

## Tory Government promising jam tomorrow when action is needed today to tackle the staffing crisis in mental health – Keeley

**Barbara Keeley MP, Labour's Shadow Minister for Mental Health**, commenting on Health Education England's Mental Health Workforce Strategy, said:

"Once again this Tory Government is promising only jam tomorrow, when what is needed is action today to tackle the staffing crisis in mental health. The workforce plan provides no real answers on how these new posts will be funded or how recruitment issues will be overcome. And it offers little hope to those working in the sector faced with mounting workloads, low pay and poor morale.

"Time and again the Tories have been warned that severe staffing shortages are affecting patient care. Only this month the Care Quality Commission highlighted staffing levels, in particular the cuts to mental health nurses, as a contributing factor to 40 per cent of mental health services now failing on safety grounds.

"A Labour Government will provide the investment needed to recruit and train staff with the right skills to deliver the mental health services patients need and deserve. We will legislate for safe staffing, reinstate nurse bursaries, lift the one per cent pay cap for NHS staff and ring-fence mental health funding to make sure it reaches the frontline."

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## The review of buildings regulations and fire safety is welcome but long overdue – Healey

**John Healey MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Housing**, responding to the Government announcement of an independent review of building

regulations and fire safety, said:

“It has taken more than six weeks since the Grenfell Tower fire for the Government to release test results of just 82 of the 4000 tower blocks around the country. Landlords still can’t get other types of cladding tested and Government ministers still can’t say how many high-rise blocks are unsafe.

“The Government’s testing programme is confused and too slow.

“The long-awaited review of buildings regulations and fire safety is welcome but long overdue, as Ministers promised this four years ago after the last fatal high-rise fires.

“The Government must also now expand the testing programme, publish results in full so that residents and landlords know whether or not their buildings are safe and stand by their earlier promise to help fund the costs of any necessary work.”

Ends

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## [Keir Starmer response to Philip Hammond’s comments that the UK will seek a Brexit transitional deal](#)

**Keir**

**Starmer MP, Labour’s Shadow Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union,** responding to

Philip Hammond’s comments that the UK will seek a Brexit transitional deal for up to three years, said:

“Labour has been calling on the Government to commit to appropriate transitional arrangements for a long time. If jobs and the economy are to come first, there can be no threat of a cliff-edge for businesses after we leave the European Union.

“The Chancellor now appears to accept this. However, in light of the clear

divisions

this week within the Cabinet, I hope the Chancellor was not merely speaking in a personal capacity.

“I

also hope that this is the final burial of the flawed proposition that ‘no deal’ is a viable option.”

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## Over a million children could go hungry this summer, government figures reveal

Millions of children across England are at risk of going hungry over the summer holidays, official figures suggest.

The worst affected will be the over 1.1 million children who are eligible for and claiming a free school meal, who will miss out over the holidays.

Millions more could be at risk, as government figures show that 30 per cent of children (nearly 4 million) across England are living in poverty, whose families may not be able to afford food.

New analysis from the Trussell Trust shows that there is an increase in the number of food packages being given to families with children over the summer, showing the extent of holiday hunger across the country.

Moreover, an answer to a Written Question tabled by Angela Rayner MP shows that the Department for Education “has made no assessment of the number of children who are at risk of experiencing hunger during school summer holidays in 2017.”

**Angela Rayner MP,  
Labour’s Shadow Secretary of State for Education, said:**

“It is a national disgrace that millions of children across the country are at risk of going hungry this summer.

“The Government has admitted it has no plans to assist children who are facing hunger during the school holidays.

“The Conservatives are failing in their duty of care to children in poverty, whose numbers are increasing to Dickensian levels under Tory austerity.

“With the IFS forecasting that child poverty will rise to 5 million by 2022, Labour is demanding that the Government brings forward a new strategy to tackle child poverty.

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## [Labour calls on the Government to address the injustice and damage caused by their unlawful Employment Tribunal Fees policy](#)

Richard Burgon MP, Labour’s Shadow Justice Secretary has written to David Lidington MP, Secretary of State for Justice, following Unison’s Supreme Court victory, where the Employment Tribunal Fees introduced by the Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition were declared unlawful, to call on the Government to make sure that all those who were treated unfairly are now able to access the justice they deserve.

In the letter, Burgon condemns the Government’s shameful decision to unlawfully restrict access to justice for its own citizens, and calls for answers on how much public money was wasted defending their unjust policy, as well as a Government commissioned independent review of the effects on access to justice of the fees in other Courts and Tribunals.

Full text of the letter

Dear Secretary of State,

I’m writing to you following the Supreme Court’s Judgment yesterday that the Employment Tribunal Fees introduced by the Conservative / Liberal Democrat Coalition in 2013 are

unlawful and impede access to justice.

This means the Ministry of Justice has been operating unlawfully for four years. Given this, it is now vital that you take urgent steps to address the injustice, unfairness and damage caused by your unlawful policy.

Your junior Minister Dominic Raab MP had no other option than to concede that the Government will have to "take immediate steps to stop charging fees in employment tribunals and put in place those who have paid".

Please could you inform me:

- How much money from the public purse your Government has spent defending its unlawful and unjust policy?
- When the Government will be issuing a full and unequivocal apology to working people and their families for deliberately and unlawfully blocking their access to justice?
- When the Government will be issuing a full and unequivocal apology to people and families who had to undertake disclosure of their personal financial circumstances in an intrusive and even humiliating level of detail as part of the Government's failed 'Fee Remission' Scheme for Employment Tribunals?
- By what date the Government will have fully reimbursed all those who were unlawfully required to pay Employment Tribunal Issue Fees and Employment Tribunal Hearing Fees?
- Whether your Government will be setting up a scheme, system or arrangements to ensure that all those who were unlawfully treated by their employers but didn't issue an Employment Tribunal case because of the applicable Issue Fee, or didn't proceed to the Employment Tribunal Hearing because of the applicable Hearing Fee, are restored to the position in which they would have been had it not been for your Government's unlawful policy?
- Given the Supreme Court's Judgment states that "In order for the fees to be lawful, they have to be set at a level that everyone can afford, taking into account the availability of full or partial remission", will your Government now commission an independent review of the effects on access to justice of the fees in

other

Courts and Tribunals? Given your Government's record of denial in relation to your unlawful Employment Tribunal Fees, it is clear that your Government cannot be trusted to carry out this review itself.

Congratulations are due to Unison for righting this wrong at the Supreme Court. It is just a shame that the Government did not listen to the trade unions, the legal community, the Labour Party or myself. If the Government had done so, it would not have found itself in the shameful position it now does – found to have unlawfully restricted access to justice for its own citizens.

Given the level of public interest in this matter, I have made this letter public. I believe it would also be in the public interest for your reply to be made public.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Burgon MP

Shadow Secretary of State  
for Justice & Shadow Lord Chancellor