The SDLP lost its two Westminster parliamentary seats in 2017. Ahead of these elections they have formed a 'remain alliance' with Sinn Féin and the Green Party to reduce the number of pro-Brexit NI MPs. Their manifesto focuses on Brexit and climate change.

The full SDLP Manifesto can be accessed [here](#).

Plaid Cymru

Health is also a devolved issue in Wales. Plaid Cymru had 4 MPs out of 650 seats in the last Parliamentary session. The manifesto commits to:

- A 5% increase in mental health expenditure every year for the next decade.
- Free social care provided at the point of need with an investment from the Welsh government of £300m a year.
- Investment in early intervention and preventative health care

Brexit Party

The party was formed this year therefore it has no MPs although in May's European Parliament elections it won 32% of the UK vote. Instead of publishing a manifesto they have opted for a 'contract with the people' with pledges to:

- Maintain the NHS services free at point of access
- Introduce 24-hour GP surgeries and invest in medical research

You can access the Brexit party's 'contract with the people' [here](#)