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Viewpoint...

"Public ownership of health facilities does not in itself guarantee responsiveness, flexibility and high quality of health services, and doubtless a National Health Service will have its own kinds of problems. It can be anticipated that the principal bar to NHS responsiveness and quality would be the creation of a large, centralized bureaucracy to administer the service. It is not a new thought that bureaucracies, especially government bureaucracies, though charged only with implementing policy, tend to make policy. The sluggishness and inertia of large agencies, their tendency to be co-opted or "captured" by lobbyists for special interests, their habit of suppressing new ideas, are problems which must be confronted in the design of a National Health Service. The active involvement of consumers in the governance, planning and evaluation of the system--along with decentralization and clear program objectives--is the best preventive medicine for chronic bureaucratitis in a publicly owned health service." From: "Consumers Versus NHS Bureaucratitis." Consumer Health Perspectives 10/78 p.3-4.