

## - News Release -



# Saatchi Bill carries a huge threat to patient safety, warns The Patient Association

The proposed Medical Innovation Bill being debated in the Lords carries a huge risk to patient safety and should not be passed into law, the Patients Association warns today.

The Bill, sponsored by Lord Saatchi, receives its Second Reading tomorrow. It aims to allow patients access to early stage drugs that have not yet been approved.

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**The Patients Association is an independent national health and social care charity established over 50 years ago and has a long history of campaigning to ensure that the voice of patients is heard within the Health and Social care system.**

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The Patients Association is concerned that drugs which have only been tried on a few hundred people – and which may go on to fail large scale tests – could put patients at risk.

The Association is also worried about issued of informed consent – especially if critically ill patients or their relatives are desperate for any chance of hope. It is also worried about the distribution of such unproven medicines – some needy patients may receive them, but others may not.

**Katherine Murphy, Chief Executive of The Patients Association, said:**

The Bill is a huge threat to patient safety. It is aimed at solving a problem that doesn't exist.

We applaud and encourage medical innovation, but giving untested drugs to critically ill people is not the way forward. People in their most vulnerable state are not in a

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position to give fully informed consent. There is a danger relatives will badger the patient into having the treatment whatever the risks or the damaging side-effects.

It is possible that some gung-ho doctors will want to use dying patients as guinea pigs, whereas other doctors will refuse to use the treatments however much patients ask for them. This is not a transparent or equitable way for new treatments to be introduced across the NHS.

### Notes for Editors

1. The Patients Association is a campaigning charity, listening to patients and speaking up for change. It has been working for over 50 years to make sure that the patient voice is heard and listened to by policy makers.
2. For further information please contact the Patients Association on 02084239111 or on [comms@patients-association.com](mailto:comms@patients-association.com).
3. To see more information on the Patients Association visit [www.patients-association.com](http://www.patients-association.com)

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