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27 Mar 2017



Research has revealed that hundreds of children every year are receiving mental health treatment in unsuitable wards.

The release of the worrying statistics come ahead of the publication of the Scottish Government's Mental Health Strategy this week.

It has previously been advised that all youngsters in need of acute mental health support should be treated in one of the specialist children's mental health wards across the country.

However, between 2007 – the year the SNP came into power – and 2015, a massive 1,840 children and adolescents were admitted to non-specialist beds. The total of 248 recorded between 2014/15 shows that the number of youngsters unable to receive treatment in these specialist units remains frighteningly high.

The Scottish Conservatives are calling for the SNP to start treating the issue of mental health with greater seriousness, and ensure that there are enough inpatient beds for children and young people across Scotland.

Scottish Conservative mental health spokesman Miles Briggs said:

“This is yet further evidence of the SNP government's lack of attention in regard to mental health.

“It's worrying to see so many children with acute mental health problems not being given treatment in the most appropriate environment.

“Mental health issues are now more apparent than ever and it's only right these youngsters receive the specialist care that will give them the best possible chance of a speedy recovery.

“The SNP has to provide more support for these vulnerable people in its upcoming mental health strategy, and this means investing in children and adolescent mental health services.”

Miles Briggs PQ and table of number of children and adolescents being admitted to non-specialist beds between 1999 and 2015:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Number-of-children-and-adolescents-non-specialist-beds.pdf>

Scottish Conservative mental health policy:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Scottish-Conservative-Mental-Health-Policy.pdf>