

Labour's Wes Streeting witch-hunts UK healthcare workers who oppose Gaza genocide

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19 December 2024

UK Labour government Health Secretary Wes Streeting has launched an attack on National Health Service (NHS) workers who oppose Israel's genocide of the Palestinians, accusing them of antisemitism.

Streeting told the arch right-wing *Telegraph* he will urge medical regulators to "discipline" staff who express "racist or extreme views" using "the conflict in the Middle East as a pretext to attack communities."

Regulators have the power, he noted, "to set conditions that a healthcare professional must work under, suspend them, or strike them entirely from the medical register."

Streeting's filthy attack follows a campaign in the *Telegraph*, *The Times*, the *Jewish Chronicle* and other right-wing media to denounce the healthcare service as a hotbed of antisemitism. In the summer, the *Times* and the *Telegraph* ran the headlines, "Complaints of antisemitism among doctors have soared since October 7" and "Dozens of doctors accused of anti-Semitism".

Both were reporting on figures obtained by the BBC showing 60 medical professionals had been reported to the General Medical Council (GMC) for antisemitism in the four months after October 7, 2023 although the *Times* noted that only 22 of these were even "undergoing 'triage'" to decide "whether a complaint should progress to a full investigation."

The *Telegraph* invited Dave Rich, head of policy at the pro-Israeli Community Security Trust (CST)—also a former member of the anti-Trotskyist Alliance for Workers Liberty who specialises in equating anti-Zionism with antisemitism—to comment, "It is extremely alarming that so many medical professionals appear to have allegedly made anti-Semitic comments or expressed support for [a] terrorist organisation [i.e. Hamas]."

Smuggled away in a single paragraph in the *Times* article was the acknowledgement that "Dr Salman

Waqar, of the British Islamic Medical Association, also told the BBC that while the figures showed an increase in Islamophobic incidents, it was difficult to give an accurate representation of the problem as people were afraid to complain to the regulator."

A month later, the *Jewish Chronicle* attacked the doctors' union the British Medical Association (BMA) conference, which it described as a "vehicle for Jew-hatred". Its "evidence" centred on proposed motions addressing and opposing the Israeli onslaught on Gaza.

In a politically filthy letter sent ahead of the event, Jewish Medical Association leaders Professor David Katz and Dr. Fiona Sim wrote snottily of the world's first livestreamed genocide: "it is clear that there is only one international event that merits medical political activism".

They continued, "Whilst there have always been occasional antisemitic incidents involving doctors and other healthcare professionals, the scale, extent and virulence of these in the past eight months has been extraordinary."

The *Times* picked up the thread again two weeks ago, running "Jewish doctors face rising antisemitism from NHS colleagues". The article refers to "dozens" of incidents since October 7, reporting just two in any detail. One is subheaded "Death threats to children," when the claimed threats had no relation to the NHS or its staff whatsoever. Another subsection is headed, with outrage, "Doctors wear Palestinian symbols".

Although the *Times* did not give details of the number of antisemitism complaints lodged with the GMC, the *Jewish News* did. Between October 7, 2023 and November 19 this year, there were 402 complaints of antisemitism, 350 (nearly 90 percent) of which were "closed at 'triage' stage, or assessment level"; six are still at triage level and 25 are still under investigation.

The large majority of the complaints (376) were made against 98 identifiable doctors, with a further 26 made “against doctors where we have been unable to verify the doctor’s identity on the medical register”.

Many complaints could also refer to the same incident: “For example, if 10 people referred the same post on social media to us, it would count as 10 complaints.” The GMC added that “the data we have provided shows the number of complaints we received about conduct that may relate to antisemitism. This is not a direct indicator that the complaint relates to antisemitic conduct or solely to antisemitic conduct”.

The campaign branding all political opposition to Israel as antisemitism plus the huge percentage of complaints dismissed out of hand suggests that even these small number of incidents should be treated with scepticism.

Streeting nonetheless leapt at the opportunity to denounce “antisemitism in the NHS,” telling the *Times*, “I expect employers and regulators like the General Medical Council, to take action against anyone working in the health service who promotes hatred against Jewish people.”

A few days later, he met with a delegation from the pro-Israeli Board of Deputies, Community Security Trust, Jewish Leadership Council and Jewish Medical Association to discuss the same issue. The health secretary reiterated, “I expect employers and regulators to take action”.

Emboldened by this campaign, the provocateurs Labour Against Antisemitism submitted a complaint to the BMA accusing its president Dr. Mary McCarthy of having “repeatedly amplified” antisemitic posts and created a “hostile environment” for Jewish doctors.

The evidence it provided included reposts of one message on social media referring to the Gaza genocide as “a holocaust” and tweets from the account of Sarah Wilkinson, a pro-Palestine activist and journalist for MENA Uncensored recently subjected to a violent raid by British counter-terror police.

The BMA has immediately caved in to this slander and brought in external investigators. This should stand as a warning to its members. If this is its response to an attack on the union’s president, how far will it go in lining up with Streeting’s attacks on all doctors and nurses?

Healthcare workers must organise their own opposition, together with workers in all sectors—including universities, schools and in local government where the government is cracking down most heavily on opposition to Zionism.

Streeting’s announcement is only the latest in a series of moves to politically police the workforce—and will not be the last.

There is a specific incentive for the Labour government to target medical staff given the respect they are held in society and especially the impact of testimony from those who have volunteered to work in Gaza. British-Palestinian doctor Ghassan Abu-Sittah, for example, has been denied entry to any European Schengen country in an attempt to silence his account. He has faced repeated efforts by pro-Israel groups to suspend him from practice and destroy his career.

Nor will Streeting have missed the usefulness of these threats to his privatisation and “efficiency” campaign against the NHS, which has already seen him attack the workforce as an “obstacle” to “reform”, with a “begging bowl” and “something for nothing” culture.

The health secretary is the perfect point man for this combined offensive: a close political supporter of the Israeli regime and ally of private health corporations.

As detailed by *Declassified UK*, he was the first of Starmer’s cabinet to visit Israel, on a £4,700 trip paid for by the de facto Israeli government lobby group Labour Friends of Israel. And he has received a combined £20,000 from pro-Israel lobbyists Sir Trevor Chinn, Lord Mendelsohn and David Menton.

According to a report in *The National*, based on the register of interests for MPs, Streeting has also been given £60,000 by OPD Group Ltd and £35,475 from another company controlled by OPD head Peter Hearn—who helps private health companies recruit. He accepted £80,000 from John Armitage, a hedge fund manager with more than \$500 million investment in private insurer UnitedHealth.



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