

Scottish Conservatives call to restart cancer services

12 May 2020



The Scottish Conservatives are calling for the Scottish Government to publish an NHS Scotland Recovery Plan to restart services disrupted by Covid-19, particularly cancer services.

In preparation for the Covid crisis NHS Scotland went to great lengths to free up capacity and many services were paused.

Elective surgeries were postponed for three months to free up beds and cancer screening programmes for breast, cervical and bowel cancer as well as some cancer operations were also indefinitely halted.

Now cancer charities have issued a plea to the Scottish government to get cancer services up and running again and the Scottish Conservatives have asked for a plan to deal with the backlog in treatment and operations.

In NHS England cancer treatments restarted over two weeks ago.

In addition, this morning ISD Scotland published figures showing that attendances at A&E services have dropped dramatically since the end of march, due to the measures put in place to respond to COVID-19.

The statistics highlight that during the week of the 3 May only 16,107 people were seen at A&E, compared to 27,845 for the same week in 2019, the previous year, a staggering drop of over 40%.

Miles Briggs, Scottish Conservative shadow health secretary said;

“It is vital that the Scottish Government brings forward an NHS Recovery Plan – a plan to restart our health service, particularly cancer services and operations, in Scotland.

“Over the last two months, in so many ways, people have selflessly put their own needs on hold.

“The A&E figures show that people have been staying away from the NHS meaning many people may be suffering in silence.

“But further delays will mean more patients could have poorer outcomes.

“It is now over two weeks since NHS England restarted cancer treatments, we could too.

“Thanks to the incredible work from everyone who works in our NHS, our health service has not been overwhelmed during this crisis.

“The Scottish Government must publish a plan to deal with the current backlog of operations and treatments and give everyone access to the healthcare they need before it’s too late.”