

# Government “trying to cover up” new NHS cuts – Ashworth

Jonathan Ashworth, Labour’s Shadow Health Secretary, has today accused Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt of “trying to cover up” a new round of NHS cuts, which include closing wards and services, extending waiting times and stopping treatments.

The NHS Capped Expenditure Process involves hundreds of millions of pounds of reductions to local health economies, but Government Ministers have so far refused to comment on the proposals.

**Jonathan Ashworth  
said:**

“I’ve today written to Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt asking a raft of questions and outlining in no uncertain terms the major concern that Labour has regarding hundreds of millions of pounds of cuts to local health budgets.

“The process has been going on since at least April but so far there has been no announcement from the Health Secretary, his Ministers or the Department for Health. There is an astonishing lack of transparency around this whole process.

“Across the country patients and their families are living in fear that local services they rely on will be cut back to plug black hole which this government has created.

“This government wants to give the impression that this is for NHS managers to sort out and wash their hands of a process which involves hundreds of millions of pounds of public money. This is an unacceptable abdication of responsibilities to patients and the public and gives the impression of trying to cover up this new round of NHS cuts.”