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# Roy Lilley's 2009

Our columnist and commentator Roy Lilley takes a personal look at the NHS in 2009

## January

NHS Cooperation & Competition panel started work – no one noticed.  
NHS Constitution was unveiled and most of us put it on a shelf and left it there.

## February

Four London Trust Chief Executives quit – proving what we know already, the job isn't do-able?  
Rose Gibb, the former boss of the Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells started her High Court action.  
The Health Care Commission bit the dust in acrimony over 400 redundancies the chief executive, apparently, knew nothing about?

## March

NHS Yorkshire boss Margaret Edwards suddenly departed and took up the job of national director of productivity and efficiency – what happened, where is she now?

Mid-Staffs FT scandal swamped the news and a row broke out over what Monitor and the HCC did for a day-job?

## April

Sir Ian (*Teflon*) Kennedy quit as HCC boss, having a parting pop at the DH, Patricia Hewett, balancing the books and restructuring.  
Rose Gibb still in court.  
Everyone in the NHS was braced for the budget – in the end it turned out to be just over 2% real terms cut. Everyone cheered up when the NAO reported an upturn in NHS productivity.

## May

Swine-Flu started to wake-up the medal establishment.  
US Republicans described the NHS as 'evil' and 'Orwellian'.

#### May ....cont

David Nicholson put the cat amongst the pigeons when, out of the blue, he came up with a £20bn savings figure. We all asked; where's the back of the envelope with the supporting calculations?

NHS appoints David (Jolly Green Giant) Pencheon as the Carbon clean-up-king; what's happening to the carbon-agenda?

#### June

DH in the grip of swine-flu-fever. The rest of the NHS seemed non-plussed.

Mark (*World-Class-just-havin'-a-larf*) Britnell jumped ship to a private firm of consultants.

Andrew Lansley (*the Tory's first-aid monitor*) promised a Tory government would increase NHS spending in real terms after 2011 and dump targets.

Labour joined the bidding war and promised to turn targets into 'rights'.

#### July

Nicholson's £20bn started to dawn on people and pay cuts and freezes became the fashionable chatter.

The BMA had their hand in the DH money bag, right up to the arm-pits and swine-flu became a nice little earner for GPs.

Health Secretary (*I'd rather be at Culture and Sport*) Burnham wanted powers to close dodgy FTs. Monitor sulked and later left the building.

#### August

The NHS went on holiday and the Tories surged in the Polls.

#### September

McKinsey (commissioned by the departed Britnell) came up with 12 sensible. Eye-wateringly stringent, ideas on how the NHS

could save money – the DH had a fit and Ministers broke Olympic sprint records running in the opposite direction.

#### October

Party Conference season. Lansley promised to slash back-office costs by £4.4bn. Presumably the '.4' bit is to make it look like they have really worked this out! All the parties hopped from foot-to-foot on the funding 'thing'.

The DH primary care Tsar, David (*can somebody get me a taxi*) Colin-Thomé said Practice Based Commissioning was dead.

#### November

The Care Quality Commission sprang into life; ticked the boxes and counted the dead at Basildon & Thurrock.

Dr Foster produced data that made the CQC look flat-footed and their boss, Baroness (*Bewildered*) Young quit after a row with Andy Burnham.

#### December

Burnham's policy document Good-to-Great turned out to be more; What-to-Where? The *pre*Budget Review shoved the NHS, collectively, to the edge of the cliff.

Andy Burnham seemed to be saying the NHS would run Social Services or maybe the other way around?

Is Rose Gibb still in Court?

In what could prove a key test case of the health secretary's NHS preferred provider status policy, the NHS Partners Network, which represents private providers of NHS care, and the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations, have woken-up the NHS's Co-operation and Competition Panel and shouted foul!