

McDonald, Diarmaid

Just Treatment, UK

**Diarmaid McDonald**

[/from justtreatment.org/people/diarmaid/](https://fromjusttreatment.org/people/diarmaid/) /

I've worked on access to medicines issues for many years, focused on global HIV. Over recent years I've become increasingly interested in the impact of the pharmaceutical industry on the NHS.

I got Just Treatment started and I'm now working with Wiz and our leader group to build support for a total rethink in how we develop and sell medicines. I believe these changes are essential to the future of the NHS as we know it.

[/from Just Treatment - Diarmaid Story/](#)

For many years I've worked with allies across the world to ensure everyone living with HIV can access the best possible treatment and care. A huge part of that fight has been the battle against the pharmaceutical companies who wanted to defend their profits rather than allow affordable versions of their medicines to be made available to the millions who need them.

With over 18 million people now alive thanks to medicines that cost less than £100 rather than £10,000 we've made great progress on HIV. But it has become increasingly clear that the problems have not gone away - high prices of medicines for cancer, hepatitis and many other conditions are not only unaffordable in the developing world, they are too expensive for rich countries like the UK.

/from: <http://campaignlab.org.uk/person/diarmaid-mcdonald/> /

I'm from Armagh in Northern Ireland, but went to uni in Lancaster. After graduating in advertising, and having realised I never wanted to work in advertising, I spent 18 months working on HIV projects in Tanzania and then Ethiopia. I learnt more than I achieved and came back keen to tackle the systemic causes of the poverty I'd witnessed – in particular the trade laws that prevented access to life-saving HIV medicines. I interned at People & Planet and a few other organisations before getting a job with the STOPAIDS coalition, first leading the student campaign network and then coordinating their campaigning and advocacy with a focus on access to medicines. Over recent years it's become increasingly clear that the profit-driven pharmaceutical industry model is not only undermining the AIDS response and the right to health across the developing world, it is threatening the health of everyone, and the future of the NHS. I'm now working with others to build a campaign in the UK to challenge the pharmaceutical companies, end the current medical R&D model and replace it with a publicly funded, health needs driven system. I also like cycling and bad dancing.

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