



## Dr Morton's

### More Than £5,000 A Year For Your NHS

- English taxpayer pays on average £4,666 per year
- ...and it's set to increase by another £617 by 2020

The average annual cost of the NHS to the English tax payer is set to pass the £5,000 mark by 2020-21, based on figures released today by Dr Morton's – the medical helpline®.

In what may already surprise many who are perhaps under the illusion that the NHS is free, the English tax payer currently pays an average of £4,666 a year, from their taxable income on health services.

By 2020, the newly elected Conservative government has pledged to spend £8 billion more than current spending, which, according to Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt, is £115 billion.

Therefore, when the next election comes around in 2020, the taxpayer will be paying £5,283 per year for NHS services in England, an increase of £617.

The data study comes from Dr Morton's, a new online medical helpline service which is positioning itself as an alternative to NHS111 or the GP's surgery.

*"We calculated the cost to the taxpayer of the NHS from the latest available data because we think most hard working individuals have no yardstick by which to judge the true cost of good healthcare."* said John Wilkes, the CEO of Dr Morton's.

*"Just because the NHS is largely free at the point of delivery does not mean that it is actually free".*

*"We believe many people will be shocked by just how much access to healthcare via the NHS already costs, even though studies have in the past shown that the NHS is very good value compared to other health systems around the world. The logical conclusion is that if you are already paying for it you should use it, but as we already know from both GP surgery waiting time and A&E statistics, the NHS is already buckling under the strain".*

	2015-16	Difference	2020-21
Tax Allowance	£10,600 <sup>1</sup>	+£1,900	£12,500 <sup>2</sup>
Number of Tax Payers	24,648,000 <sup>3</sup>	-1,367,000 <sup>4</sup>	23,281,000
Overall cost of NHS England	£115bn <sup>5</sup>	+£8bn <sup>6</sup>	£123bn
Individual cost to English taxpayer	£4,666 <sup>7</sup>	+£617	£5,283

Over a million people a month seek medical advice by phone by calling the NHS111 helpline with an average call length of almost 15 minutes, but 63 per cent of callers are told that they need to speak to a doctor, which means another phone call and a queue. Dr Morton's is a web-based medical helpline which grants direct access to an experienced GP, by telephone or email, seven days a week. The customer pays only for the time they use and the cost of a first call is never more than £60.

*"We think what patients really want is direct access to a good doctor" added Wilkes. "We are supported by more than 50 of the UK's top doctors who believe there is a better way to deliver primary healthcare. Our aim is to take the stress out of your NHS."*

## ENDS

### Notes for editors:

Dr Morton's – the medical helpline<sup>®</sup> is a service for busy people wanting speedy access to an experienced doctor for confidential reassurance or advice by phone or email. All doctors are UK based and GMC registered. Dr Morton's Limited is regulated by the Care Quality Commission. Because the customer's medical record is collected online before a consultation starts and pops up in front of the doctor when the call starts, no time is wasted and calls typically take less than 5 minutes.

Callers can discuss the health problems that arise in their everyday lives and in most cases avoid the need to join a surgery queue or take time off work.

It aims to take the stress out of the NHS.

When needed, Dr Morton's doctors are able to prescribe for a wide variety of medical issues and arrange for medication to be sent to the customer's door. Dr Morton's is a service for busy people that demand convenience.

### How Dr Morton's figures for the cost of the NHS were calculated:

1. 2015-16 tax allowance available from HMRC at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)
2. The Personal Allowance target of £12,500 first announced in George Osborne's 2015 budget speech at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/chancellor-george-osbornes-budget-2015-speech> gave no timetable but is assumed to be reached before the end of the current government term in 2020-21.
3. Number of tax payers in England in 2015-16 is calculated by Dr Morton's using HMRC data
  - a. from table 2.2 on page 23 of <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-tax-liabilities-statistics-tax-year-2012-to-2013-to-tax-year-2014-to-2015> which reveals 24.9 million tax payers in England in 2014-15;
  - b. adjusted by 292,000 people removed from tax in 2015-16 as a result of the change in personal allowance. The figure of 292,000 for England was calculated by Dr Morton's using a total of 346,000 UK tax payers removed from tax. The English proportion of the UK total was estimated from table 2.2 on pages 23 to 27 of <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-tax-liabilities-statistics-tax-year-2012-to-2013-to-tax-year-2014-to-2015> by calculating the proportion of English tax payers within the sum of all tax payers (at 84.4%) which assumes that the same proportion of English taxpayers were removed. The figure of 346,000 UK tax payers removed is calculated by Dr Morton's using an HMRC figure of 288,000 extracted from page 3 under 'Impact on individuals and households' of an HMRC publication regarding the 2014 budget at [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/293800/TIIN\\_8110\\_income\\_tax\\_personal\\_allowance\\_and\\_basic\\_rate.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/293800/TIIN_8110_income_tax_personal_allowance_and_basic_rate.pdf) when the tax allowance was due to increase by £500 to £10,500. This figure is assumed by Dr Morton's to increase pro rata in the ratio 600/500 when the tax allowance actually increased by £600 to £10,600 in the 2015 budget.
4. The decrease in the number of tax payers in England between 2015-16 and 2020-21 is estimated by Dr Morton's using an HMRC figure from the 2015 budget of 341,000 people in the UK taken out of tax by 2017-18 quoted on page 3 under 'Impact on individuals, households and families' if personal allowances reach £11,000 at [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/413970/TIIN\\_4168\\_income\\_tax\\_personal\\_allowances\\_and\\_basic\\_rate\\_limit.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/413970/TIIN_4168_income_tax_personal_allowances_and_basic_rate_limit.pdf) multiplied by the same 84.4% figure at 3b above to estimate the English proportion of the total using the same previous assumption from 2014-15 HMRC data and arrive at a figure of 287,804 for a £400 increase in personal allowance over 2015-16 from £10,600 to £11,000. This total has been projected by Dr Morton's to 1,367,000 using the ratio of 1,900/400 where the 1,900 is the promised increase in allowance from £10,600 to £12,500.
5. The cost of NHS England at £115bn for 2015-16 is taken from a speech by Jeremy Hunt, which figures are re-quoted regularly by others such as the BBC – see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-30796343>. Responsibility for other NHS health services is devolved to the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish administrations and the additional cost of those services is not included within the figure announced by Jeremy Hunt.

6. The £8bn extra funding was promised by the Conservatives during the election campaign and quoted regularly by others such as the BBC - see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2015-32260220> - and recently reconfirmed in the Queens speech on the opening of Parliament.
7. An immaterial figure of £7, that is well within the expected margin of error from HMRC data reformatted as described by Dr Morton's above, has been deducted by Dr Morton's to produce an accurate result that resonates.
8. Dr Morton's calculation does not take account of more material but unexpected changes in demographics or healthcare costs that may occur if Government or NHS cost saving or other targets are missed.
9. All references to NHS relate to NHS England.