Autumn Statement

Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative)

I warmly thank the Chancellor for investing the extra billions of pounds in our NHS. There is not only extra revenue, but a transformation fund that will transform the NHS into the service that we need for the future. Does he share my concern, however, that our endorsement of the NHS’s forward view—our long-term plan for the NHS—would be put at risk if we handed it over to a Government who had no long-term economic plan to fund it?

George Osborne (The Chancellor of the Exchequer; Tatton, Conservative)

My hon. Friend is right. The transformation fund is an important part of the NHS’s forward view, which has been looked at and endorsed by the Health Committee, which she chairs, the various health charities and the royal colleges. The head of the NHS, Simon Stevens, who drew up that plan, welcomed what we announced at the weekend and travelled with me to Homerton university hospital to explain how the transformation can take place. My hon. Friend is right that it is impossible to have a strong NHS unless we have a strong economy: we are delivering both.

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