

“Appalling winter downturn” as almost 50,000 patients languish in ambulances for over 30 minutes

Labour’s analysis of the latest weekly winter data (11 December to 17 December) released today by NHS England reveals that in the first month of winter:

- 46,993 patients have been stuck in the back of ambulances for over 30 minutes and 9,775 have had to wait longer than one hour. There has been an 86% rise in the number of delays for over one hour in just the past two weeks as the cold snap has hit.
- Average bed occupancy has risen at an alarming rate. Last week it averaged at 95%- a 0.7% increase since winter began. This is 10% higher than the recommended safe level of 85%.
- There have already been 105 diverts from A&E Departments.

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour’s Shadow Health Secretary, responding to Labour’s analysis of the first month of winter, said:

“Patients should be under no illusions: there has been an appalling winter downturn across our NHS over the past month.

“Despite the heroic efforts of our brilliant NHS staff, it’s unacceptable that so many patients have been stuck in the back of ambulances for such a long time.

“With vacancies of 100,000 across the NHS, alongside the biggest financial squeeze in its history, patients are paying the price for Theresa May’s neglect of the NHS this winter.”