



Press release  
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**“Life begins at sixty: what kind of NHS after 2008?”  
by David Boyle, Geoff Mulgan and Rushanara Ali**

The Young Foundation and New Economics Foundation (nef) have today launched a new report setting out how the NHS needs to evolve after its 60<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2008.

The report warns that today’s debates over hospitals and choice will soon look anachronistic and that the key priority for the NHS will be management of chronic disease – which already drives most of the NHS’ costs and which will require radically new approaches to healthcare that put patients in control.

Its sets out a vision of a health service that does what the NHS was originally intended to do: keep people well and put wellness at the heart of policy. The report argues that success in combating infectious diseases in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and acute diseases in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, is now focusing attention on chronic diseases – from arthritis and depression to diabetes and heart disease. This is a very different kind of epidemic: as many as 80% of GP consultations now concern chronic illness rather than the kind of health problems where traditional forms of intervention seem appropriate. Progress towards an NHS focused on wellness will involve continued attention to diet and fitness, recognising the importance of supportive social networks and addressing the many environmental causes of ill-health: from poor food and congestion to stress and bad housing.

*“The debate on the NHS often seems polarised between defenders of the status quo and advocates of greater marketisation and consumerism”, says co-author Geoff Mulgan. “But the biggest challenges of the next two decades – particularly around chronic disease – will make both of these positions look increasingly inadequate and anachronistic. That’s why we’ve begun the work of mapping out how the NHS might evolve to better need the real needs of the people who depend on it.”*

None of the major parties has yet addressed where the NHS is heading. ‘Life begins at 60’ has been prepared to initiate a 3 year programme of practical work and policy thinking that will help to redefine how money, knowledge and power are organised

*“Life begins at sixty: what kind of NHS after 2008?”* is published on the Young Foundation and nef websites.

**Notes to Editors:**

- Geoff Mulgan, Rushanara Ali and David Boyle will be available for interview and features. Contact Natalia Chan on 020 8980 6263 or [Natalia.chan@youngfoundation.org.uk](mailto:Natalia.chan@youngfoundation.org.uk).
- nef and the Young Foundation have hosted fringe meetings at all major party conferences this year as part of a consultation before final publication later in the autumn.