

The consequences of deliverology: UK public services

Subject	Publication	Headline	Extracts
1.Educational standards	<p>BBC News website</p> <p>9 October 2013</p> <p>http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-24433320</p>	<p>England's young adults trail world in literacy and maths</p>	<p>Young adults in England have scored among the lowest results in the industrialised world in international literacy and numeracy tests.</p> <p>A major study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows how England's 16 to 24-year-olds are falling behind their Asian and European counterparts.</p> <p>England is 22nd for literacy and 21st for numeracy out of 24 countries.</p> <p>The OECD's Andreas Schleicher warned of a shrinking pool of skilled workers.</p> <p>Unlike other developed countries, the study also showed that young people in England are no better at these tests than older people, in the 55 to 65 age range.</p> <p>When this is weighted with other factors, such as the socio-economic background of people taking the test, it shows that England is the only country in the survey where results are going backwards - with the older cohort better than the younger.</p> <p>The study shows that there are 8.5 million adults in England and Northern Ireland with the numeracy levels of a 10-year-old.</p> <p>The newly-appointed shadow education secretary Tristram Hunt defended Labour's record.</p> <p>"Labour drove up standards in maths and English across our schools, evident in the huge improvements we saw in GCSE results between 1997 and 2010."</p> <p>He said a future Labour government would "ensure all young people study maths and English to 18" and would not allow "unqualified teachers to teach in our classrooms on a</p>

Subject	Publication	Headline	Extracts
			<p>permanent basis".</p> <p>Mr Schleicher says it might suggest evidence of grade inflation and it shows that better qualifications do not necessarily mean better skills.</p> <p>"When you look at this snapshot you do have to conclude that these young people are not any better skilled when it comes to those foundation skills than people in the older generation," he said.</p> <p>He warned of the serious economic implications of a failure to provide a skilled workforce.</p>
1.Educational standards	<p>Warwick Mansell</p> <p>The Guardian, Tuesday 9 June 2009 http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2009/jun/09/14-19-education-further-education</p>	<p>How children became customers</p> <p>The biggest review of 14-19 education in 50 years says corporate values now rule schools.</p>	<p>Richard Pring, professor of educational studies at Oxford and the inquiry's leader, says it is more difficult for rounded qualities to be developed under the current system. He says: "Once performance management takes over, it does begin to narrow the educational experiences on offer, classically through teaching to the test in the pursuit of performance targets." "I suppose many newly trained teachers may just take the language of performance management for granted these days. If you go back 20 years, it would be seen as foolish."</p> <p>Ruth Lea, a former head of policy at the Institute of Directors and an adviser to the Arbutnot Banking Group, says: "The public sector has been administered on a very basic, and misleading, interpretation of how the private sector operates. If you are a salesman, you have sales targets, but if you are in, for example, human resources or legal services, you have a job description and you do it, without targets. Education is not just a matter of turning sausages out of a sausage machine and hitting targets - and that's where it's gone wrong."</p>
1. GCSE performance in London schools	<p>The Guardian 25/8/09 http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2009/aug/25/teachers-choosing-exam-</p>	<p>Are teachers choosing 'easy' exam boards?</p>	<p>But there is evidence that teachers have admitted to "playing the system" by selecting a particular board's version of an exam according to how easy its questions are. They have also made comments that appear to support the view that boards can expect to lose business if they do not start "listening to their customers" and making their exams more straightforward...</p> <p>In April, in evidence to the Commons children, schools and families committee, another</p>

Subject	Publication	Headline	Extracts
	boards-gcse		<p>major exam body appeared to support the view that schools feel under pressure to opt for the easiest exams, as their ranking in league tables depends on them doing well. This was resulting in lower standards. The evidence from Cambridge Assessment said: "Performance tables exert a strong downwards pull on the system – schools actively 'game play' in order to find the easiest route to higher qualifications outcomes."</p> <p>In January, Mike Cresswell, director general of the AQA board, told a London seminar on exam standards: "The choice of examination syllabus is now primarily about making judgments about what will give you the best results." However, teachers were sometimes being given inaccurate information, on the basis of simplistic statistical analyses, on which board was the "easiest". This could then drive them to choose the exams of a board based on bad information.</p> <p>He said: "There is a real risk to educational standards in this country. If these de facto measures of standards are used, they will provide perverse indicators to boards to reduce the standards they set."</p> <p>The pressure on schools to raise their GCSE results, which was already fierce, intensified last year when Ed Balls, the schools secretary, suggested that any secondary with fewer than 30% of its students achieving five or more GCSEs at A*-C including English and maths had to improve or face closure.</p> <p>Tony Gardiner, a past president of the Mathematical Association, says he has heard similar comments to those on the history forum from "dozens" of maths teachers. He says: "If you have high-stakes testing, with league tables and targets, and competing exam boards, this is what happens."</p> <p>Ian McNeilly, director of the National Association for the Teaching of English, says that the phenomenon is also well known in his subject. He says: "Teachers will pick the syllabus they think their pupils will do best with. The boards often compete on how</p>

Subject	Publication	Headline	Extracts
			<p>'accessible' they can make their exams to pupils and their teachers."</p> <p>Martin Stephen, high master of St Paul's school in Barnes, west London, who has criticised league tables as a "cancer on the face of education", says: "There is massive pressure on the boards to reduce their standards."</p> <p>For Professor Alan Smithers, director of the University of Buckingham's centre for education and employment research, the revelations help to persuade him of the merits of replacing competing exam boards with a single awarding body.</p> <p>He says: "The current system encourages boards to compete to make their exams as accessible as possible. That is unhealthy. This makes the case much stronger for a national examination board that could ensure a level playing field, so that each pupil's grades would be directly comparable with those of others."</p>
1. GCSEs	<p>The Times August 25, 2009 Joanna Sugden</p> <p>http://www.timesonline.co.uk/to/life_and_style/education/article6808542.ece</p>	<p>Bright pupils favour new alternatives to the GCSE 'treadmill'</p>	<p>Geoff Parks, director of admissions at the University of Cambridge, said that the current GCSE syllabus is a "treadmill" that does not "allow for originality". "GCSEs are so prescribed — [they] do not stretch young people," he said. "There is a growing feeling that they are not the best use of time."</p>
1.GCSEs	<p>The Cambridge Primary Review – independently funded research into the condition and</p>	<p>Children, their World, their Education A preview summary of the ideas contained in</p>	<p>The Cambridge review of primary education attacked the marginalisation of creativity in schools in favour of literacy and numeracy lessons as "utilitarian and philistine". (quote from Warwick Mansell's Guardian column http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2009/jun/09/14-19-education-further-education)</p> <p>The report contains a careful analysis of the vital matter of educational standards. It finds</p>

Subject	Publication	Headline	Extracts
	future of primary education. October 2009	their final report and recommendations of the Cambridge Primary Review By Robin Alexander et al	the current definition of standards – as test performance in literacy and numeracy, and in those alone – narrow and misleading. Several of the more spectacular assertions (such as that in 1997 English primary education was at a ‘low state’, or that testing of itself drives up standards, or that SATs are the only way to hold schools to account) have little or no basis in evidence.
2.National Literacy Strategy 97-2002 63%-80%	Anthony Seldon March 2010 Pamphlet for the Centre for Policy Studies	An End to Factory Schools http://www.cps.org.uk/cps_catalog/an%20end%20to%20factory%20schools.pdf	Too many state schools in Britain in 2010 have become factories. Results (at least on paper) have improved. But at what cost? Reluctant students are processed through a system which is closely controlled and monitored by the state. No area of public life is more important than education to prepare people to live meaningful, productive and valuable lives. Yet our schools turn out young people who are often incapable of living full and autonomous lives. At the same time, employers condemn students’ lack of academic and personal skills while universities find that the end products of schools can be little more than well-drilled automatons who do not know how to think independently about their academic subjects. Over 50% of employers reported, in mid-2009, that they were unhappy in particular with school leavers’ numeracy and literacy rates (CBI 2009) In 2000, the PISA analysis showed that Britain came 8th for maths, 4th for science and 7th in reading and literacy. By 2006 it had fallen to 24th, 14th and 17th respectively. (PISA 2006: Science Competencies for Tomorrow’s World 2007). In 2009, the number of pupils leaving primary school achieving a ‘level 5’ score in English and Science fell for the second successive year, leading to questions about whether the Government’s literacy and numeracy strategy for primary schools has been the success that has been claimed for it. (ONS, Education and Training Statistics for the United Kingdom: 2009)

Subject	Publication	Headline	Extracts
3. A + E	Independent inquiry into Mid-Staffs Hospital Trust BBC News 24/2/10 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/8531441.stm	Hospital left patients 'sobbing and humiliated'	Hospital patients were left "sobbing and humiliated" by uncaring staff, an investigation into one of the worst NHS scandals in history has found. The independent inquiry led by Robert Francis QC claimed the Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust had become driven by targets and cost-cutting. The report - the latest in a long line of critical reviews - said the distress and suffering had been "unimaginable".
3. A + E	Healthcare Commission Report into Mid-Staffs BBC News 17/3/09 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/staffordshire/7948293.stm	Failing hospital 'caused deaths'	A hospital's "appalling" emergency care resulted in patients dying needlessly, the NHS watchdog has said. About 400 more people died at Stafford Hospital between 2005 and 2008 than would be expected, the Healthcare Commission said. It said there were deficiencies at "virtually every stage" of emergency care and managers pursued targets to the detriment of patient care. It said that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients were "dumped" into a ward near A&E without nursing care so the four-hour A&E waiting time could be met • Unqualified receptionists carried out initial checks on patients arriving at the accident and emergency department • Heart monitors were turned off in the emergency assessment unit because nurses did not know how to use them • There were not enough nurses to provide proper care • The trust's management board did not routinely discuss the quality of care • There was often no experienced surgeon in the hospital during the night

Subject	Publication	Headline	Extracts
3. A + E targets	From The Sunday Times March 28, 2010 http://www.timesonline.co.uk/to l/news/politics/article7078867.e ce	Ambulance ‘waiting rooms’ cost NHS £11m	<p>THE NHS has wasted more than £11m using ambulances as “waiting rooms” to get around Labour’s target that patients should be treated within four hours of entering casualty.</p> <p>New figures reveal the time spent by crews waiting outside hospitals for their patients to be admitted last year was the equivalent to funding 31 fully staffed ambulances to do nothing for 24 hours a day.</p> <p>The statistics released by NHS ambulance trusts show the amount of time ambulances are forced to remain idle is increasing each year. In the first nine months of 2009 the total so-called “dead time” in England reached 284,000 hours — more than the whole of 2007.</p> <p>The four-hour target was introduced in 2004 in an effort to end the scandal of patients left on trolleys overnight waiting to be seen by doctors.</p> <p>However, it has led to hard-pressed casualty departments refusing to admit patients until they can be sure they can be seen within the four-hour limit. Waits of more than two hours occur in hundreds of cases each year.</p> <p>Mike Penning, a shadow health minister, said: “It is a scandal that desperately needed frontline paramedics are trapped at hospitals around the country because of Labour’s fixation with the target culture.</p> <p>“It can’t be right that bureaucracy has taken over from clinicians being able to put patients first, rather than watching the clock. Millions of pounds are being wasted and patients are suffering.”</p> <p>The Conservatives have promised to slash the number of NHS targets and hand more power to doctors.</p>

Subject	Publication	Headline	Extracts
			<p>A Department of Health spokesman insisted that delays should not occur. He said: "The four-hour clock starts counting down once an ambulance transfers a patients to A&E or 15 minutes after the ambulance arrives, whichever is sooner."</p>
<p>3. A + E 4 hour target</p>	<p>The Daily Telegraph 14/7/09</p>	<p>http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/5820301/Patients-being-hurried-through-casualty-departments.html</p>	<p>The inquiry into "appalling standards of care" at Mid-Staffordshire Hospitals Trust found that patients were being moved from A & E units before they were properly assessed because of pressure to hit a Government-set target to treat them within four hours. But new statistics suggest that other hospitals are also hurrying patients though casualty departments.</p> <p>Many show large spikes in the numbers leaving A&E after three hours and 40 minutes.</p> <p>The figures, obtained by the Liberal Democrats, show that 16 hospitals across England had higher spikes than Mid-Staffordshire last year in the minutes before the target was due to be missed. At a handful of hospitals more than one in every five patients left casualty in the 20 minutes before the target was due. At 20 hospitals, more than 15 per cent of patients left A&E during that period.</p> <p>A report by the Healthcare Commission highlighted concern that one of the factors which could have led to deaths was the pressure put on doctors to meet the four-hour target. The investigation into the deaths, between 2005 and 2008, found that doctors were diverted from treating seriously ill patients to attend to minor injuries to ensure that the Trust did not miss the Government-set target.</p> <p>The report also found that doctors were put under pressure to make decisions quickly and that some patients were not properly assessed before they were moved. The health watchdog also found a lack of staff, poorly trained nurses and receptionists expected to assess of a patient's condition was serious, all of which it said could have contributed to the high number of deaths.</p> <p>Norman Lamb, the Liberal Democrat health spokesman, said: "The investigation into the tragic events at Mid-Staffordshire highlighted the danger that the Government's obsession</p>

Subject	Publication	Headline	Extracts
			<p>with targets can cause to patient safety. Ministers claim that the tragic events at Mid Staffordshire were a one-off due to poor local management. But these figures suggest a widespread problem which must now be investigated. The Government must admit that its obsession with targets is putting doctors and nurses under impossible pressure and patients' lives at risk. Patient safety should be the top priority for the NHS, not hitting targets."</p> <p>The Lib Dems asked hospitals how many patients had left casualty wards and at what time between 2008 and 2009. The party received responses from 79 hospitals under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act.</p>
3. A + E 4 hour target	<p>The Daily Telegraph 19/11/09</p> <p>http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/6596523/Patients-admitted-to-hospital-to-meet-targets.html</p>	<p>Patients admitted to hospital to meet targets</p>	<p>Hospitals have to admit or discharge A&E patients within four hours of their arrival and figures have revealed a rush in final the ten minutes before the patients breach the deadline. Patients are three times more likely to be admitted to a hospital bed in the last ten minutes of the four-hour wait than over the period as a whole, the figures show.</p> <p>For the first time the NHS Information Centre has broken down what happens to emergency patients in the four hour waiting period into ten minute slots. It reveals more patients are seen in the last ten minutes than any other slot and two thirds of the patients dealt with in the final minutes are admitted to a bed compared with one fifth over the whole period.</p> <p>Officials said patients are being treated faster than ever before and the majority treated within three hours.</p> <p>However critics said the target is distorting clinical decisions with patients sent to wards just to get them out of the A&E department regardless of whether their condition requires admission.</p>
3. A + E 4 hour target	<p>The Observer, Sunday 22 March 2009 Simon Caulkin</p>	<p>This isn't an abstract problem. Targets can kill</p>	<p>MRSA, Baby P, now Stafford hospital. The Health Commission's finding last week that pursuing targets to the detriment of patient care may have caused the deaths of 400 people at Stafford between 2005 and 2008 simply confirms what we already know. Put abstractly, targets distort judgment, disenfranchise professionals and wreck morale. Put concretely, in services where lives are at stake - as in the NHS or child protection - targets kill.</p>

Subject	Publication	Headline	Extracts
3. A + E 4 hour target	<p data-bbox="394 233 611 336">Simon Caulkin, management editor</p> <p data-bbox="394 384 584 488">The Observer, Sunday 10 February 2008</p> <p data-bbox="394 536 611 703">http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2008/feb/10/businesscomment1</p>	The rule is simple: be careful what you measure	<p data-bbox="925 233 2103 600">What happens when bad measures drive out good is strikingly described in an article in the current Economic Journal. Investigating the effects of competition in the NHS, Carol Propper and her colleagues made an extraordinary discovery. Under competition, hospitals improved their patient waiting times. At the same time, the death-rate following emergency heart-attack admissions substantially increased. Why? As targets, waiting times were and are measured (and what gets measured gets managed, right?). Emergency heart-attack deaths were not tracked and therefore not managed. Even though no one would argue that the trade-off - shorter waiting times but more deaths - was anything but a travesty of NHS purpose, that's what the choice of measure produced.</p> <p data-bbox="925 647 2103 783">As the paper observes: 'It seems unlikely that hospitals deliberately set out to decrease survival rates. What is more likely is that in response to competitive pressures on costs, hospitals cut services that affected [heart-attack] mortality rates, which were unobserved, in order to increase other activities which buyers could better observe.'</p> <p data-bbox="925 831 2103 1118">In other words, what gets measured, matters. Measures set up incentives that drive people's behaviour. And woe to the organisation when that behaviour is at odds with its purpose. Imagine the cost to NHS morale (one of Deming's unknown and unknowable figures) of the knowledge that managing to the measure resulted in more deaths - the grotesque opposite of its aims. Hospitals are the extreme example of a general case. As such, they allow us a definitive rephrasing of our least favourite management mantra. What gets measured gets managed - so be sure you have the right measures, because the wrong ones kill.</p> <p data-bbox="925 1166 958 1190">---</p> <p data-bbox="925 1198 2103 1377">The paper says that the level of extra deaths were outweighing the claimed waiting time gains over time by a ratio of 3:1. (Propper C, Burgess S and Gossage D 2008 'Competition and Quality: Evidence from the NHS Internal Market 1991-9' The Economic Journal Volume 118 Issue 525, Pages 138 - 170)</p>

Subject	Publication	Headline	Extracts
3. A and E (and health more generally)	14 April 2009 By Graham Clews Nursing Times http://www.nursingtimes.net/whats-new-in-nursing/management/nhs-stress-driving-up-nurse-sick-leave-levels/5000401.article	NHS stress driving up nurse sick leave levels	<p>NHS staff are almost four times as likely to be absent from work with stress as people with other occupations, and nurses are the most stressed of all, <i>Nursing Times</i> can reveal.</p> <p>Workforce data on 30,000 staff working across 17 NHS trusts shows stress and associated psychiatric problems accounted for as much as 15% of all days lost due to sickness absence in 2008.</p> <p>This compares with 4% of days lost in the same year due to stress among 40,000 staff, working across a range of other occupations –in both the public and private sector – including education, manufacturing, retail and local government.</p>
4. Rail Punctuality	Rail News 27/5/09 http://www.railnews.co.uk/news/business/2009/05/27-nr-punctuality-virgin.html	Network Rail’s claim of ‘record punctuality’ runs into criticism	<p>An announcement by Network Rail that passengers last year “enjoyed the best train punctuality ever recorded on Britain's railways” has been met with criticism — and an official complaint to the Office of Rail Regulation by Virgin Trains</p> <p>Network Rail’s statement said that in 2008 90.6 per cent of trains “arrived on time” — the highest number since records began in 1992. The company added that April 2009 was a record month in its own right with 93.5 per cent of trains arriving on time over the course of the month — “the highest ever recorded.”</p> <p>Among those quick to criticise the statement was Liberal Democrat Shadow Transport Secretary Norman Baker, who warned passengers “not to be hoodwinked.”</p> <p>He said: “The industry considers that anything up to five minutes late, and in some cases even 10 minutes, is still on time. Many passengers will have a different view.”</p>

Subject	Publication	Headline	Extracts
			<p>Figures released to the Liberal Democrats earlier this year by the Association of Train Operating Companies had shown that between January 2008 and January 2009:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More than 21,000 trains were more than half an hour late - Almost 3,000 trains were more than one hour late - 144,000 trains were either completely or partially cancelled - In total, trains were delayed for almost 100,000 hours <p>Mr Baker added: "It's not good enough to simply record that half a million trains were within five minutes of their schedule. On time should mean on time."</p> <p>Gerry Doherty, general secretary of the Transport Salaried Staffs Association, described Network Rail's figures as "just spin and poppycock."</p> <p>He added: "They do not begin to compare with the old British Rail (BR) figures before privatisation in 1996. The old InterCity services regularly reported punctuality figures of 92 per cent and the biggest part of BR, Southern, regularly reported figures of 95 per cent during the early 1990s."</p>
5. Crime and Policing	<p>The Guardian 19/11/2013</p> <p>http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2013/nov/19/police-failures-rape-child-abuse-official-statistics</p>	<p>Police fail to investigate rapes and child abuse, Commons committee is told</p>	<p>Police are failing to investigate some of the most serious crimes, including rapes and sexual abuse of children, in an attempt to massage official statistics, a parliamentary committee was told.</p> <p>MPs on the Commons public administration committee heard evidence from past and present officers who claimed the fiddling of crime figures was done to boost apparent performance. Former West Midlands chief inspector Dr Rodger Patrick said the failure to investigate serious allegations properly had catastrophic consequences: "I highlighted this issue in relation to incidents involving domestic violence and child protection, child abuse, but the incidents weren't recorded and investigated and subsequently this led to homicide. "That is the extreme end of the risk that people are taking. It isn't just about fudging the figures to keep everybody happy – there are really serious consequences of this behaviour."</p>