

THOUGHT-STARTER: COULD TRANSHUMANISM BE AVAILABLE ON THE NHS?

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Sociologist and author Steve Fuller discusses society's aversion to taking biological risks, and says this must change if we want to make human enhancements available to all.

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Transhumanism, or the idea of optimising the human body through technology, is explored by Fuller in his books that explore the future of humankind. He recently described the potential for such optimisation to be available one day on the NHS.

'In the history of science and technology, there have always been two attitudes that have run together in parallel. One is that we need to experiment and we need to be adventurous [with the human body]. The other attitude – which started at the end of World War II – is that we need to take stock and respect the dignity of human beings,' he explains.

Fuller identifies a constituency of people who are willing to take a risk with their lives, knowing all the uncertainties and knowing possible consequences, but notes that the people who are taking exotic cognitive enhancement drugs are generally well educated or otherwise able to afford such augmentation. But, he notes, that could change.

'[In the future] people could work until 70 or 75. They would be contributing more to the economy and they would not have to rely so much on the health service. You'd be saving money, in the long term, if people were just fitter. Therefore, you could bring in enhancements as part of a strategy to extend working life and to maintain people's health. Enhancements on the NHS could be part of a package where you are working 10 years longer than your parents did.'

Read the full interview [here](#).