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Our NHS is in crisis. Hospitals are in deficit. General practice is in crisis. We cannot recruit, we cannot keep GPs. In parts of Northern England half the training courses are unfilled.

There are a growing number of campaigns around the country defending local services as well as national campaigns to raise awareness and exert political pressure for change. We have had some successes. For example, the success of our campaign in Lewisham. But many setbacks. Because it's been difficult to translate the obvious public support for the NHS into action to defend it. Partly because the NHS still seems to be coping. Given the huge pressures on the NHS that is amazing and entirely due to the millions of hours of extra unpaid work that NHS staff do each year.

Something is changing; the cracks are starting to show. This has erupted in the most unlikely of places – the medical profession. This is usually conservative. Yet now a whole generation of young doctors is realising that we have to act together. And we have the attack on the bursaries for nursing and other NHS students – and they are taking spontaneous action to defend their bursaries.

The public are supporting the nurses and the doctors and the other staff. They understand that it is vital for the NHS to recruit and retain good-quality staff and that such staff can only give of their best when they have time for patients, they are well trained, happy in their work.

I have been a GP for 28 years. I know how important it is to make and reinforce the links between all sections of society who have an interest in securing the future of the NHS as a public service. It's not always easy to achieve that synergy.

But seeing the way the public has been supporting the doctors has been so uplifting and shows just what can be achieved when people realise we have common cause and shared goals. We have got to do all of that. We have got to come together work together and that will give us the best chance of winning together.