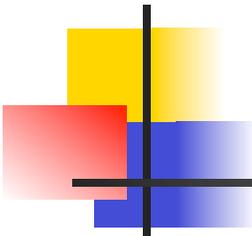


Social Partnership in the UK National Health Service

CRIMT-CIRA Conference

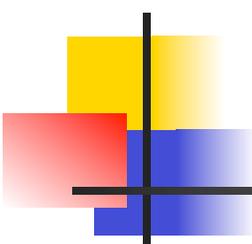
Université Laval

16-18 June 2010



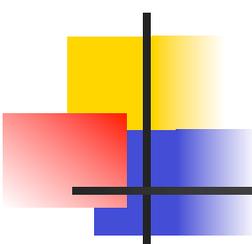
The industrial relations partnership debate: 1997 - 2005

- Context:
 - New Labour 'third way'
 - TUC Partnership Principles
 - American 'mutual gains enterprise' literature
- Union renewal – opportunity, risks
- Bacon & Samuel (2009)
 - 248 formal agreements 1990-2007
 - Accelerated rate of formation, 2000-7
 - Public sector concentration – NHS
 - Union density – professionals
 - Public sector modernisation
- Q: the character of the agreements
 - Multi-level (multi-union), tripartite, bipartite
 - Policy influence; concession 'bargaining'; stalemate



Public sector modernisation: the public management debate

- A Post-New Public Management?
 - Tensions in NPM
 - Third Way political project of centre left
 - New objectives (alongside old)
 - New policy instruments
 - 'soft regulation' ... horizontal networks
 - State: steering, vertically joined up
- New Labour
 - Public expenditure investment (42% GDP 2006)
 - Central government performance management of public service organisations – continuity with 1992-7
 - Treasury's Comprehensive Spending Review, Public Service Agreements

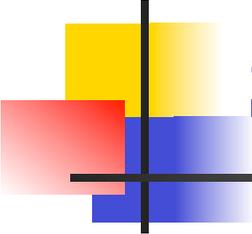


Partnership & NHS modernisation – England

2000-2005: **investment for reform**

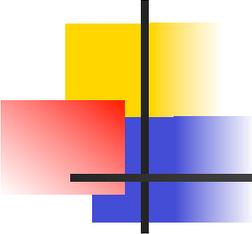
- **Targets & terror**
 - Patient waiting times, HRM, Finance ...
 - HRM – employee involvement & partnership -
 - targets, PAs, unions, centralisation
- **Capacity building**
 - Private finance initiative (PFI, also LIFT); Independent Sector Treatment Centres ... versus union opposition
- **Pay and grading ... and boundary spanning**
 - Agenda for Change – non-medical staff
 - GP contracts, Consultant contracts
- **Choice and Competition**
 - Internal market + external players + tariffs + regulator

Keep Our NHS Public!



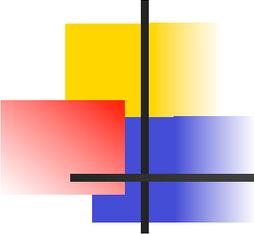
Social Partnership Forum

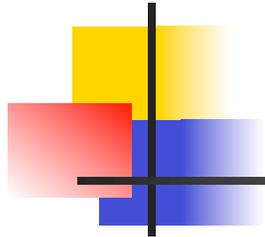
- TUC unions' response on unions' exclusion from policy
 - 2005 Commissioning for a Patient Led NHS
- Government 'efficiency turn' 2005/6
- Revised Social Partnership Forum – 2006/7
 - Tri-partite: 16 unions, NHS Employers, Dept of Health
 - Not the National Stakeholder Forum – policy discussion
 - Secretariat (department of health)
 - Fund
 - Web-site
 - Rules:
 - Discuss workforce implications of policy
 - Roles & responsibilities
 - Minister as Chair
 - Principles of effective working
 - a 'no surprise culture'
 - Benefits – mutual understanding, better NHS services
 - Involvement & Participation Association – Review



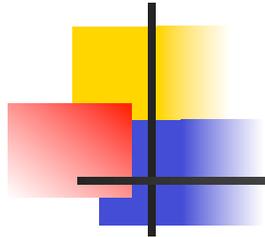
Roles & Character?

- Policy implementation
 - must be 'productive' to become embedded (and safe)
re. national leaderships **RCN, Unison**
 - *Knowledge & Skills Framework*, Agenda for Change
 - Preparing for pandemics
 - Productivity deficit reduction ... but loss of unity
 - Staff passport – mobility in healthcare labour market
- Partnership diffusion: **connectiveness**
 - **Regional** level partnership forums
 - strategic planning – but foundation trusts?
 - 'because it's required' – SHA
 - 'a sop to the unions' – GMB steward
 - **Local**: partnership and workforce engagement

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- Case study trust, 2010
 - Stewards' radicalisation
 - 'we're more comfortable with collective bargaining than partnership'
 - 'the JCNC gets bogged down with matters that should have been dealt with locally ... if there was partnership working'
 - 'managers haven't bought into partnership and as a result we can't buy in'
 - Union capacity issues and 'too many are interested in recruitment not representing'
 - Union representation on the Board, 'but no more rights than are given to the public' (user voice)



- PFI new hospital build
 - Workforce shift: hospital to community
 - Skills dilution on 'the productive ward'
 - Staff attitude survey: mentoring v training & skills
-
- SPF meeting, March (IPA organised): 'the message was all about pulling together through more difficult times'



■ Social Partnership Forum Policy influence?

- NHS preferred supplier status – Dept. of Health, end 2009
- TUC unions within SPF
- Public service industry (PS) = private sector, response ...

... longevity?