

Midwife shortage due to Government underfunding is failing families in their time of need – Justin Madders

Justin Madders MP, Labour's Shadow Health Minister, responding

to today's Royal College of Midwives report on agency spending in the NHS, said:

"The Government's management of the NHS workforce has been a disaster for both staff and patients. The country is now 3,500 short of the number of midwives needed and the RCM say almost £100m is being used to plug the gaps with temporary staff.

"It's essential that hospitals are able to get the right number of midwives in place to keep mothers and their babies safe. Labour's research published earlier this year showed a huge rise in temporary closures of maternity units because of short staffing. The Government's underfunding of the NHS is failing families in their time of need.

"Ministers must step in with a long term workforce plan for the NHS and they should put an end to the self-defeating pay cap. At the moment too much money is going to employment agencies when it should be going to frontline patient care."