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# Ten reasons why the Left should like the ASI, 9: Choice [1]

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The Left ought to support our campaigns to put power over these services into the hands of the people who use them.

Some elements on the Left want the state services used to mould an egalitarian society, but others should side with the ASI in wanting to concentrate instead on improving those services in line with the needs and wishes of their users. The ASI views the centrally-planned top-down model as unsatisfactory and unresponsive, in that it delivers what its administrators think should be provided. The ASI instead has advocated and backed reforms that have state services responding instead to the choices made by recipients. Patients should have choices over where they are treated and, in consultation with their doctors, over which treatments they prefer. Parents should be able to choose which school their child attends. In both cases the state funding should follow from those choices and be directed to the institutions favoured by patients and parents.

Not everyone is equally equipped to make such choices, of course, but the ASI thinks that the choices made by those who are informed will lead the way in improving standards generally as others follow their lead. Much the same effect happens in the production of private goods and services; it is the informed customers who improve the goods and services for everyone else as suppliers try to attract them.

This introduction of choice to allocate state funding is not only a superior model in theory. It works in practice in some of the Scandinavian countries in both health and education, and succeeds there in raising standards as well as consistently attracting high levels of popular satisfaction.

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