

Response To BBC Panorama

By Eileen Chubb©

We watched the Southern Cross scandal unfold, we saw first-hand the suffering of residents and struggling staff because we were visiting Southern Cross care homes at the time. See [tales of The Uninspected](#)

Those who asset stripped Southern Cross got out with millions in their pockets, some went on to set up new care home company's and the same foreseeable pattern resulting in avoidable human suffering started all over again.

If I were making a documentary, I would have dug into the BBC archives and found the repeated assurances that Government gave at the time, namely that a scandal like Southern Cross would never happen again.

Within months of Southern Cross collapsing the same asset stripping, private equity profiteering was already in motion in numerous new companies, some individuals directly involved in the collapse of Southern Cross bought up former Southern Cross homes cheap.

Last night on Panorama we saw Jeremy Hunt, saying how shocked he was, this charity has written hundreds of letters to Governments highlighting these issues, including to Jeremy Hunt. Our care home inspection reports were sent to successive Governments.

Does Jeremy Hunt really believe that he can control what Private companies do with their profits? He could not be more wrong, there is only one way to control how much money is paid for care and what standard of care that money buys in return, that is to take big business out of care full stop.

Care homes should be a mixture of small family run, good quality care homes and local authority run services. Profit in health and social care does not and will never work.

When care homes are closing down, like the one featured in Panorama last night, the homes should be taken over by local authority's.

Southern Cross at the height of their asset stripping, were applying to the Department of Health for "Dignity Grants" to buy bedsheets for residents. Countless people died in agony from infected bedsores, thirst, were left lying in their own waste, the suffering and neglect was

absolutely shocking. Yet these companies are propped up with public money, are allowed to thrive in profit, but fail in care again and again.

Successive governments think pouring more and more public money into the blackhole of offshore accounts is the answer, it is not.

For many years we have been highlighting the huge profits being made and also being concealed by these companies.

Every time Care England, or the National Care Forum and other such provider representative organisations publicly ask for more and more money, for their allegedly poverty struck care providers; we have been contacted by countless journalists, who have asked us over the years, if we agreed the care sector needed more money, and that all ills were down to the sector being starved of funds. The looks of disbelief when we pointed out huge profits were being made by the bigger companies.

Jeremy Hunt thinks he can tell these companies to declare their profits and channel them into care, this is a delusional belief, the profits are buried so deep it's impossible.

When you hand over a state service to the private sector, you hand over all control. If any service needs to be taken back, its social care.

The privatisation of rail and energy has meant higher prices and lack of investment and that has caused hardship to so many but in social care lives are being lost.

Every individual who has and continues to make profit from this conveyor belt of misery, we hope that every time they put food or drink into their mouths, that they are reminded of those who waited hours each day, hungry and thirsty for a care worker to come and care for them. Far too many died in agony, emaciated, and covered in pressure sores. Not because staff were bad, but because staffing levels were too low to provide the care.

There are many good staff working for bad care companies, we have seen this every day. Good staff are also being lost from this industry, forced out for whistleblowing, or just broken by being asked to do the impossible. This is an industry of extremes, that balks at paying even a living wage to its care staff whilst sustaining those at the top in obscene profits and luxury; whilst those living in its care homes are fed the cheapest of food and given the minimum of care at best.

We are a charity that tells it like it is, that is always the first to call out the lies that are told, often many years before the truth is known to the public. We are a charity run by former care workers who used their own wages to buy residents decent food in a care home owned by a multi-million, multinational care company, who whilst allegedly being non-profit, still paid its executives millions in bonuses.

If we could have questioned Jeremy Hunt, he would have been challenged on everything he said, we would have asked him why the current Health and Care Bill is opening doors to the privatization of the NHS, which can only end with the same disastrous outcome that privatization has had on Social Care.

Why investigations into poor care are to be kept secret and why they intend to criminalize anyone who speaks out? because these are not the actions of a government that is anti-poor care, that really learns lessons from the disastrous privatization of Social Care. This is a government where everything is about money, and nothing is about people.

Many feel increasingly frustrated at the style of journalism that lets politicians say what ever they want and never challenges them at all.

We would say to those Cayman Island profiteers, not one penny of taxpayers money until you publish all bank statements publicly.

If this Government can waste 37 billion on track and trace and think it such an inconsequential amount that it warrants no action to reclaim it; then it can spend 37 billion on buying one closed care home in every local authority area to be used for running a state care service.