

NHS Waiting lists

There are some people in need of treatment who are waiting too long. Despite the appointment of more than 200,000 extra staff since 2019, and putting in many billions more money the stated waiting lists have risen. There are said to be 7.7 million waiting. The strikes have not helped. The NHS does need to ensure people in pain where treatment can help should get the treatment they need in a timely way.

There is also a large amount of duff data as in so much of the public sector. Talking to a recent NHS Minister I am told the rapidly rising numbers of executives and administrators have not managed to clean up the lists and produce meaningful figures.

The first problem with the waiting list figure is it includes many people who want to see a consultant to see if there is anything seriously wrong, with people awaiting test results, with those who are awaiting treatment after tests and diagnosis, with people who have completed treatment and may or may not need a follow up appointment.

Apparently if you are after treatment you may stay on a waiting list in case you need to come back, just as you are on a waiting list whilst awaiting test results or diagnosis. You need to say you are happy with treatment and sign off.

There are people with more than one condition who may be on the waiting list more than once, waiting additionally for a second or third possible condition. There may even be people who have died of something else whilst registered as waiting under one or other of the categories of waiting.

It would help if all those extra administrators got the lists into better shape and told us how many different people were waiting for diagnosis, waiting for tests and waiting for treatment. That would help in the important task of getting different waiting times down.