

# Staff and patients are being failed by Government neglect of NHS workforce – Ashworth

**Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary**, responding to new NHS Improvement data showing at least 36,000 nurse vacancies in England and new UCAS data showing a fall in the number of students starting health degrees, said:

“These new figures are stark evidence of the Tory Government's complete mismanagement of the NHS workforce and it is patients paying the price once again for understaffed wards.

“Cuts to training places and the self-defeating pay cap have meant hospitals just can't get enough staff in place to provide safe levels of care. These figures blow apart ministers' claims to prioritise patient safety.

“And understaffing is likely to get worse in the coming years, because the Government's decision to remove the NHS bursary has led to a fall in the number of new students starting nursing degrees. Ministers have no excuses because they were warned all along by students and nursing representatives that this would be the outcome.

“The Government urgently needs a long term, sustainable solution to get the right numbers of nursing staff in place to keep patients safe. Staff and patients alike are being failed by this neglect of the NHS workforce.”