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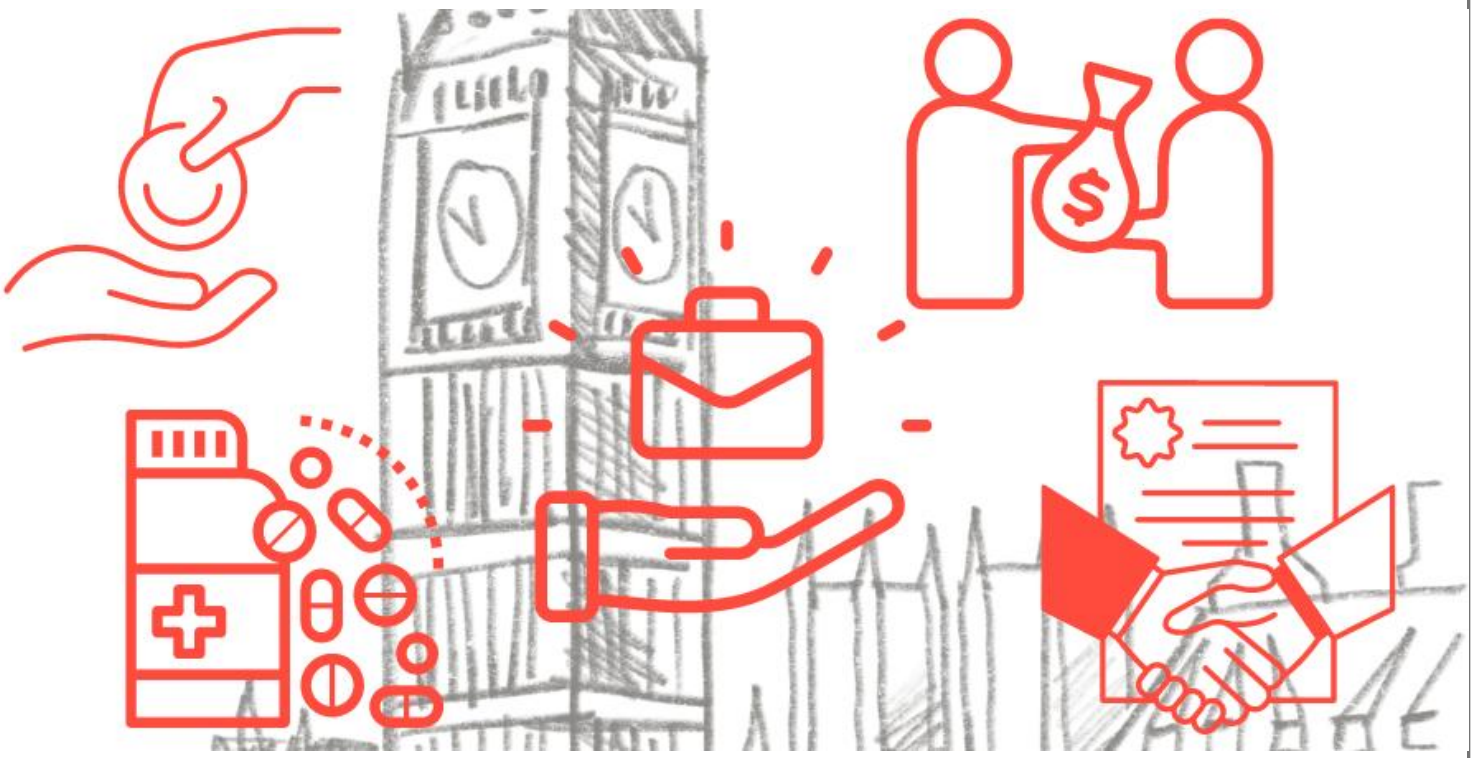
Which MPs have received donations from people and companies linked to the private healthcare sector?



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Introduction

When we vote for Members of Parliament (MPs), we are trusting them to make decisions which are best for the public, not for wealthy donors and corporations. But EveryDoctor's new research shows that private companies and people linked to the private healthcare sector are giving large donations to our politicians.

This raises serious concerns about whether these donations might influence decisions about our National Health Service (NHS).

Why does this matter?

The NHS is meant to provide equal, comprehensive healthcare for all. But at the moment it's not doing this. Because of decisions made by politicians, millions of people across the UK are now struggling to access healthcare, and there's a growing push from the current Government to allow private companies to take on more NHS work. These private companies get paid with taxpayers' money to carry out NHS work, and they're hoping to make a profit.

When private companies are donating large sums to politicians, we need to ask: are decisions being made for public good, or private profit?

People and companies linked to the private healthcare sector gave more than £2.7 million to political figures over the past 2 years, EveryDoctor's new research reveals.

To put this in perspective, that's enough money to pay for about 90 NHS nurses for a whole year.

Alarmingly, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Wes Streeting, was the biggest recipient, accepting almost £167,000 from individuals and companies with ties to the private healthcare sector over the period 2023-2025.

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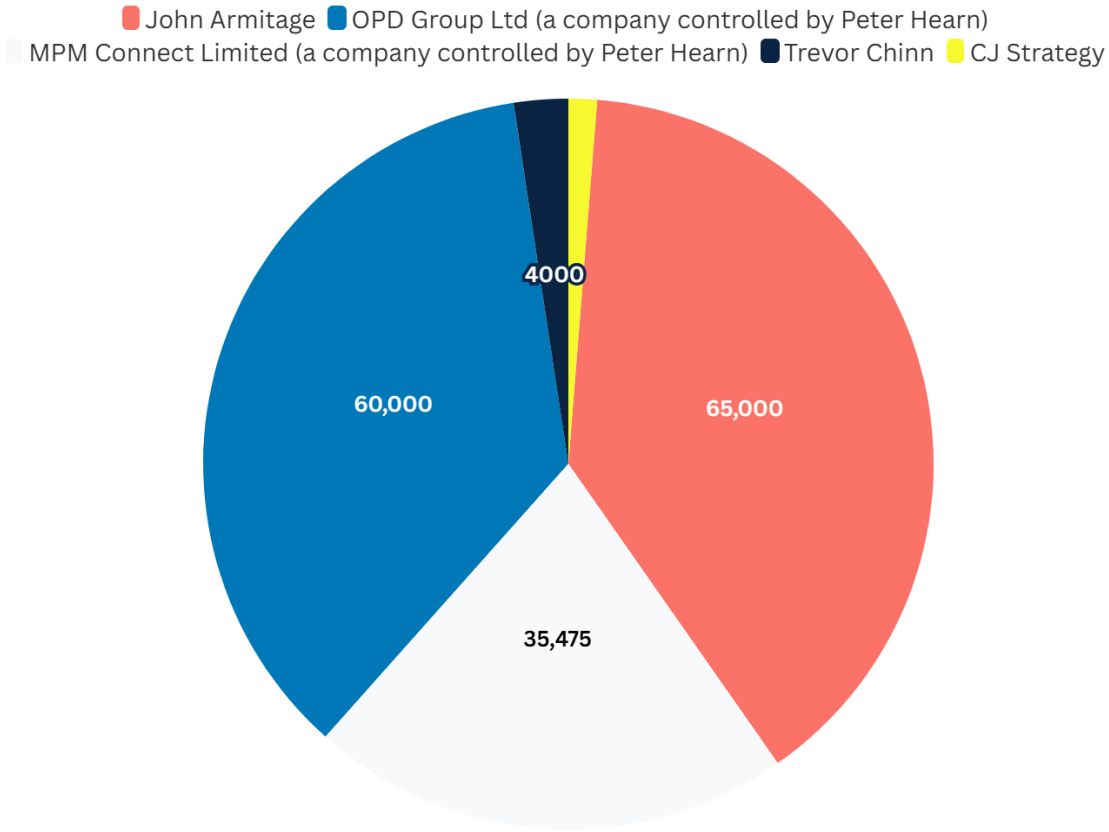
Who is donating to Wes Streeting?



Source: Wes Streeting Donations Total £166,575

Data extracted from the Register of MPs' Interests for 2023-2025

Full details about donations received by Wes Streeting can be found here

The Labour Party received four times as much in donations from donors connected to private healthcare than all other political parties combined, according to our analysis of the MPs' register of financial interests for 2023-2025...

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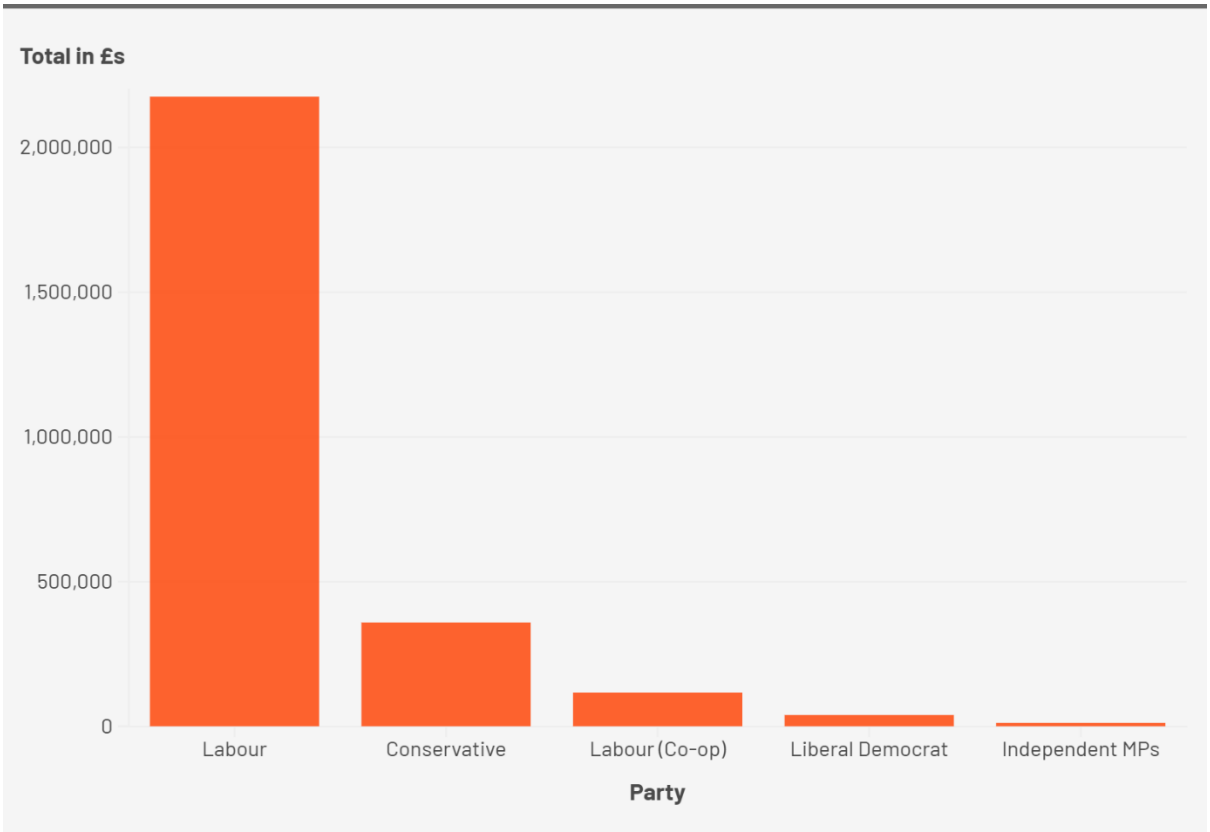
Donations received by MPs from different political parties 2023-2025



Data extracted from the Register of MPs' Interests for 2023-2025

We must ask why this is happening, at a time when the Labour Government has chosen to divert billions more into the private healthcare sector, to enable private companies to carry out yet more NHS work.

Labour Together — an organisation previously run by Keir Starmer's current Chief of Staff, Morgan McSweeney — donated more than £1.4m to Labour candidates ahead of the 2024 General Election. Its biggest funder is Martin Taylor whose hedge fund Crake Asset Management holds over $20m (£15.8m) in shares in United Health, one of the largest private hospital operators in the US and the parent company of UK-based health services firm Optum.

Other major political donors include businessman Trevor Chinn, a senior advisor to private equity firm CVC Capital Partners, which owns stakes in dozens of private healthcare companies across the UK, Europe and Asia.

The links between donors, politicians, and millions invested in private healthcare...

EveryDoctor identified more than a dozen political donors who manage or advise firms with millions of pounds invested in private healthcare, according to our analysis of MPs' financial interests.

Among them is Daniel Luhde-Thompson, an advisor at investment firm Quadrature Capital, who donated £25,000 to four Labour MPs ahead of the general election, along with a further £50,000 to Labour Together. Quadrature Capital has invested more than $200m (£158.7m) in private healthcare firms, according to the investigative outlet Torchlight.

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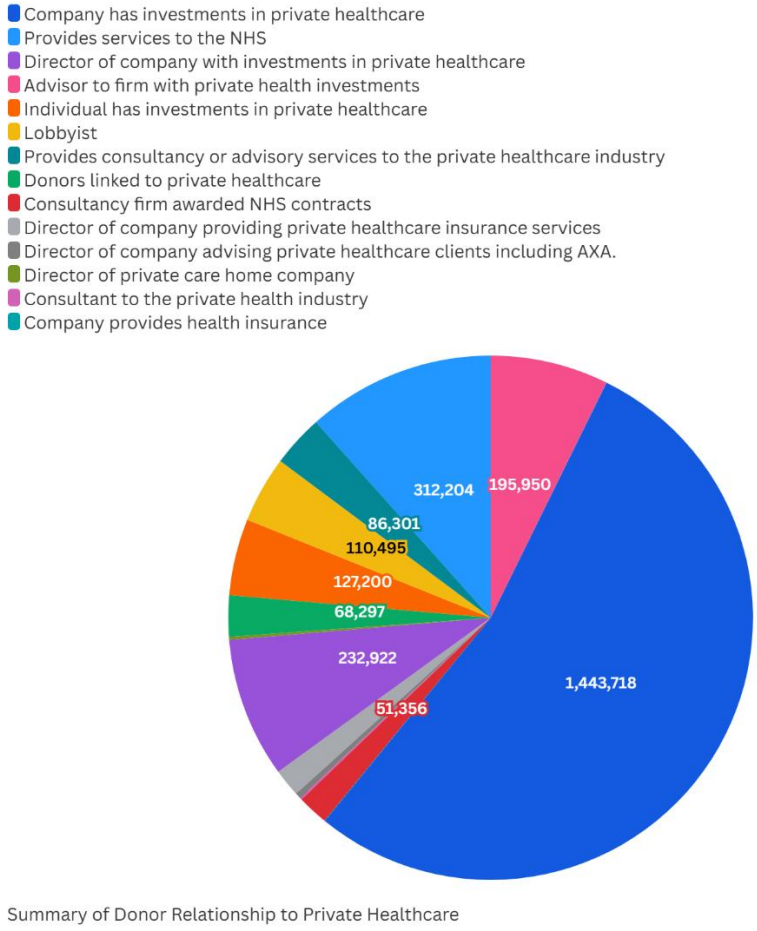
Analysis of the source of all private healthcare related donations for the period 2023-2025



Data extracted from the Register of MPs' Interests for 2023-2025

Wes Streeting, meanwhile, received £65,000 from John Armitage, head of UK investment firm Egerton Capital, which holds hundreds of millions of pounds in US healthcare stocks. Egerton had more than $216m (£169m) invested in the US pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly, and $357m (£280m) in healthcare technology firm GE, according to filings with the US Securities and Exchange Commission published in February.

Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch also received a £40,000 donation from billionaire hedge fund manager Alan Howard, whose firm Brevan Howard Asset Management has invested millions in private healthcare firms including United Health and Cardinal Health.

Richard Fuller, a Conservative MP and Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, holds a second job as an advisory director at the Bahraini venture capital firm Investcorp, which also has significant holdings in the private healthcare sector. The North Bedfordshire MP is paid £25,000 a year for just 15 days' work — equivalent to a full-time salary of over £430,000. Investcorp's portfolio includes Health Management Plus, which provides services to privately run GP practices in the US, as well as several companies operating private hospitals and clinics in India and Germany.

Over £300,000 in donations from companies with NHS contracts

More than £300,000 in donations to MPs came from companies already making money from providing services to the NHS.

They include multimillionaire recruitment tycoon Peter Hearn, who donated £260,304 to several Labour MPs, including Wes Streeting, via two companies he ultimately owns. Hearn made his fortune through recruitment firms PSD and Odgers Berndtson, which has faced criticism over some of the senior executives it has helped place in the health service.

Darren Jones, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, was provided with a free member of staff by management consultancy firm Baringa in the run-up to the 2024 General Election — a donation worth £34,356. Baringa has secured contracts worth more than £6.7m from the Department of Health and Social Care since 2020, including £2.3m for managing NHS Test and Trace during the pandemic which was criticised for being "ineffective" by MPs.

Lobbyists with private healthcare clients have donated to Labour's front bench

MPs received more than £110,000 from lobbyists whose clients have included private healthcare companies. Among them is the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves who accepted a free campaign advisor from political lobbying firm FGS Global between February and May 2024 – a donation-in-kind worth more than £17,000. The firm also funded a further £12,929 of "logistical costs" for Reeves at the Labour Party conference in October 2024.

FGS Global went on to lobby the government on behalf of Optum, the UK subsidiary of US private healthcare group United Health, between July and September 2024, according to the official registrar of consultant lobbyists.

The firm's other clients have included Ernst and Young, which has been criticised for billing the NHS more than £2,000 a day for its consultants, and Accord Healthcare, a UK drug company previously fined for overcharging the NHS.

Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities Bridget Phillipson and Secretary of State for Business and Trade Jonathan Reynolds also accepted a total of £5,900 in sponsorship from lobbying firm Public First for a pre-election media reception. Public First's clients include the Independent Healthcare Providers Network (IHPN), an industry group representing private health firms operating in the UK.

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Why Should We Be Concerned?

When private companies and people linked to the private healthcare sector give donations and benefits to politicians, they might expect something in return. This could lead to:

- More NHS contracts going to private companies
- Less money for public healthcare
- Decisions which benefit profit-making companies instead of NHS patients and hardworking staff.

What Can We Do?

- Pay attention to how money is moving through Westminster.
- Ask our MPs to explain their connections to donors
- Help to build the movement of people who understand what's going on

The NHS belongs to everyone. It was created to provide healthcare based on medical need, not ability to pay. If private healthcare companies gain more influence over our politicians through donations, it puts this fundamental principle at risk. We must ensure that decisions about our health service are made in the interest of public health, not private wealth.

We are building the movement to save the NHS. Please click here if you can donate to support us to do this. There's no time to lose.