Twitter Thread by The Citizens

The Citizens
@allthecitizens

Last night @allthecitizens found a 1/3rd billion gov contract won by a company linked to Conservative donor Lord Ashcroft.

£350m Covid19 award goes to company run by Impellam, where former Tory treasurer has 'significant interest'. THREAD:



Recruitment firm Medacs Healthcare won the 17 Dec contract to "support medical and clinical services in laboratories" & assist "national testing programme in response to Covid-19". It's the 3rd largest Covid-related single award seen by @allthecitizens https://t.co/WjCQXuhTfA

Managed service provision of workers to support the national testing Programme.

Department of Health and Social Care
Published date: 19 January 2021

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Closing: 18 December 2020, 12am

Awarded opportunity - This means that the contract has been awarded to a supplier.

Contract summary

Industry

- Supply services of medical personnel - 79625000

Location of contract

SW1H 0EU

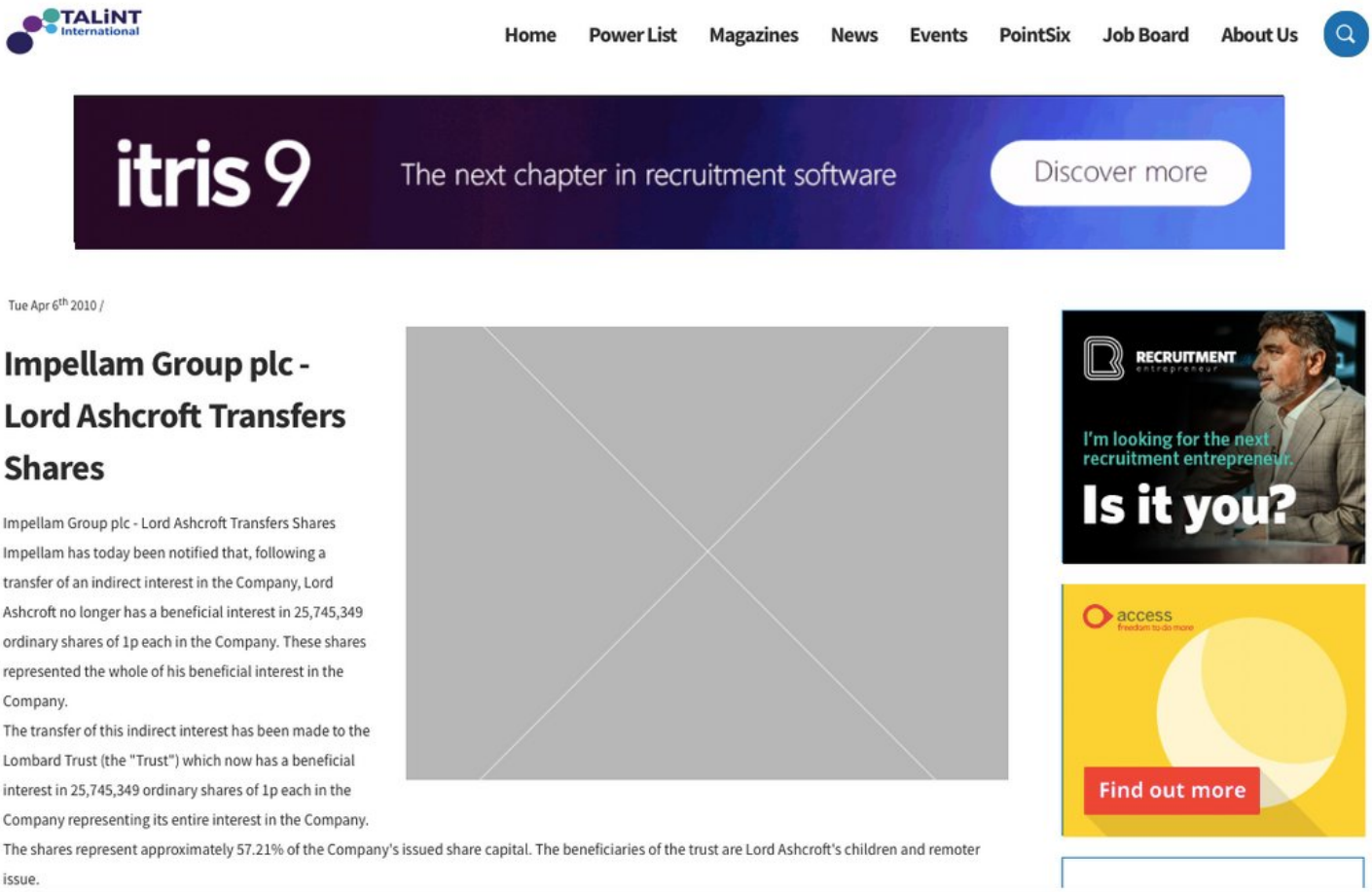
Value of contract

£350,402,831

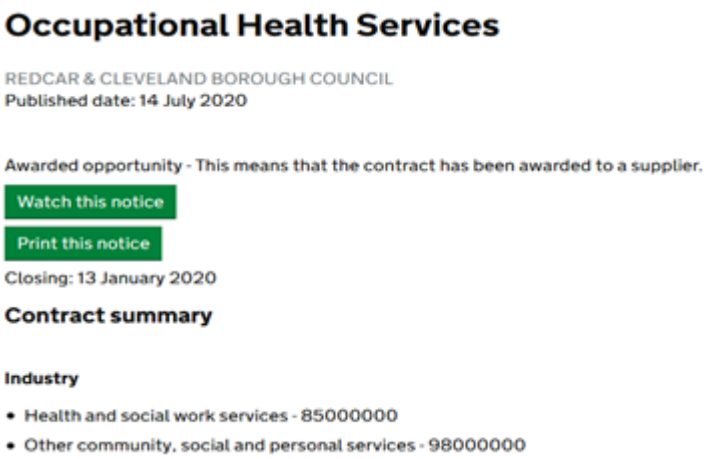
Medacs Healthcare is part of the Medacs Global Group, owned by parent company 'Impellam Group'. Impellam's main shareholder & Chairman is Conservative donor Michael Ashcroft. He's donated £176,104 to the Tories since the pandemic began and £851,029 since 2001.

Click for more details	Entity Name	Register	Campaigning name	Entity Type	Value	Accepted date ↑	Rec'd by (AU)	Donor name	Reported under 62:12	Is sponsorship	Donor status
C0522736	Conservative and Unionist Party	Great Britain		Political Party	£9,854.00	11/08/2020	Central Party	Lord Michael Anthony Ashcroft			Individual
C0501128	Conservative and Unionist Party	Great Britain		Political Party	£50,000.00	18/02/2020	Central Party	Lord Michael Anthony Ashcroft			Individual
C0501138	Conservative and Unionist Party	Great Britain		Political Party	£4,250.00	03/02/2020	Central Party	Lord Michael Anthony Ashcroft			Individual
C0501917	Shaun Bailey	Great Britain		Regulated Donee	£100,000.00	03/02/2020		Lord Michael Ashcroft			Individual
C0501129	Conservative and Unionist Party	Great Britain		Political Party	£12,000.00	03/02/2020	Central Party	Lord Michael Anthony Ashcroft			Individual

Lord Ashcroft is listed as having ‘significant influence’ over Impellam. In addition, 56% is owned by the Lombard Trust. In 2010, Ashcroft transferred the 26m shares he held in Impellam to the Lombard Trust; the beneficiaries are his children. https://t.co/Z8gcdRpwKz



Medacs Healthcare is majority owned by Medacs Global Group, which is majority owned by Impellam Group. Medacs Healthcare has also won other Covid contracts: £357,830 on 2 smaller awards to supply temporary health personnel and also was part of two large group contracts.



The £1/3rd billion contract is by far the largest single contract awarded to Medacs in 5 years. Since Aug 2015, Medacs has won at least 29 NHS and care contracts; 20 were high-value group awards (but only one of these group awards exceeds the £350m single issue contract).

Medacs claim to be “the largest provider of on-framework locum doctors to the NHS”. In 2019 they reported a turnover of £89.6m, with £3.6m profits declared.

Medacs Healthcare plc

Strategic Report for the 52 weeks ended 3 January 2020

The directors present their strategic report for the 52 weeks ended 3 January 2020.

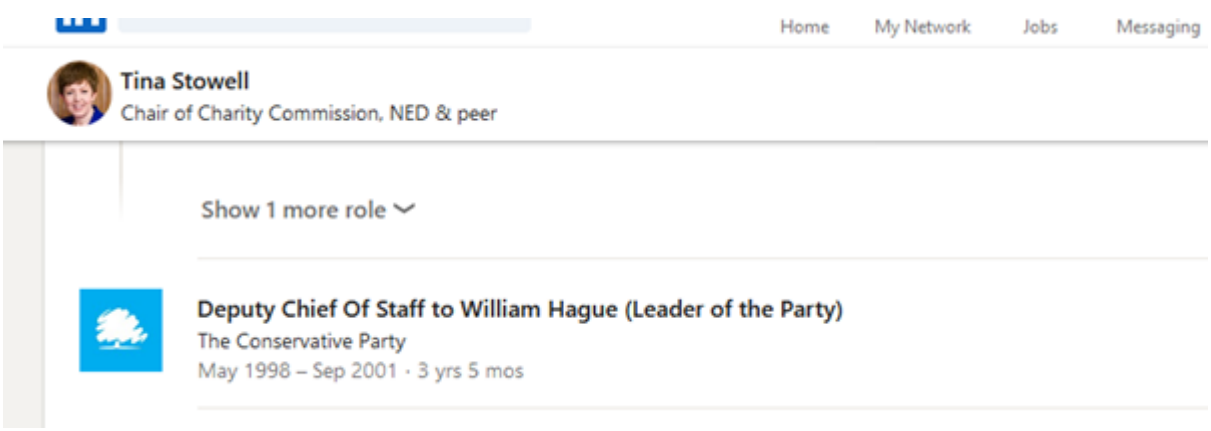
Fair review of the business

The company's key financial and other performance indicators during the period were as follows:

	52 weeks 3 January 2020 £000s	(As restated) 53 weeks 4 January 2019 £000s	Change %
Turnover	89,630	90,713	(1.2)
Gross Profit	20,893	20,825	0.3
Administrative expenses	(17,270)	(20,331)	(15.1)
Operating profit	3,623	494	633.4
Gross profit percentage (%)	23.3	23.0	
Conversion rate (%) (Operating profit to Gross profit)	17.3	2.4	
Permanent fees as a % of Group profit	12.8	7.8	

The company reported revenues of £89.6m which was a reduction of 1.2% on 2018. The reduction in revenues continues to reflect the combination of the roll out of Direct Engagement schemes across the Healthcare market (where only agency fees being billed) and a continued focus on the reduction in agency spend across the NHS as a growing number of Trusts look to internal Staff Banks to fill their temporary staffing. Despite these pressures, operating profit has continued to improve and reflects changes in the business to support evolving priorities within the NHS. The improving operating profit in 2019 is facilitated by targeted investment in the business. This is to ensure a ‘fighting fit’ organisation moving forward and is a result of the director's continued confidence in the market in the coming years. Work is focused on developing products and the organisation to provide high quality opportunities for candidates and workers in the UK and overseas, as well as extending the scope of its Managed Services to enable clients to continue providing high quality care within the current fiscal environment.

Their owner, Impellam, lists among it’s directors Conservative peer Baroness Tina Stowell of Beeston. She once was Deputy Chief of Staff for William Hague when he was Leader of the Conservative Party, and was Head of Corporate Affairs at the BBC.



Since the beginning of the pandemic, Lord Ashcroft has donated £176,104 to the Conservative party, including £100,000 to their candidate for 2021 London Mayoral election, Shaun Bailey.

Over the past 20 years he has donated £851,029 to the Tories and is amongst the top 10 donors to the Party in recent years. Treasurer of the Conservative Party (1998-2001), his political influence extends today to owning
https://t.co/gEbVzv4wYx
https://t.co/CbV4LVEEJp



Ashcroft has long retained “non-dom” status as a citizen of Belize. In 2017, it was reported that Ashcroft, in the Paradise Papers coverage, had been ‘sheltering his wealth’ in offshore havens.
https://t.co/RUyScRaQuk

An entity called the ‘Lombard Trust’ also appears in the offshore Panama Paper leaks, although as no listed address is given it can’t be confirmed this is the same Lombard as operated by Lord Ashcroft.
https://t.co/snSsiItg9G

In 2020, Ashcroft wrote an open letter to Boris Johnson suggesting the NHS should collectively receive the George Cross for their work battling Covid. He described it as “the best way of rewarding such commitment and public service”.
https://t.co/s1Jd3wEGkF

In 2018, he announced an as-yet-unreleased “no holds barred” book into the NHS. Amazon listed that it sets out to ask the question “how good really is the NHS and can it cope with the formidable challenges it faces?”

Yet the emergency comes at a time when the NHS is under huge strain, draining resources from an already creaking system. Fundamental questions about its state and its future remain. How good really is the NHS and can it cope with the formidable challenges it faces, even without the terrifying new threat of global pandemics?

Every day, millions of patients receive care that is fair, good or outstanding and they are grateful. In keeping with Nye Bevan s founding principles, the same treatment is available to rich and poor, and is free at the point of need. Public support for the concept remains overwhelming. Yet for every positive NHS experience there are negatives: care that is substandard, disjointed and arrives too late; patients dying while on waiting lists and suffering because they cannot get the treatment they need. A cult of secrecy surrounds errors and failings. Politicians on all sides dissemble and lie. This book seeks to strip away the spin and uncover the true state of the NHS: the good, the bad and the ugly. It explores an increasingly urgent question: can the NHS go on like this?

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The contract awarded to Medac appears to be the 3rd largest single UK contract issued yet since the pandemic began. The others were won by Innova Medical Group Plc (£496m) and Primer Design (£406m).

Award information

Awarded date

6 October 2020

Contract start date

6 October 2020

Contract end date

31 December 2020

Total value of contract

£496,080,000

This contract was awarded to **1** supplier.

INNOVA MEDICAL GROUP INC

▶ Show supplier information

Medac's owner, Impellam, operates '14 market-leading brands across 106 locations'. In 2019 it reported an annual revenue of £2,254.8 million.

https://t.co/BoIoJA0QGP

There is no claim Lord Ashcroft, Impellam, Medac or anyone linked to these companies and their subsidiaries have acted illegally in this contract procurement. We do not know if this contract benefited from the ‘VIP fast track lane’ that has been granted to some Covid19 contracts.

.@opendemocracy has also covered this story today. It can be read here: https://t.co/ZFu2jeUZZr

The Department for Health and Social Care spokesperson told them: “As part of our response to this unprecedented global pandemic, we rightly have drawn on the expertise of a number of organisations to support this important work.”

The DHSC went on: “This includes when establishing the largest diagnostic network in British history, and a test and trace system used by tens of millions of people to reduce rates of Coronavirus. Proper due diligence is carried out on all government contracts.”

Lord Ashcroft, Medacs and Impellam have yet to publicly comment.

Does this story concern you? Can you help @allthecitizens reveal more concerning Covid-19 contracts lacking possible due diligence and oversight? If so, please see the thread below to find out how you can help contribute and hold power to account:
https://t.co/uiSKn7wfRv

> We need your help! We\u2019ve looked at 1000+ contracts issued by the UK gov in response to COVID-19. These total \xa311.2+ billion of public money given to private companies. Help us scrutinise and improve the data - viewable here: https://t.co/J9MAiCV2Su
>
> — The Citizens (@allthecitizens) October 23, 2020