

Sixty years of privatizing the NHS

**Martin Powell and Robin Miller
(HSMC, University of Birmingham)**

Introduction

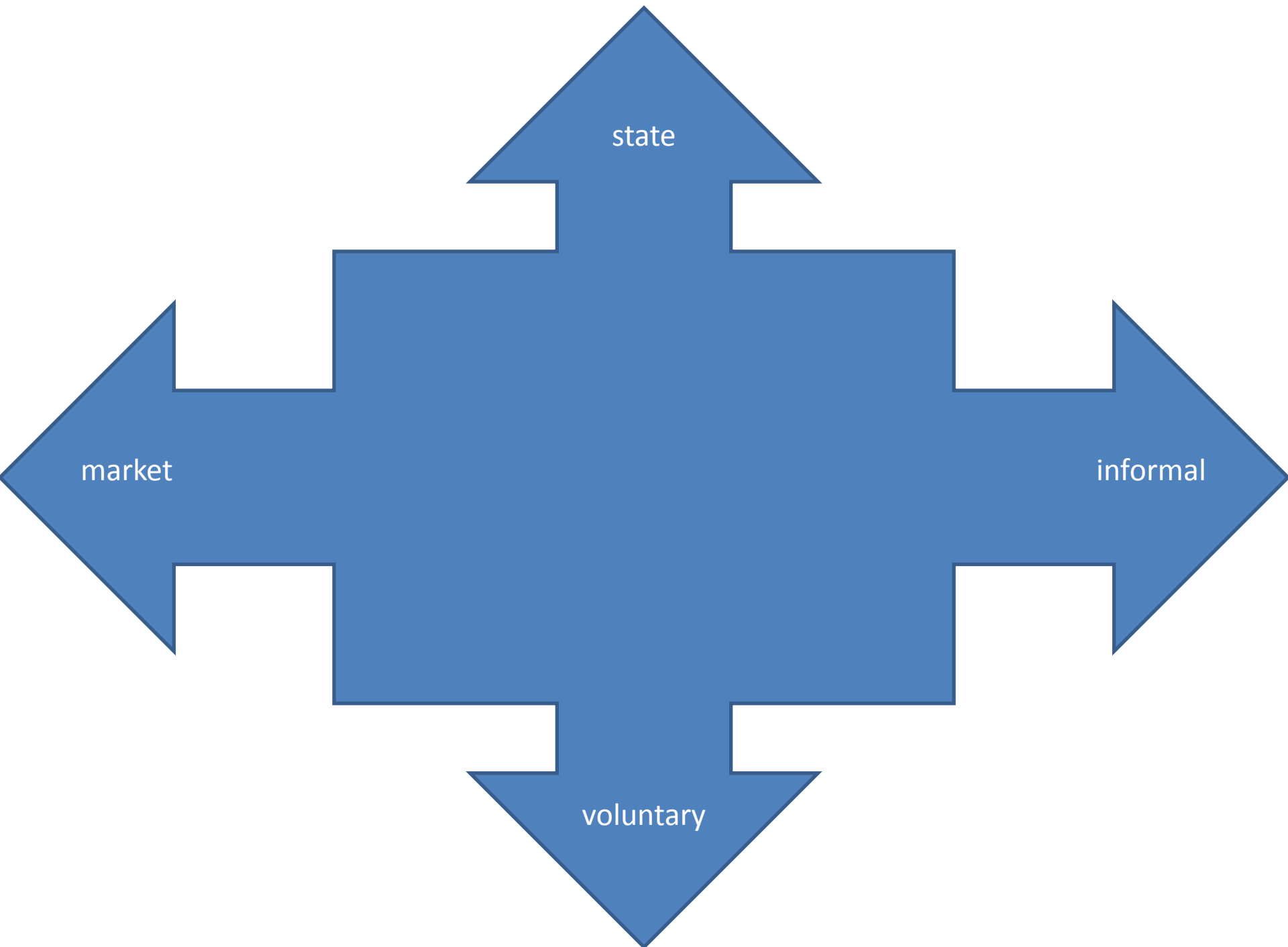
- Recent governments' vision of an increasingly diverse range of providers of health care services have led to accusations of 'privatising the NHS'.
- However, 'privatisation' is a slippery weasel word, and similar claims have been made throughout the NHS' 60 year history.
- This paper examines the conceptual arguments associated with different types of 'privatisation' drawing on the 'mixed economy of welfare' (MEW) literature, and provides an historical exploration of privatisation in the NHS.

Privatisation

- Significant use (over-use?) of the P-word?
- General 'boo word' that lacks definitional and analytical precision.
- Cognate terms: commercialisation, marketisation, re-commodification etc
- Different narrow and broad definitions, non-definitions and implicit definitions.
- Wider issues of 'publicness', public domain, public value, public service motivation etc (not discussed here)

Dimensions: Mixed Economy of Welfare

- One dimensional: provision
- Two Dimensional: provision and finance
- Three dimensional: provision, finance and regulation.
- (Fourth dimension of 'decision' eg Burchardt)



state

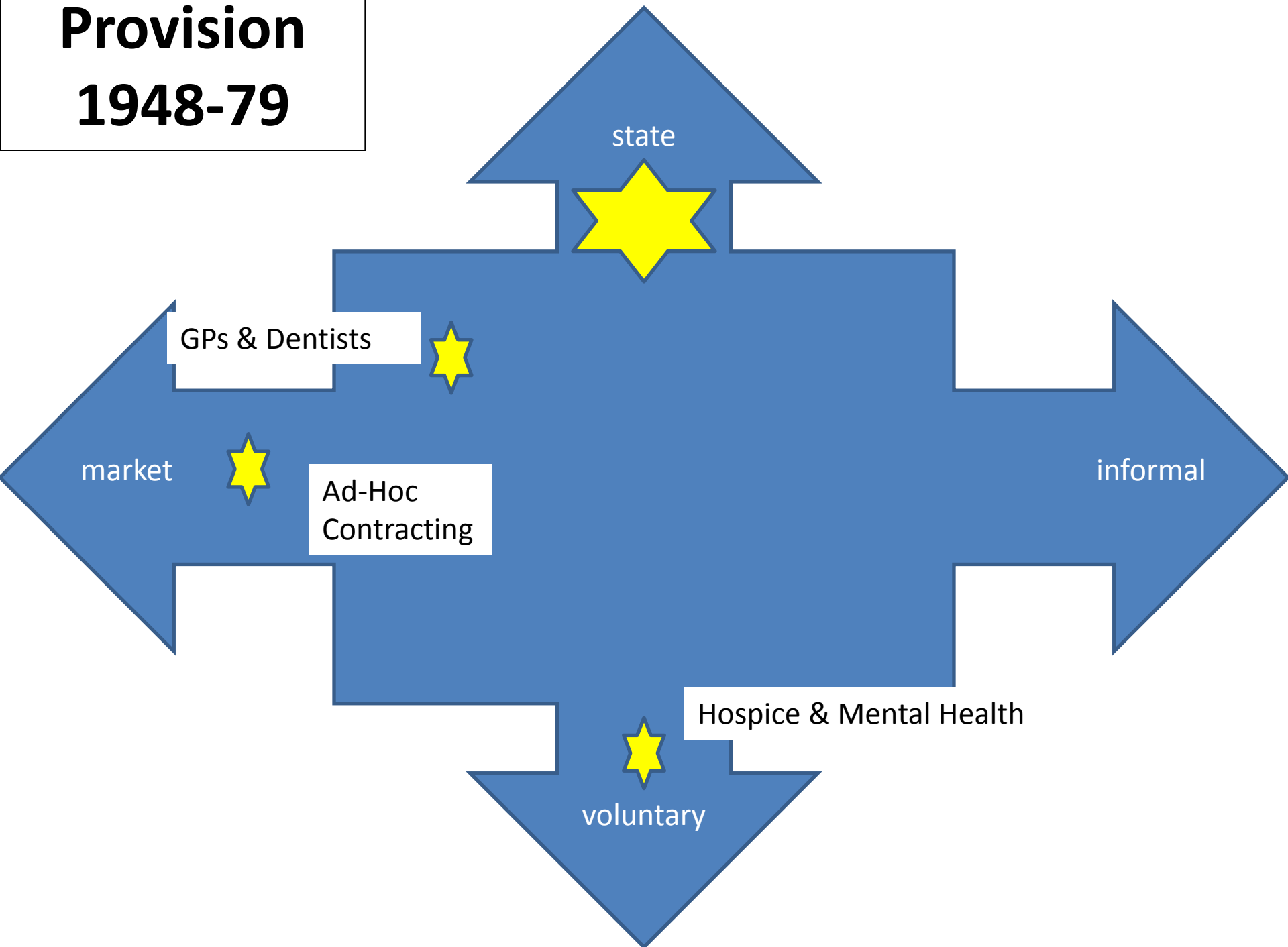
market

informal

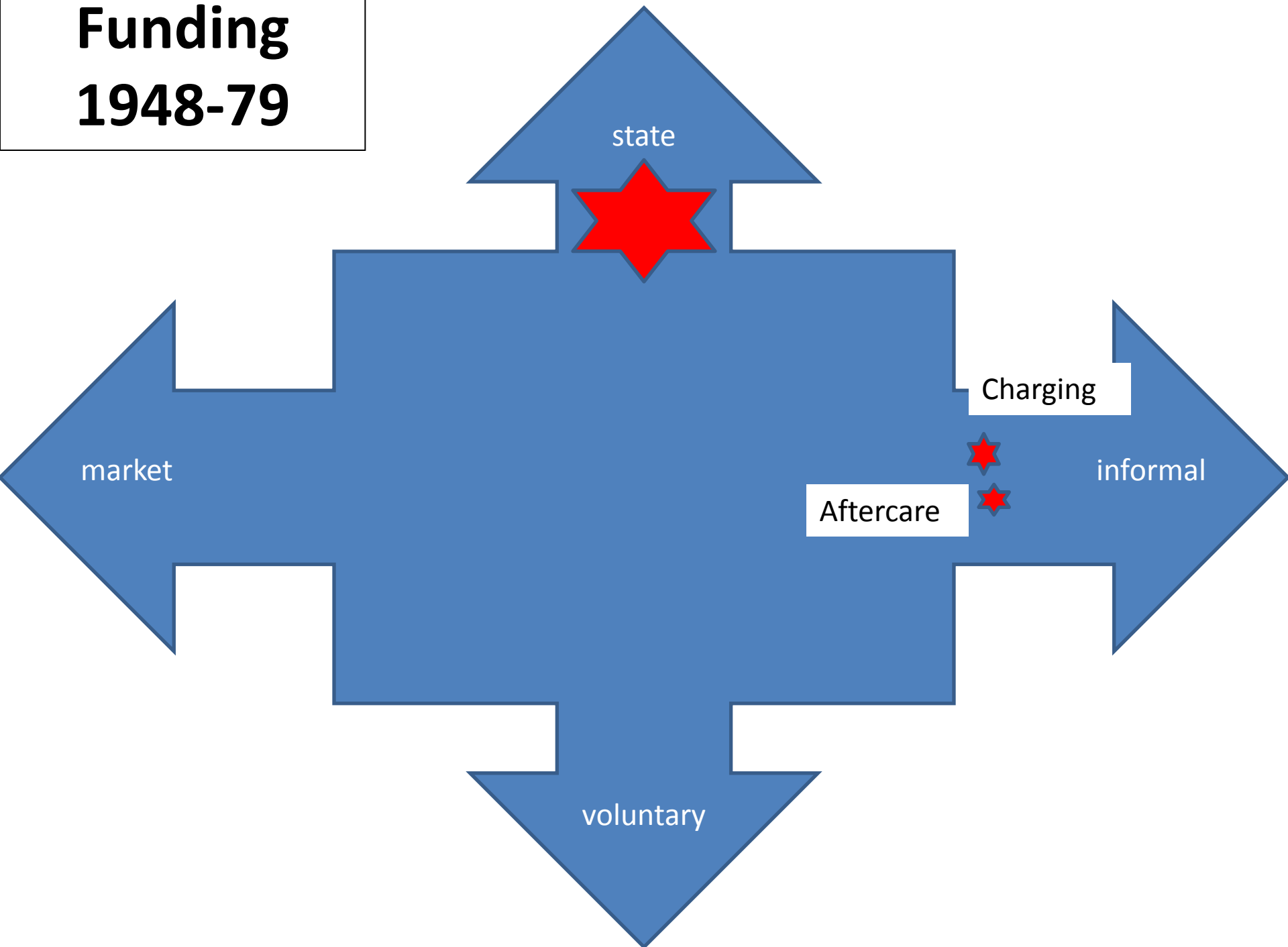
voluntary

1948 – 1979
THE 'CLASSIC' NHS

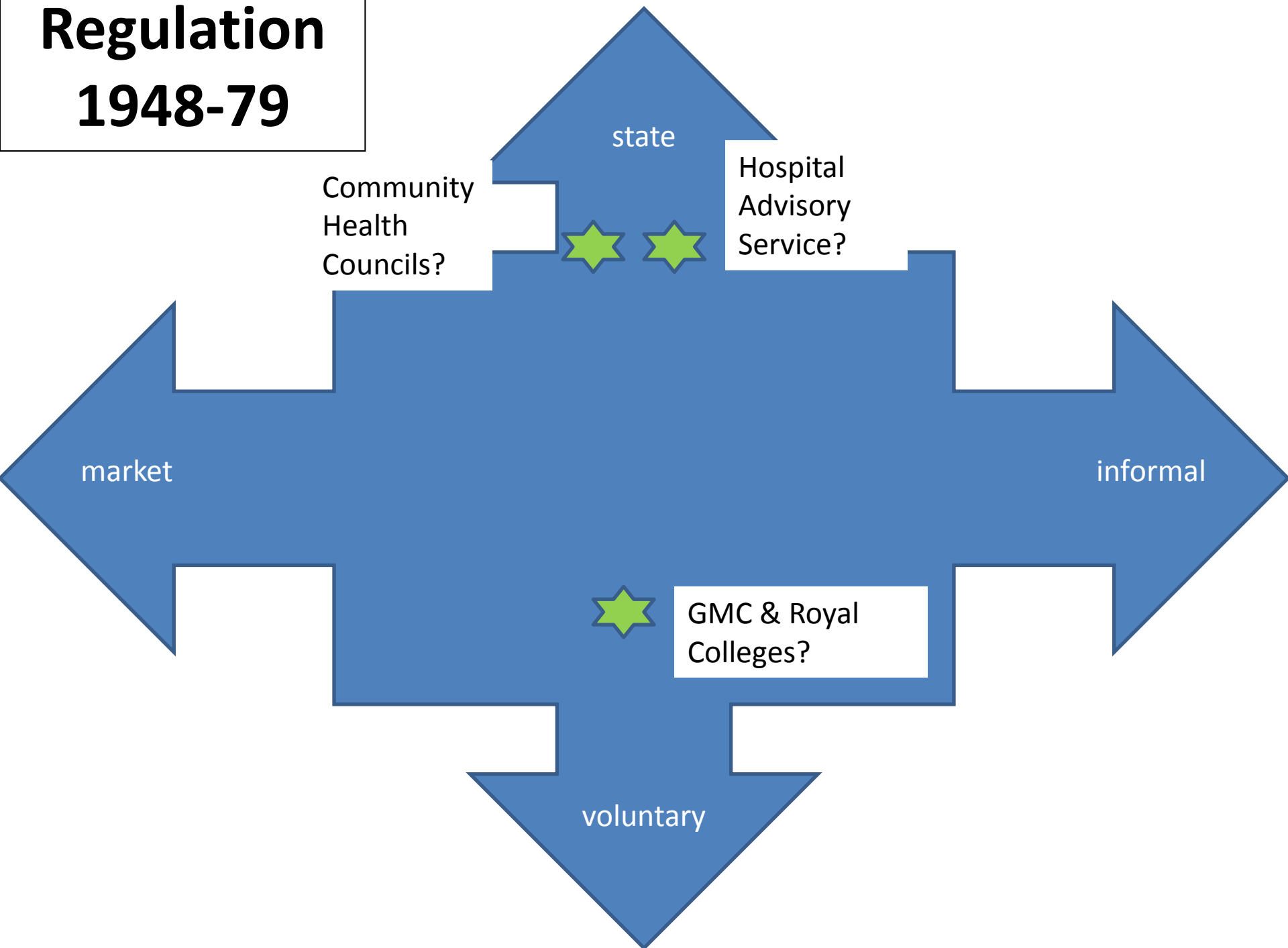
Provision 1948-79



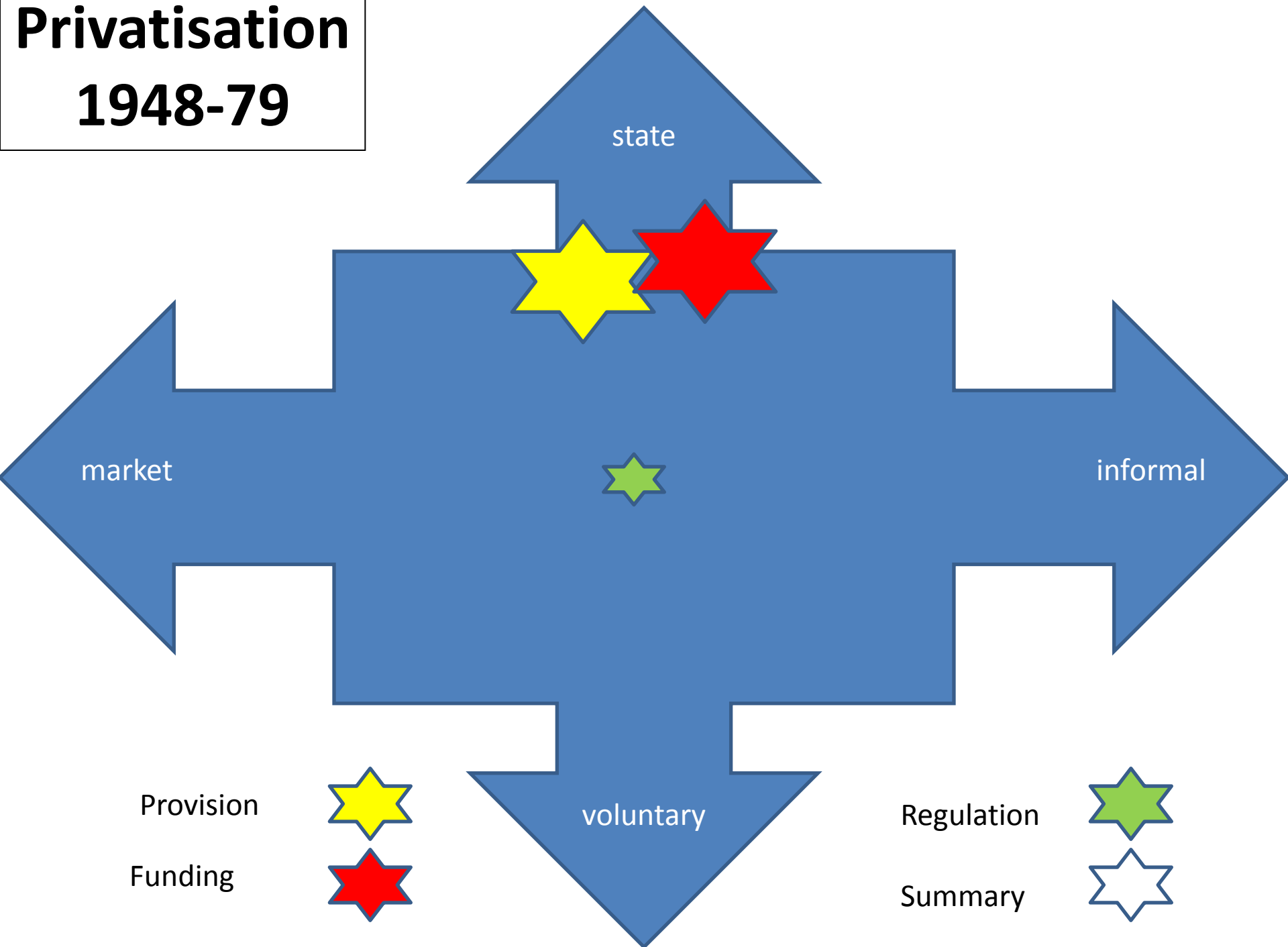
Funding 1948-79



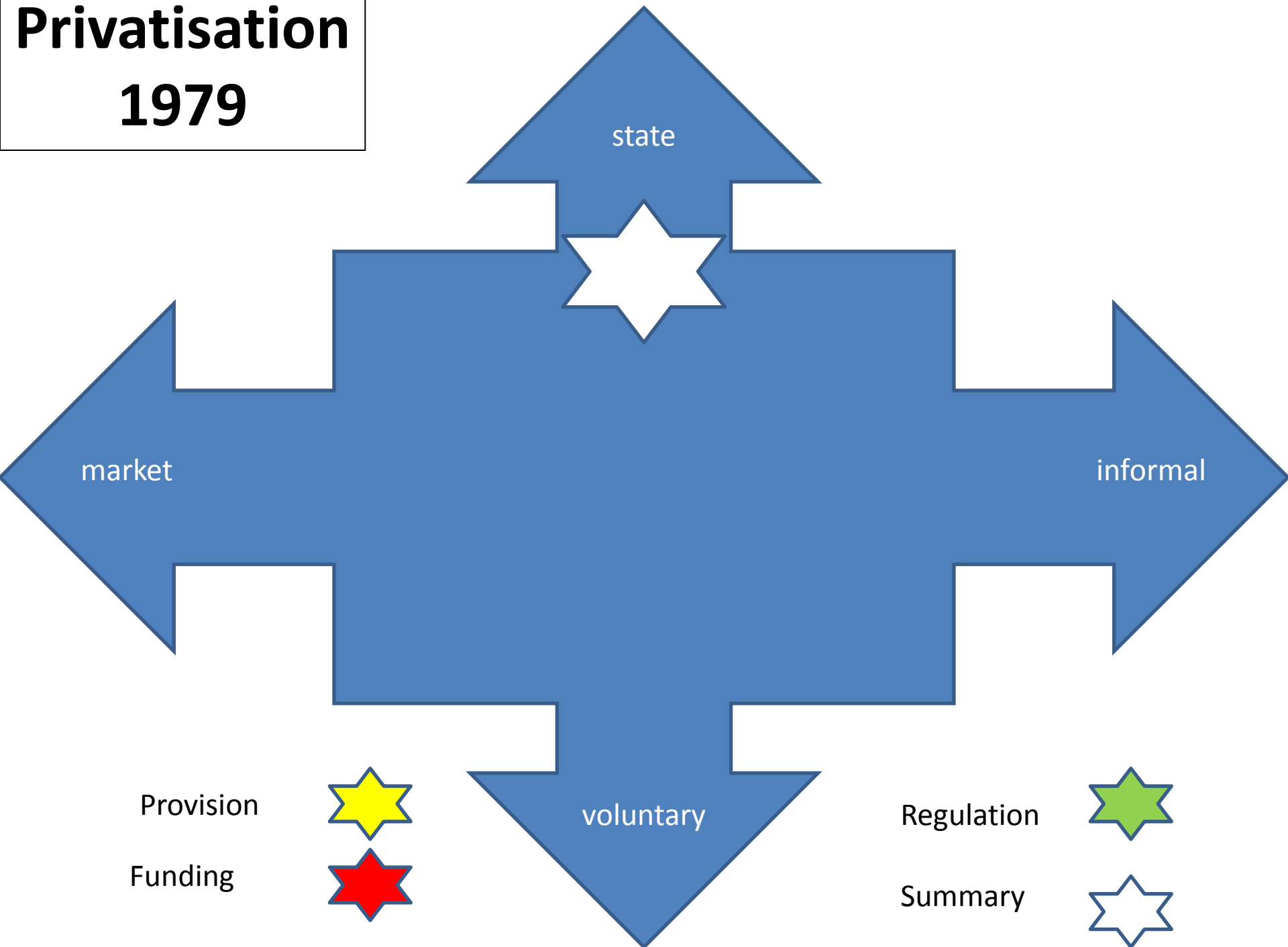
Regulation 1948-79



Privatisation 1948-79

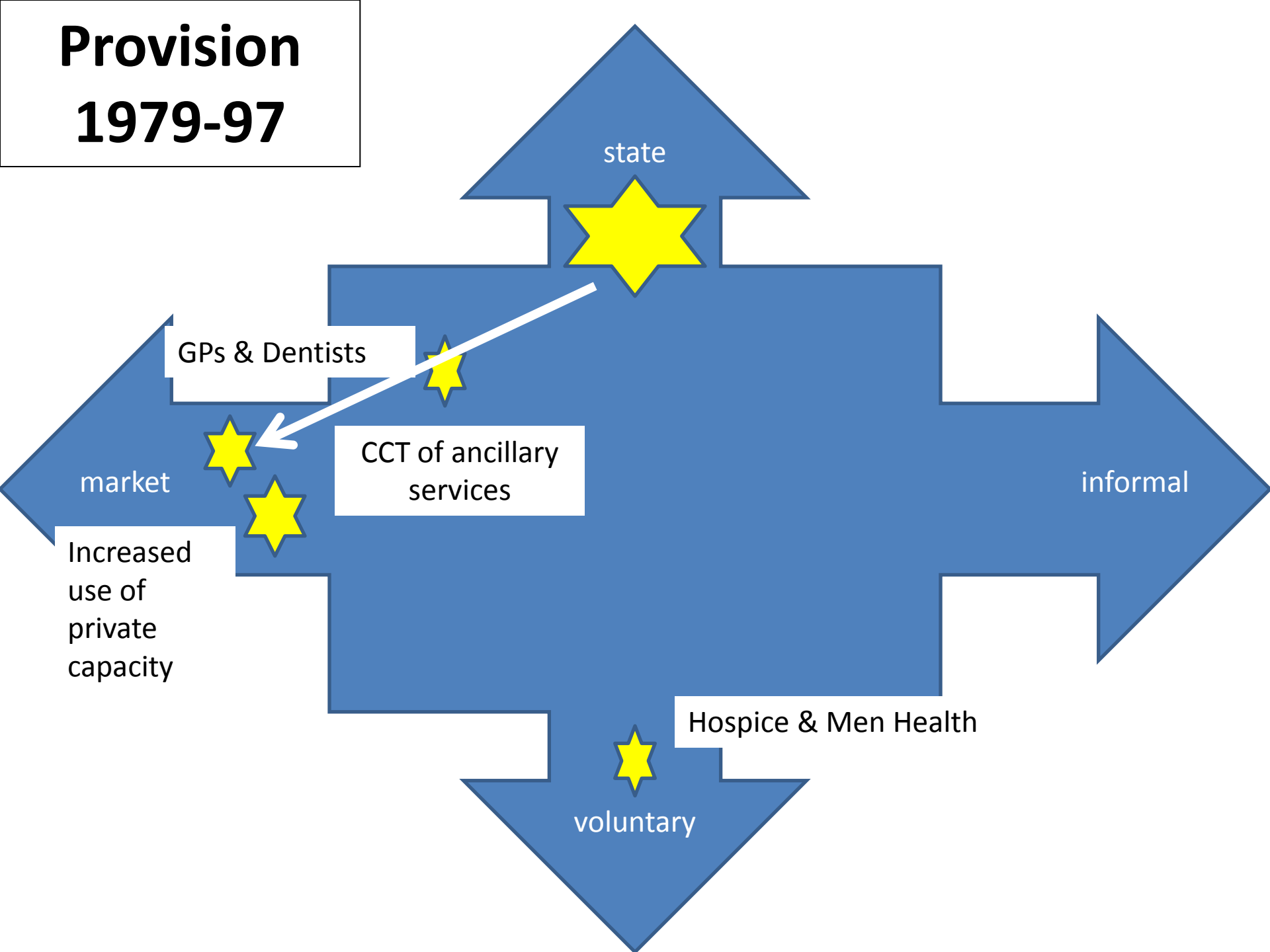


Privatisation 1979

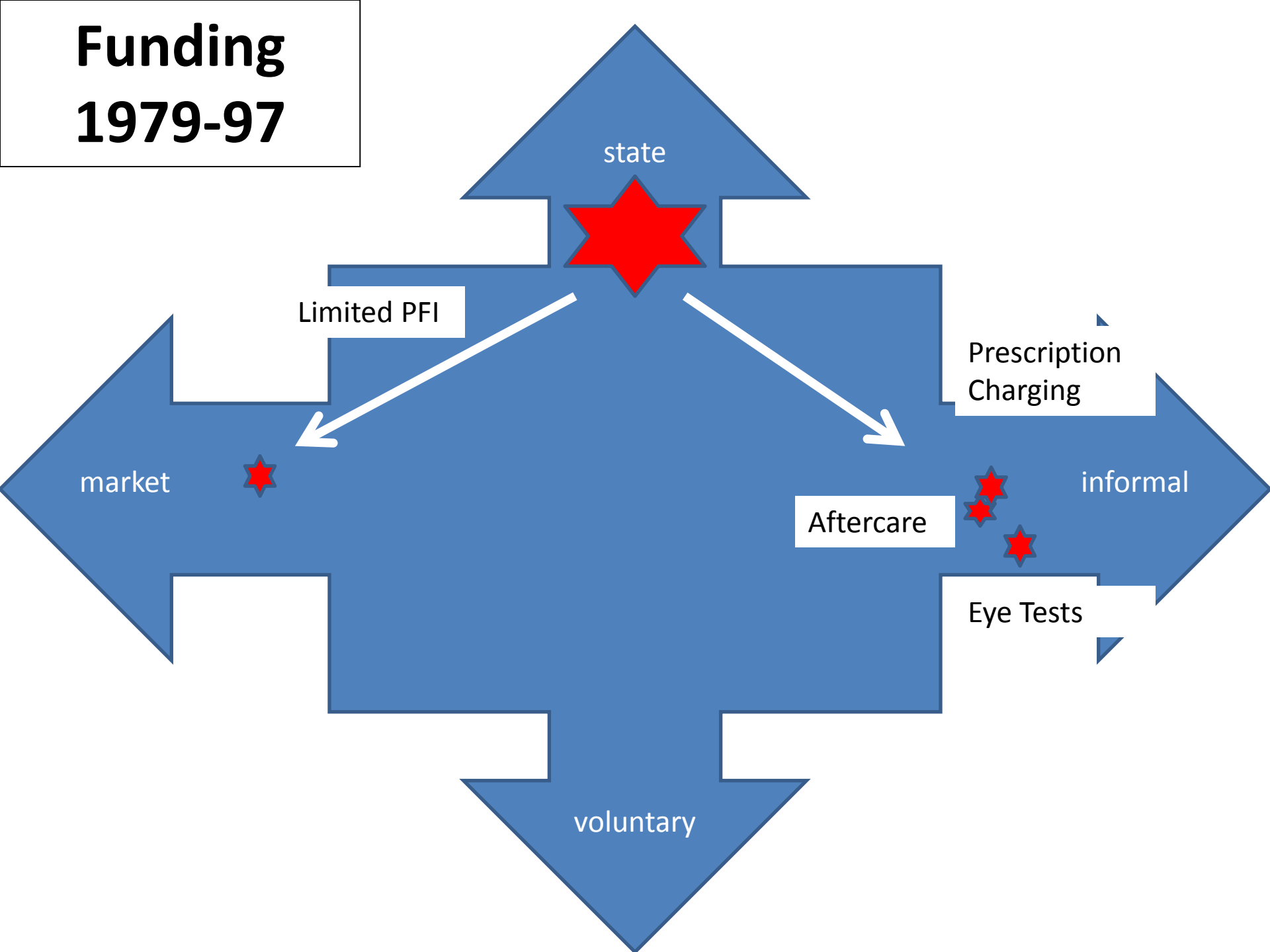


1979 – 1997
THE 'CONSERVATIVE' YEARS

Provision 1979-97



Funding 1979-97



state

Limited PFI

Prescription
Charging

market

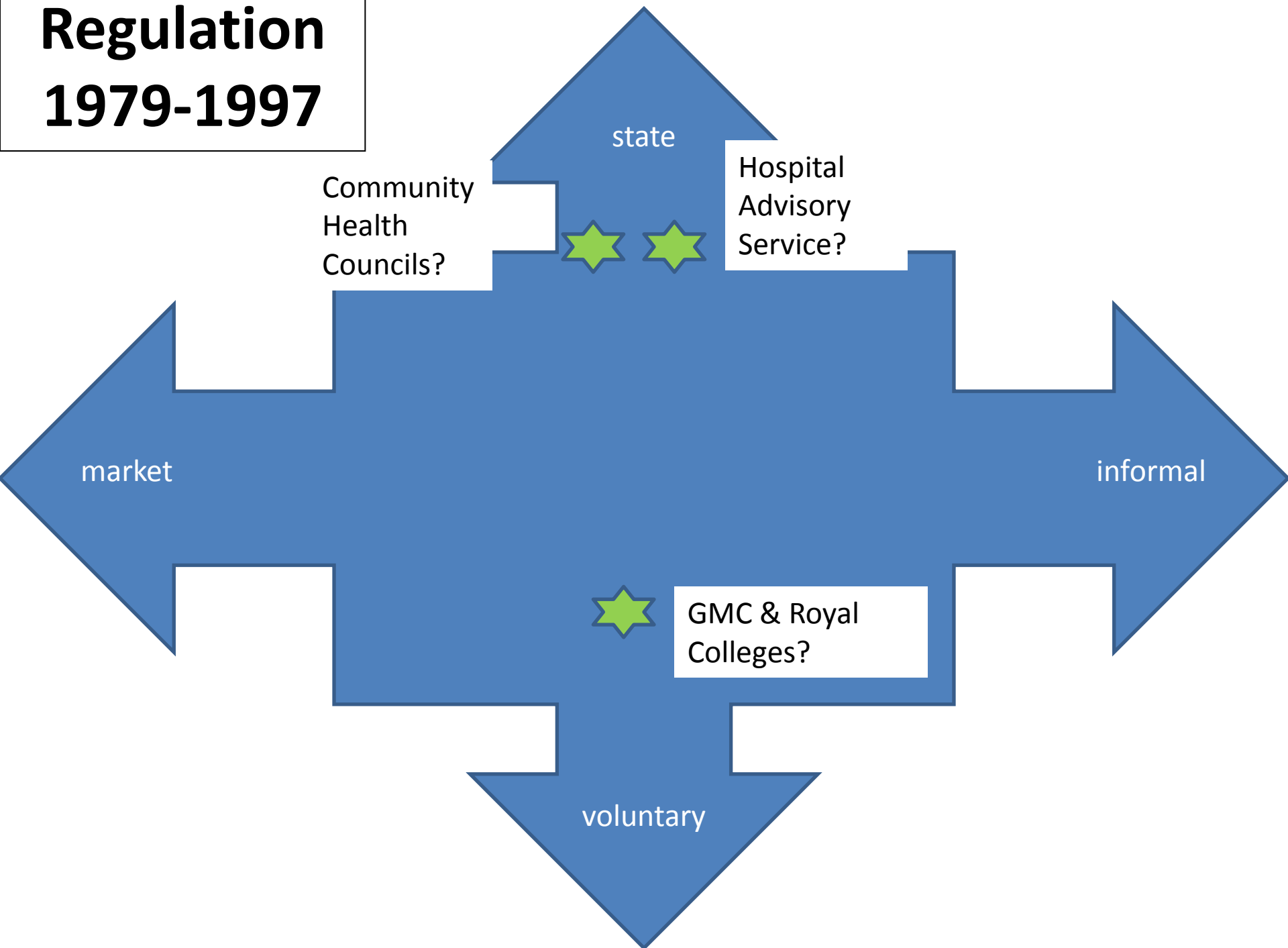
Aftercare

informal

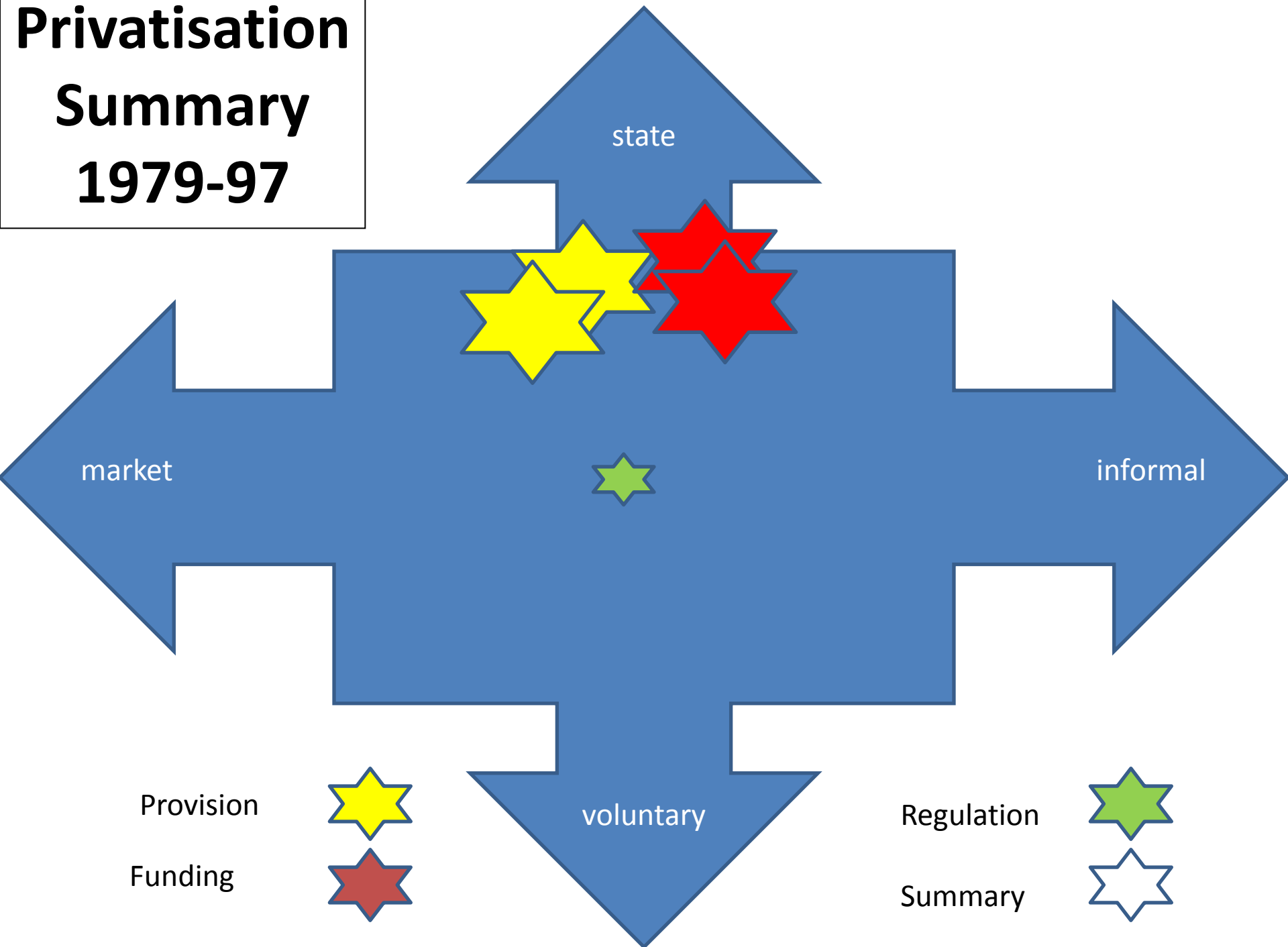
Eye Tests

voluntary

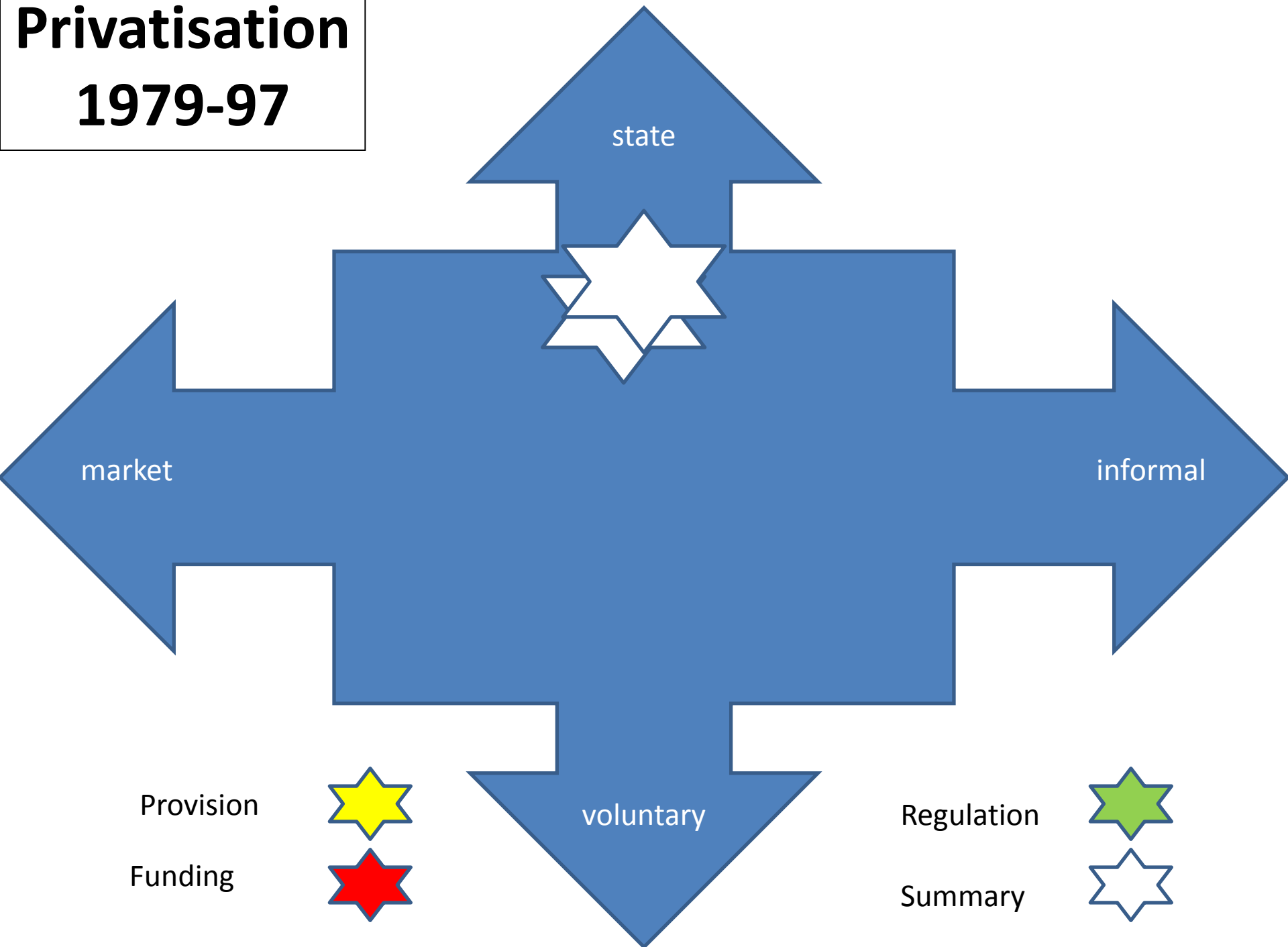
Regulation 1979-1997



Privatisation Summary 1979-97

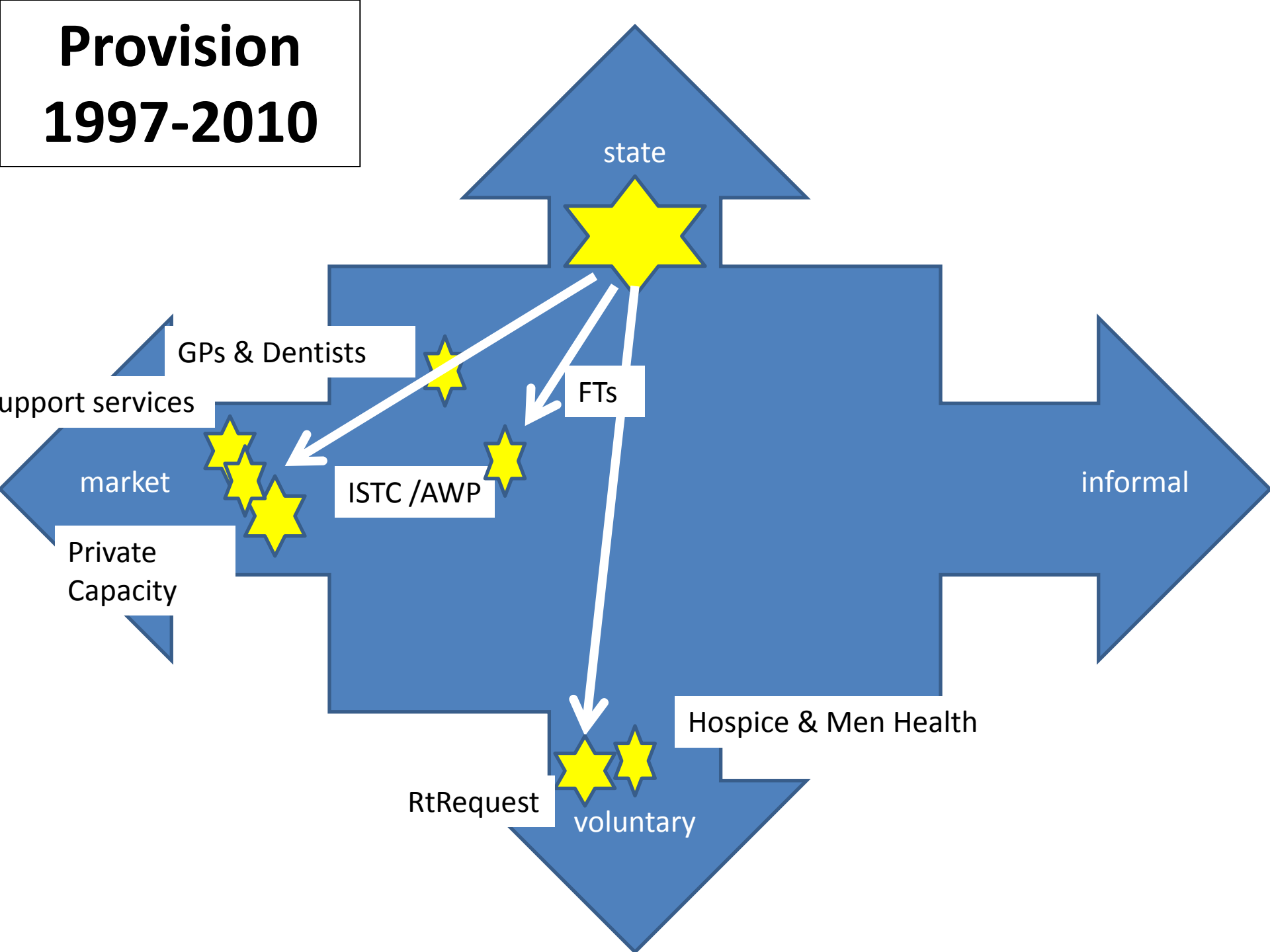


Privatisation 1979-97

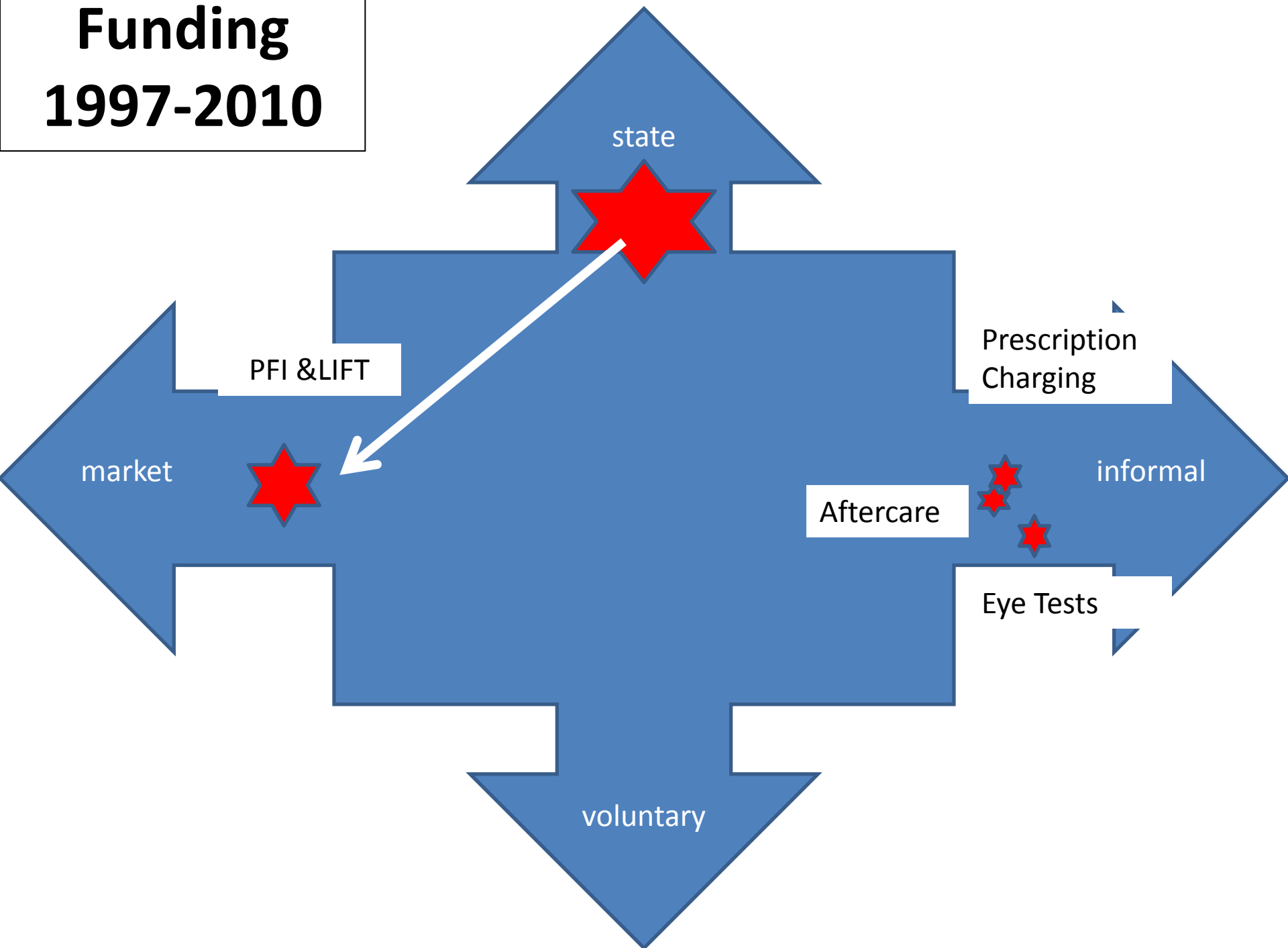


1997 – 2010
THE 'LABOUR' YEARS

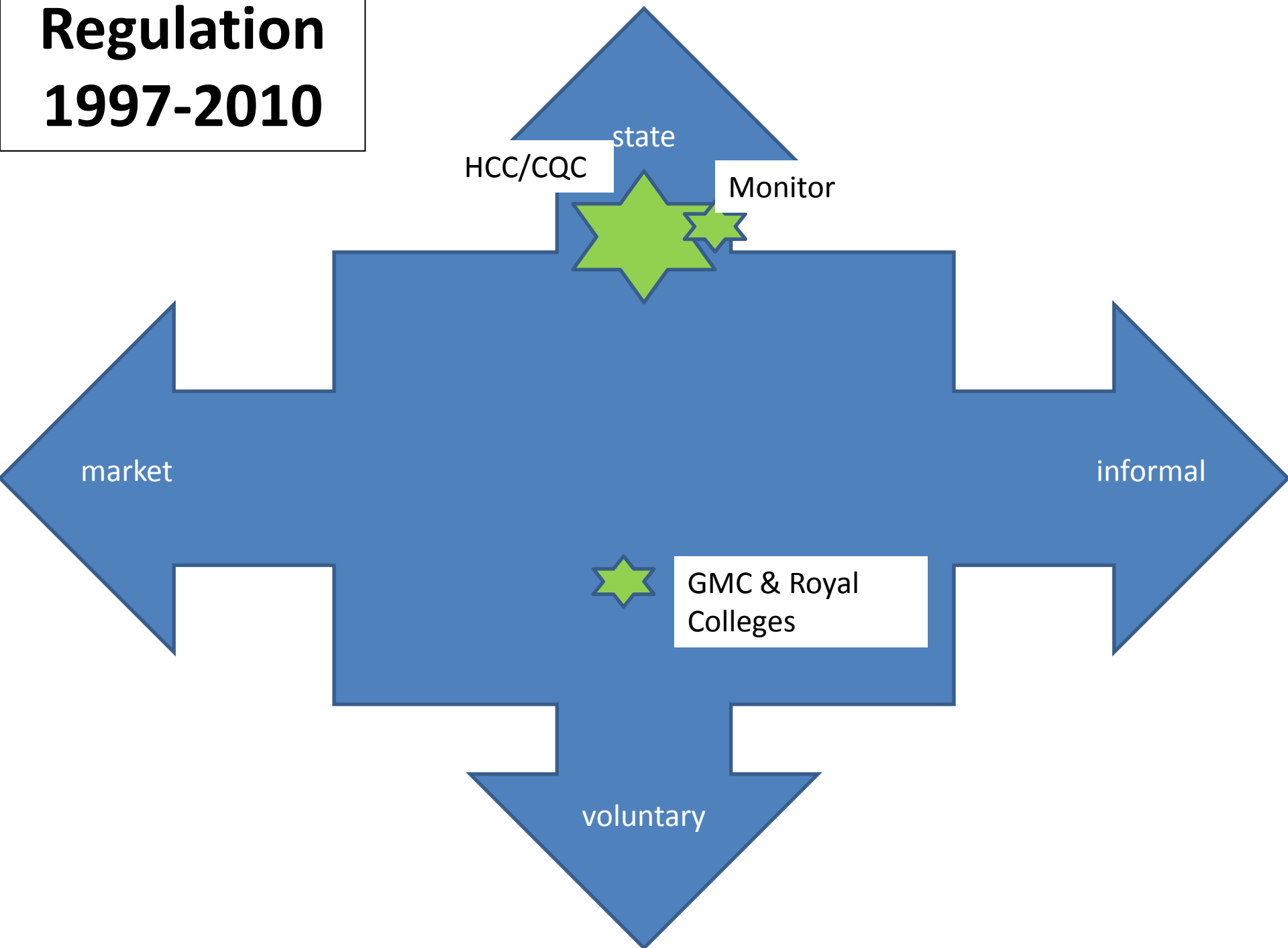
Provision 1997-2010



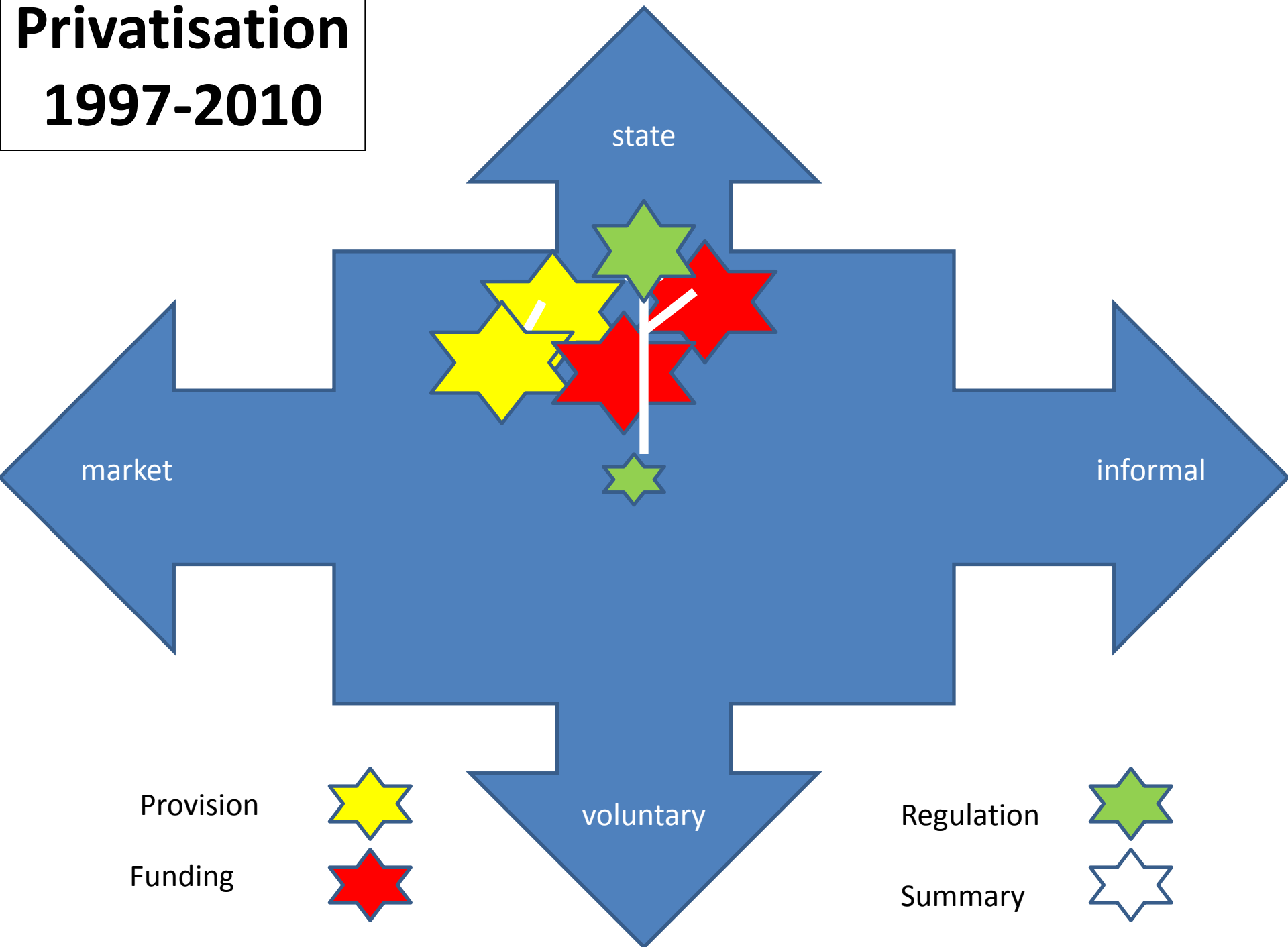
Funding 1997-2010



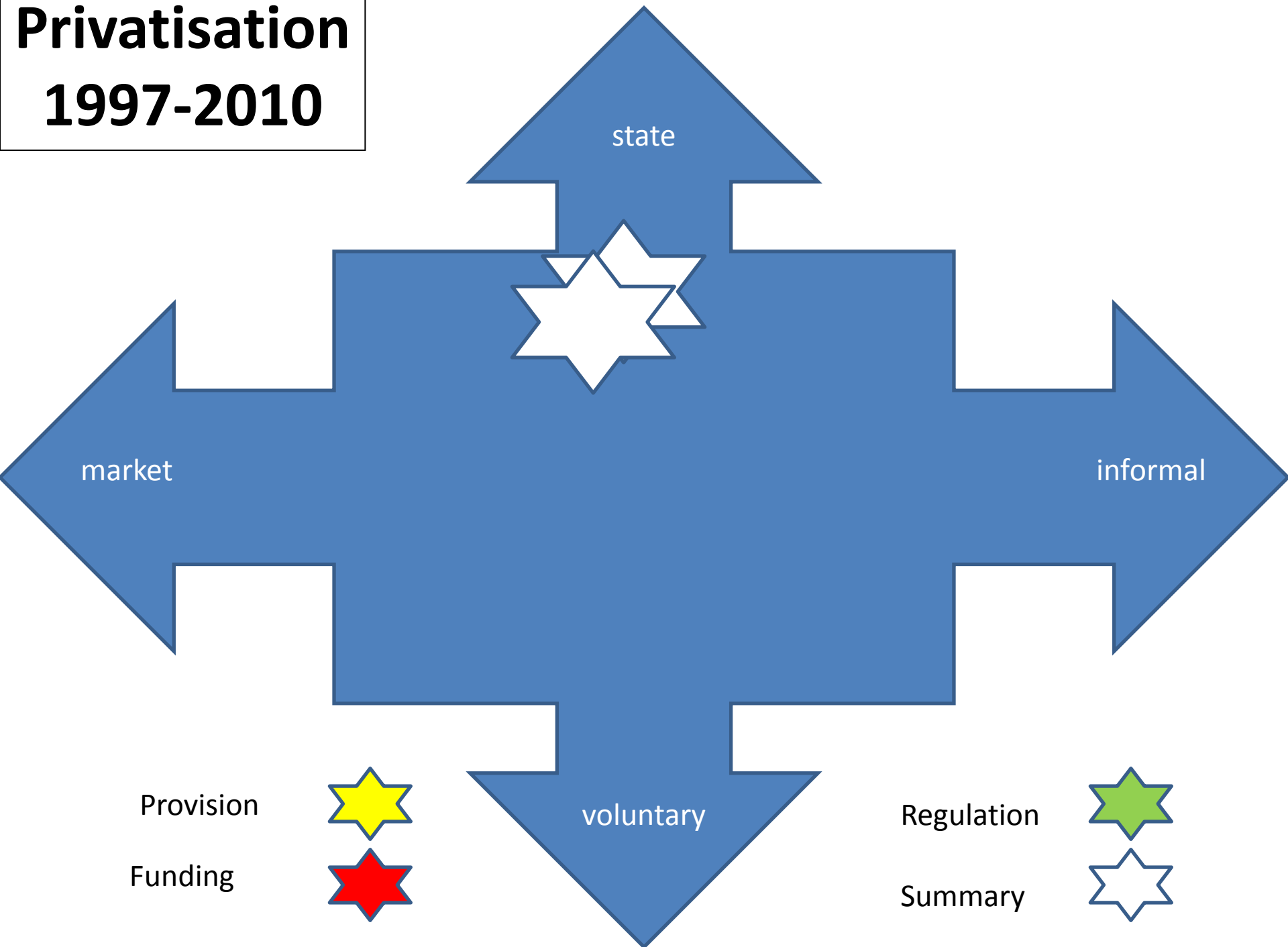
Regulation 1997-2010



Privatisation 1997-2010

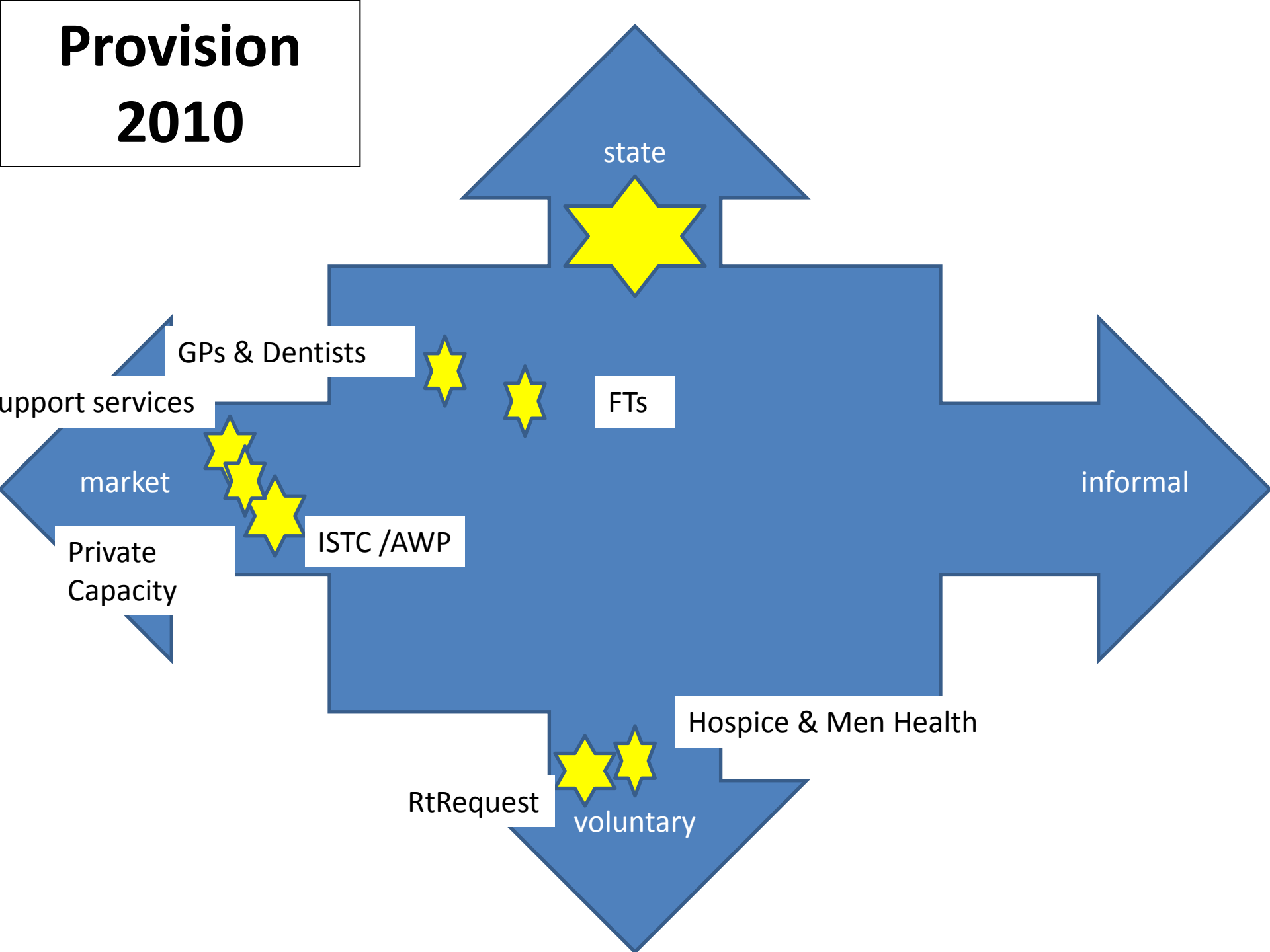


Privatisation 1997-2010

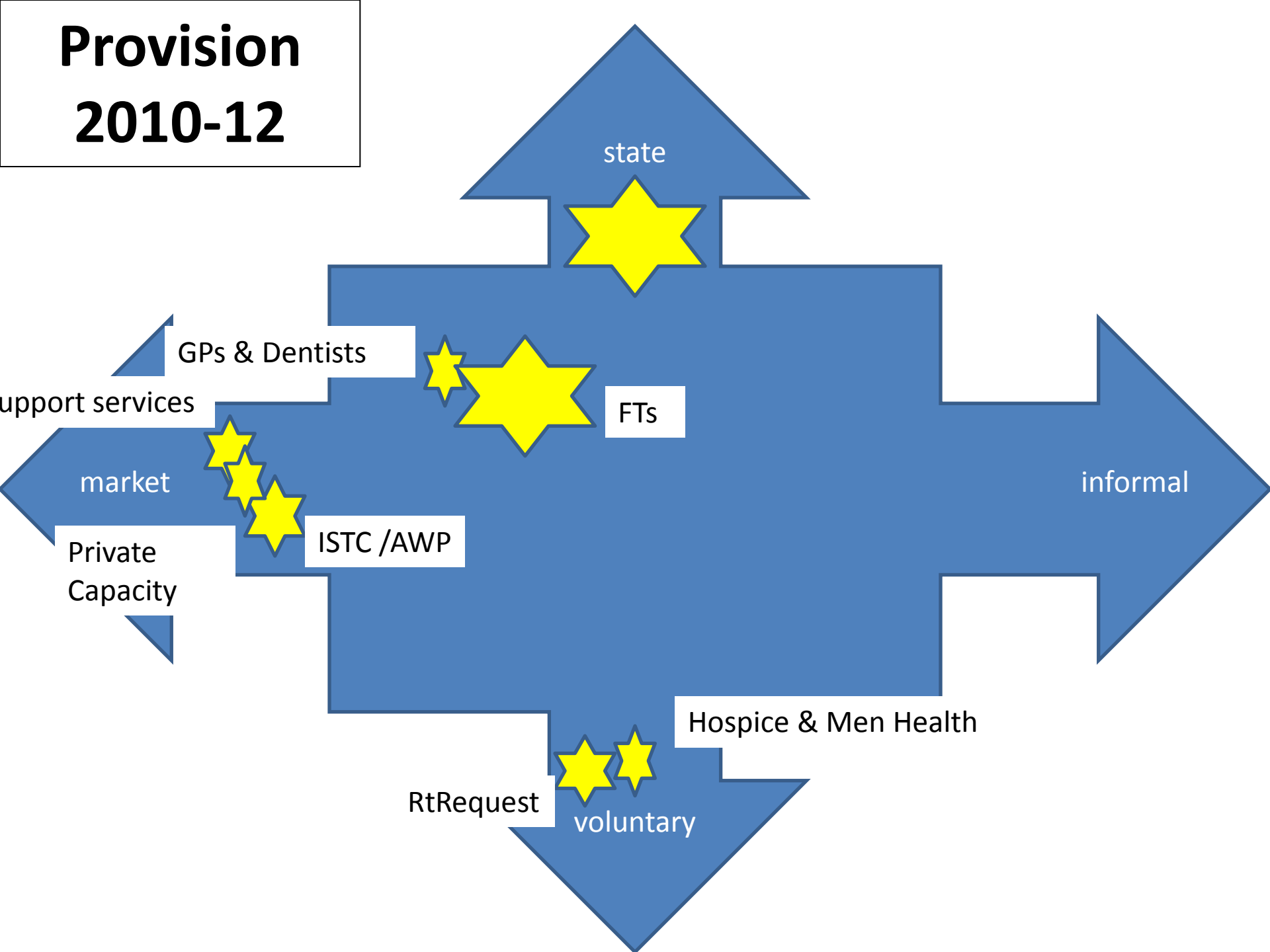


2010–12
THE 'COALITION' YEARS

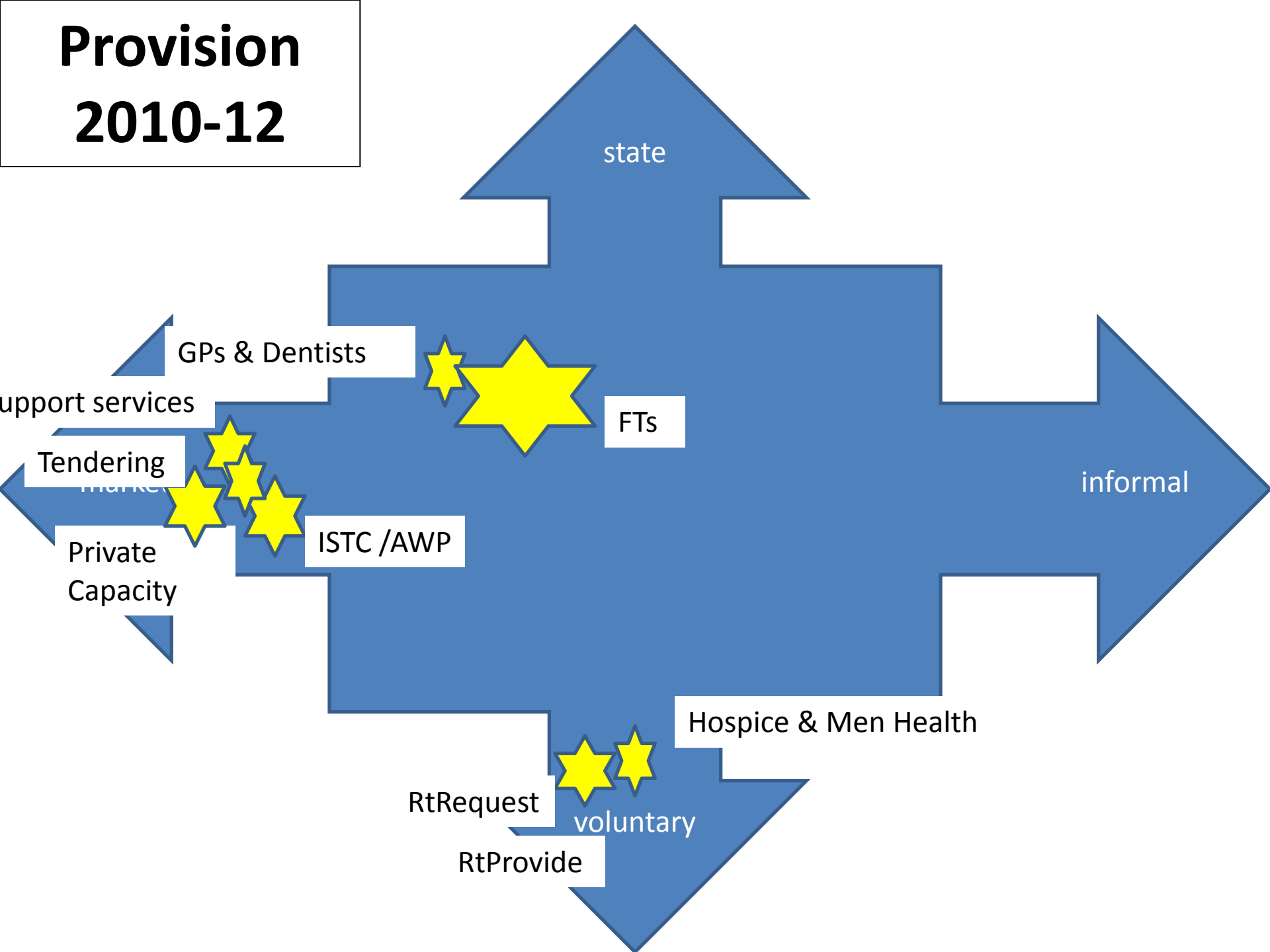
Provision 2010



Provision 2010-12



Provision 2010-12



state

GPs & Dentists

support services

Tendering

Private
Capacity

ISTC /AWP

FTs

informal

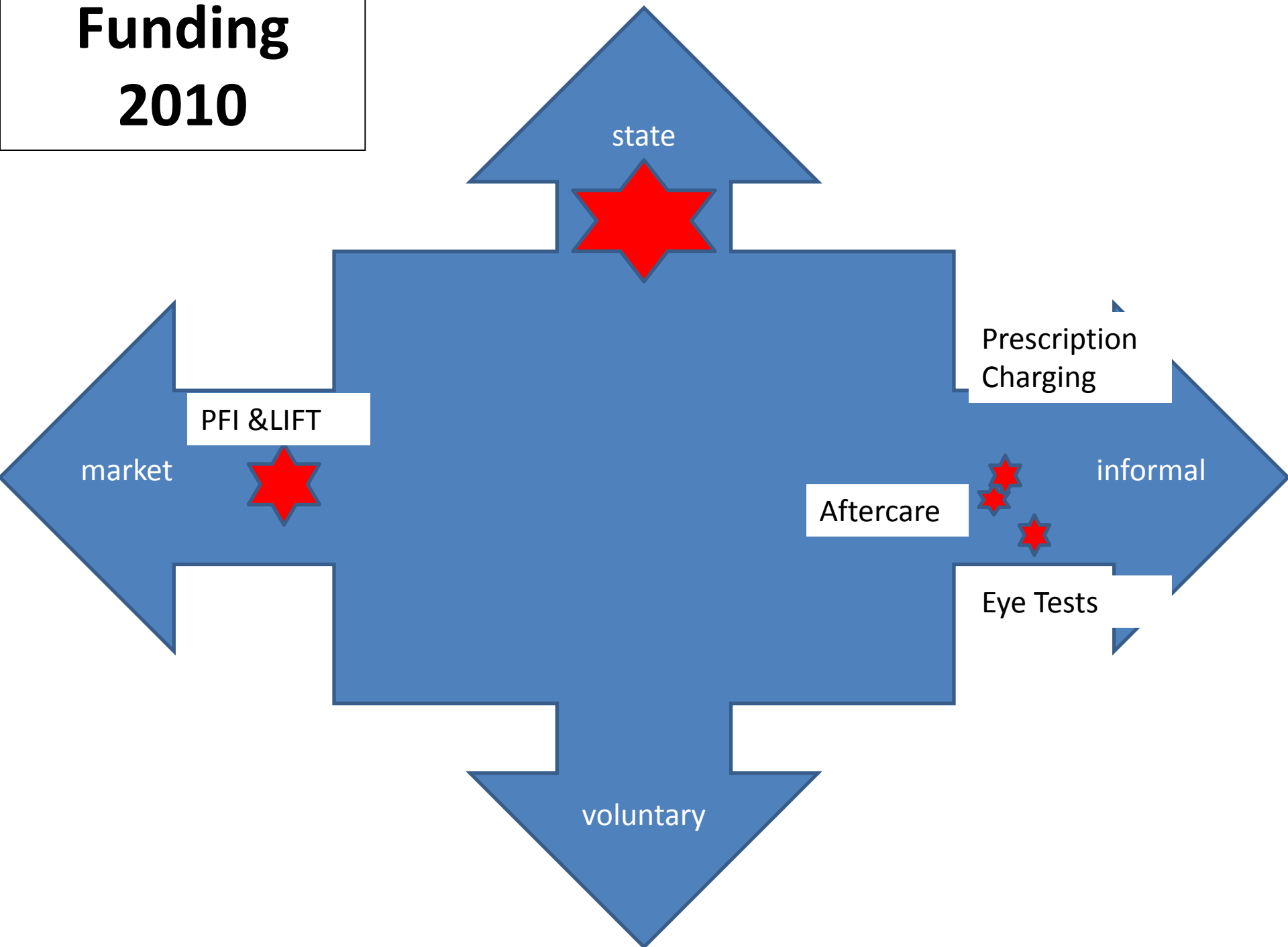
Hospice & Men Health

RtRequest

voluntary

RtProvide

Funding 2010



state

Prescription
Charging

PFI & LIFT

market

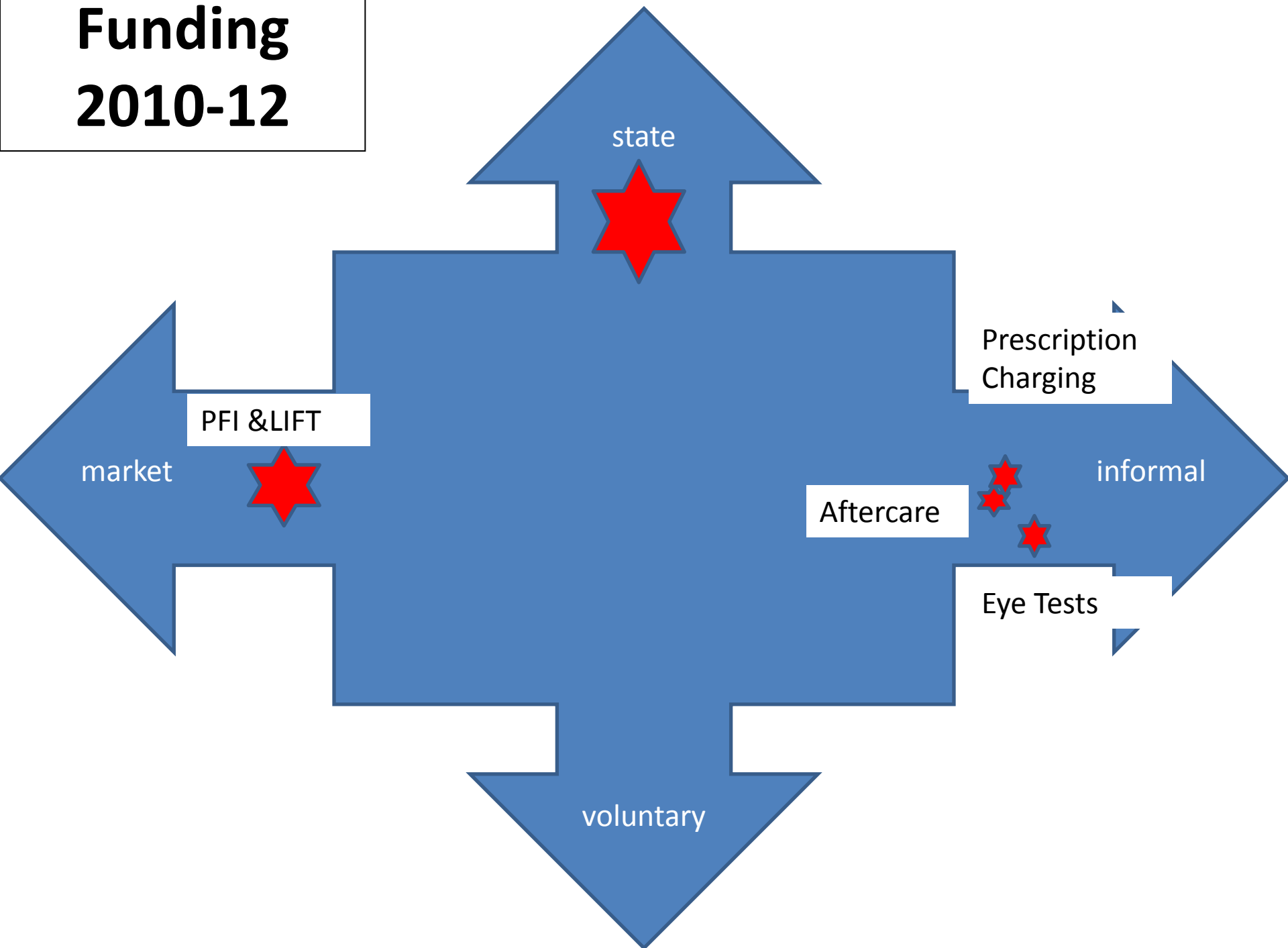
Aftercare

informal

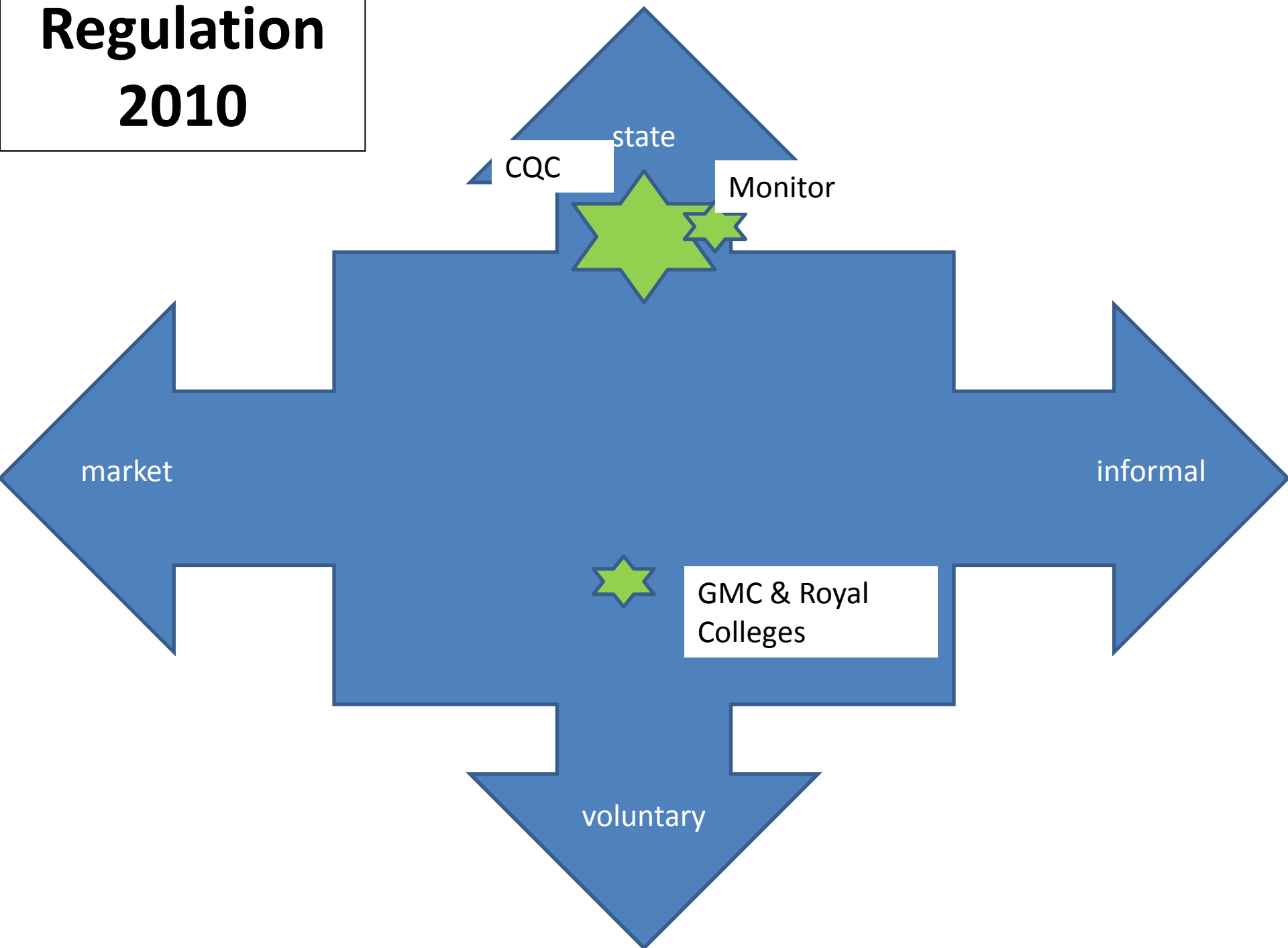
Eye Tests

voluntary

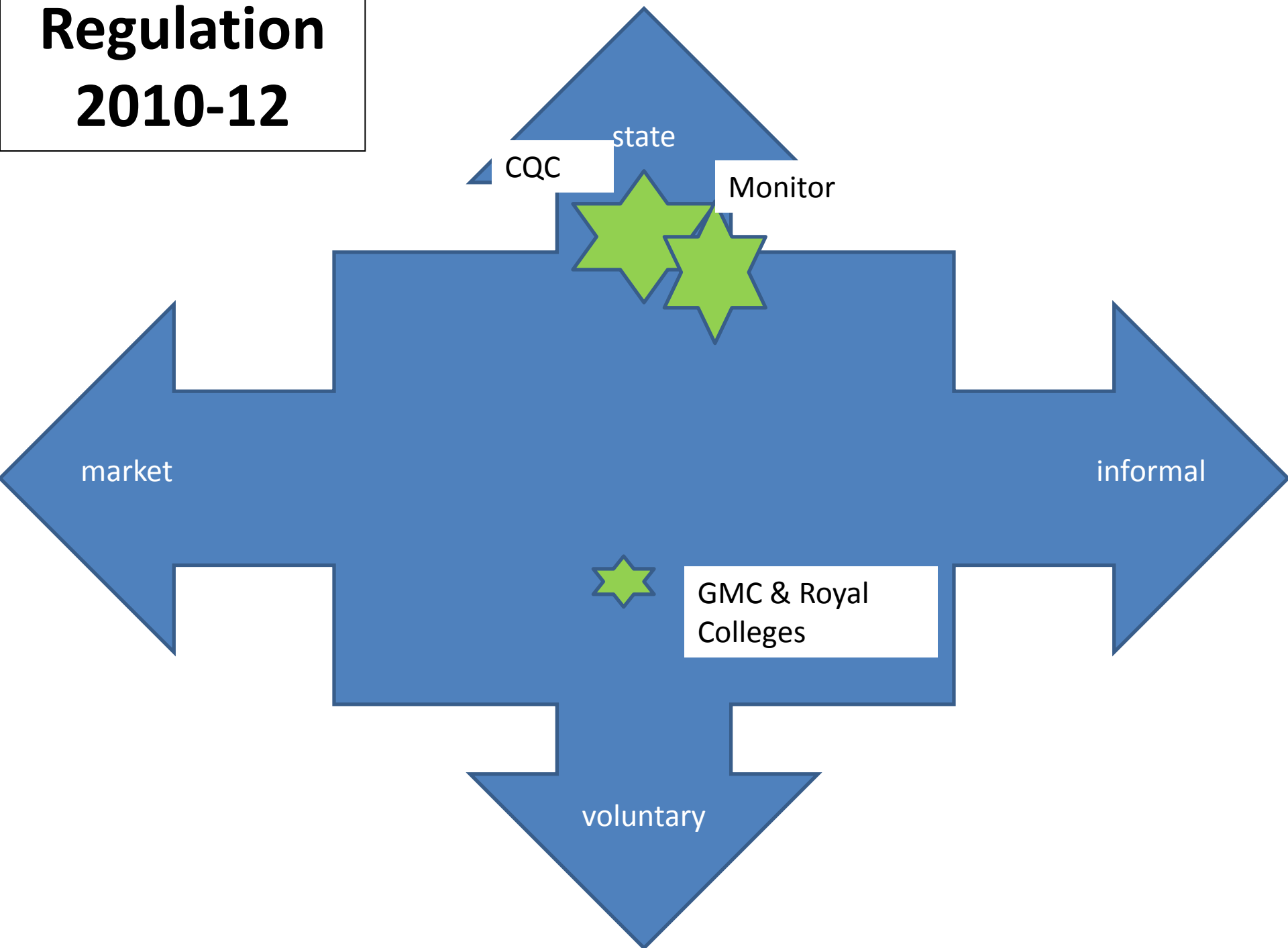
Funding 2010-12



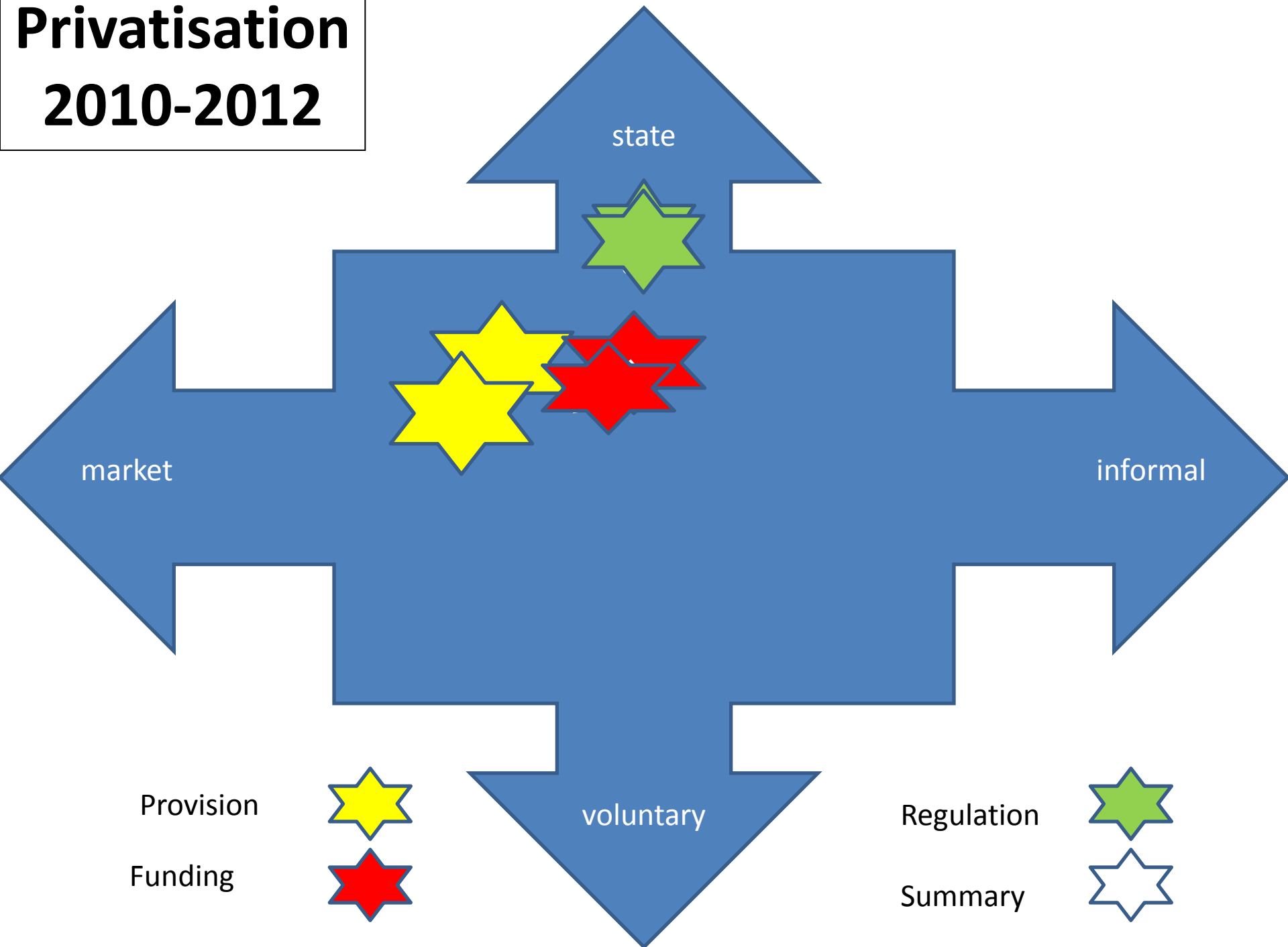
Regulation 2010



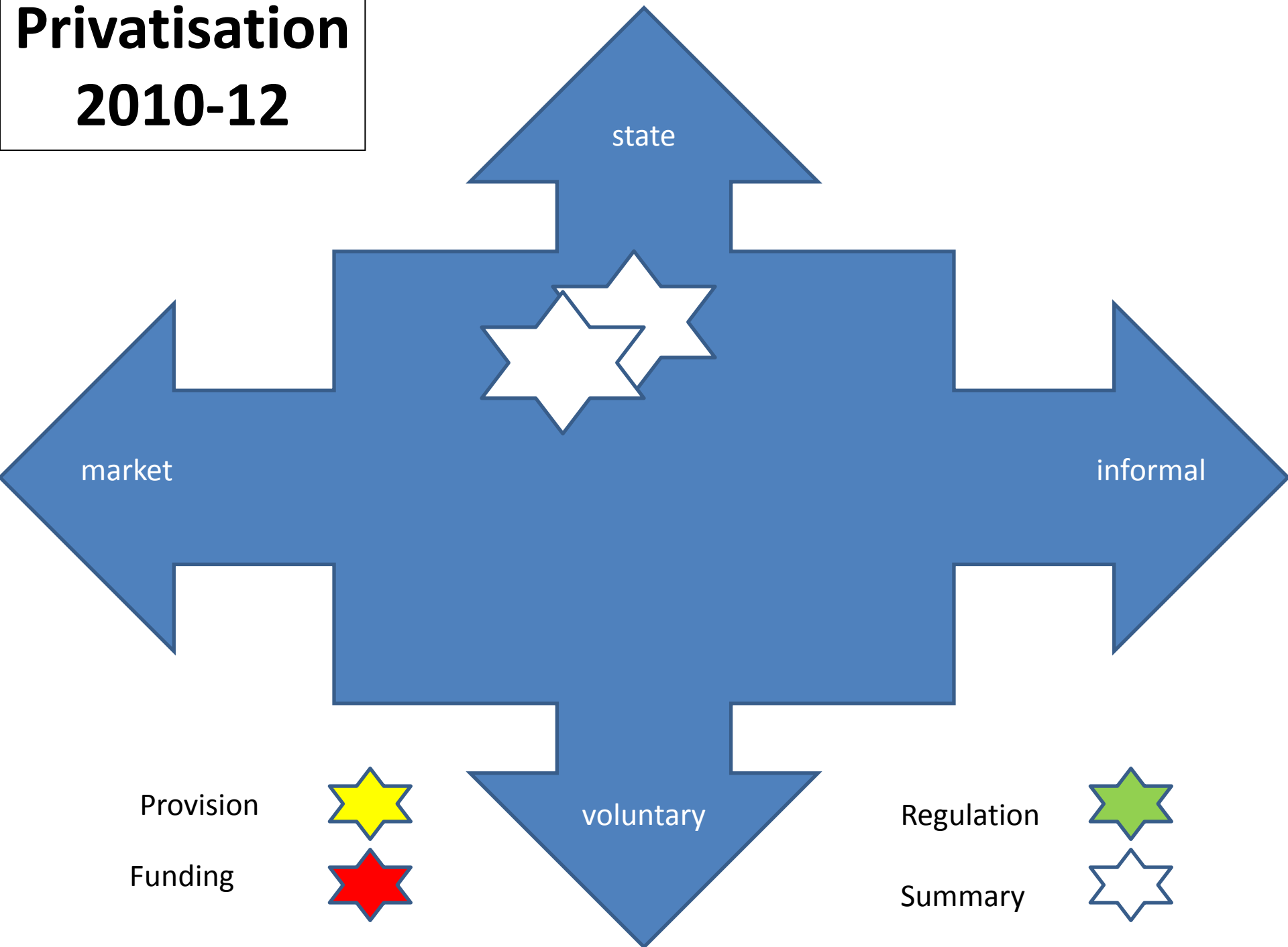
Regulation 2010-12



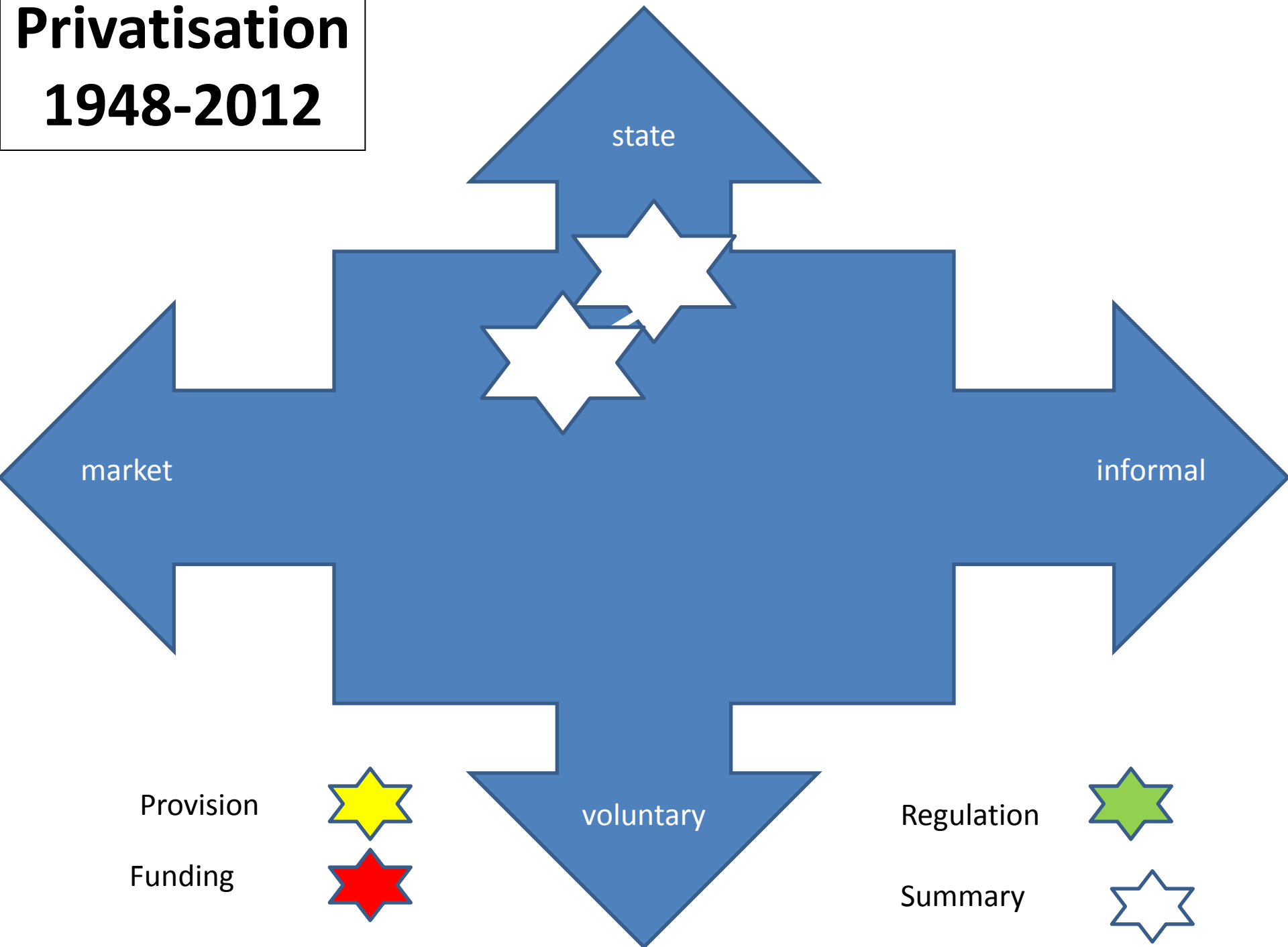
Privatisation 2010-2012



Privatisation 2010-12



Privatisation 1948-2012



state

market

informal

voluntary

Provision



Regulation



Funding



Summary



Discussion:

- NHS was never a purely public service
- Conservative years did see a shift to increased privatisation
- Labour years saw significant shifts in relation to funding & provision but arguably governance counterbalanced this to some degree
- Coalition continues these trends but with potential 'privatisation' of decision making

Conclusion

- No clear consensus on definition and measures of privatisation
- Therefore potential for different accounts
- Our account has focussed on MEW but other approaches such as publicness are possible
- This account neglects the most important issue – the impact of ‘privatisation’. Do different types and degrees have varying impact?