

# [The SNP is silencing NHS staff](#)

4 August 2017

The SNP has cancelled an annual survey of NHS staff which highlighted the pressure they are under.

The NHS Scotland staff survey is normally published in December, but so far no survey has been published for 2016.

Previous staff surveys have highlighted the pressure NHS staff are under due to the SNP government's mismanagement of our health service.

The last staff survey to be published, in December 2015, [revealed that only a third of NHS staff believed there were enough of them to do their jobs properly](#).

We are seeing more and more examples of NHS staff saying they are struggling to cope – [9 out of 10 nurses say their workload has got worse in the last year](#).

Meanwhile, the chair of the British Medical Association in Scotland has warned that our NHS workforce is [‘stretched pretty much to breaking point’](#).

In an interview on the BBC Sunday Politics Scotland programme, Dr Peter Bennie said doctors are ‘fed up’ with the SNP’s spin.

Earlier this week, Labour revealed that unfilled posts in nursing and midwifery are rocketing in our NHS – that means more pressure on our existing NHS staff. [LINK](#)

The people who work in our health service are the beating heart of our NHS. The SNP government should be listening to what they have to say, not cancelling an annual survey to avoid bad headlines.

Labour’s workforce commission will deliver a solution to the SNP’s NHS staffing crisis. It will look at how we can attract more people towards training for nursing and midwifery jobs and consider how to support more student nurses financially. It will also consider how to scrap the 1% pay cap for NHS staff.

**Agree with our plan? [Then help spread our message](#).**

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# Our hospitals need more nurses and midwives

**3rd April 2017**

New figures published by Scottish Labour today show that the number of unfilled nursing and midwifery posts has rocketed under the SNP.

Since 2011 the number of vacancies for nursing and midwifery posts has increased from around 600 to over 2,500. That's a more than 280% increase.

Even more worryingly, the number of long term vacancies – that show us how hard it is for our health service to fill these jobs – **has increased by an even greater rate of more than 300%**

## **How has this happened?**

After a decade of SNP control our hospitals don't have enough nurses and midwives. A key reason for that is Nicola Sturgeon's decisions, as health secretary, to cut training places for nurses and midwives

Expert groups like the Royal College of Nursing [said it was a bad idea at the time](#) but the SNP pushed ahead and did it anyway

## **How is our NHS coping?**

Thanks to the goodwill of NHS staff. The last NHS staff survey said that [only a third of staff think there are enough of them to do their jobs properly](#), meanwhile [nine out of ten nurses believe their workload has got worse](#).

Our NHS staff save lives, care for others and do it all against a backdrop of ever increasing pressure. They need support.

## **What would Labour do differently?**

Our workforce commission will deliver a solution to the SNP's NHS staffing crisis.

It will look at how we can attract more people towards training for nursing and midwifery jobs and consider how to support more student nurses financially.

It will also consider how to scrap the 1% pay cap for NHS staff.

Our NHS staff are the foundations of our health service – we need to listen to them and support them.

**Agree with our plan? Then help spread our message**

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## Nicola Sturgeon should ban mesh products

**30 March 2017**

The mesh implant scandal has caused misery for hundreds of women in Scotland.

The implants are medical devices used by doctors to treat a number of conditions such as incontinence and other issues that can occur after childbirth.

Some women have reported severe and constant abdominal and vaginal pain following the surgery, with some women experiencing infections, bleeding and even paralysis. Many have said their original incontinence symptoms have not been improved by the surgery.

You can read more about this by clicking [here](#).

Scottish Labour leader Kezia Dugdale raised the scandal at First Minister's Questions in the Scottish Parliament on Thursday. She called on Nicola Sturgeon to ban the use of mesh products in Scotland's NHS which have left hundreds of women paralysed and in horrific pain.

An independent review of the use of mesh has been beset by scandal with survivors and clinicians resigning from the review group claiming the report has been compromised and 'whitewashed'. Former SNP Health Secretary Alex Neil branded the final review report as "[totally unacceptable](#)".

At First Minister's Questions Kezia Dugdale read out an email from the daughter of a mesh survivor to the SNP Health Secretary Shona Robison, which detailed the impact of mesh implants on the lives of countless women in Scotland. The email was sent at 2.30am on Thursday morning while Sophie cared for her mother.

The email said:

*Ms Robinson,*

*I'm contacting you this morning as you announce the MESH INDEPENDENT INQUIRY. HOW CAN YOU?!!!!*

*I attended Parliament, when you apologised to my Mum, who is a member of Scottish mesh survivors. I saw hope and maybe relief in my sick, disabled mums eyes.*

*You see Im struggling to remember my mum, before took her from me, no she's not dead, but she is a shell of the mum I'd previously loved adored and inspired by.*

*You have to come live a day in our life, on the days when the pain is so bad,*

*my fiercely independent mum, can't even brush her teeth.*

*I come home to share my apprenticeship and life's troubles etc, and my loving mum is so doped out her head , I know she won't remember our conversation. She blames herself for my lack of education, but it's hard to concentrate at school knowing your mums home crying in pain.*

*You know Ms Robison, my mum once thought and planned taking her own life, but something stopped her, a few days later she read "Hear our voice". She had a sparkle back in her eye, as she was no longer alone or Unique. I believe finding Scottish mesh survivors, saved my mum.*

*But Ms Robison, your Independent inquiry, is flawed so badly that your going to allow another family, young girl ( I'm 18,my mums been ill since I was 11) to experience this journey and that's so wrong. I had hoped you were going to prevent a child ,living like me.*

*I'm the next generation of Scottish woman, who you Catherine Calderwood MHRA , HAVE FAILED.*

*I LEAVE YOU WITH THIS THOUGHT," its 2:19 am, and my mum has a UTI, and in extreme pain is now in my bed, with me, as her pain meds cause her to be unsteady on her feet, and I need her to be safe. i deserve to have my mum here for all my Firsts..*

*So let down  
Sophie (18)*

**Speaking after First Minister's Questions, Kezia Dugdale said:**

*"Scottish mesh survivors are a group of women whose lives have been destroyed by a medical procedure that was supposed to help them get better.*

*"The heart-breaking story of Sophie, the 18-year old daughter of a mesh survivor, shows the devastating impact the mesh scandal has had on the lives of hundreds of women.*

*"One woman I spoke with can't sit down without excruciating pain and others have been paralysed. These women feared that the review into the use of mesh products would be a whitewash but that's exactly what it is.*

*"The mesh review was a cover-up. It is a national scandal. Nicola Sturgeon must listen to the mesh survivors and ban this dangerous practice."*

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**[Ten things you may have missed this](#)**

## **TEN THINGS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED THIS WEEK**

While Nicola Sturgeon focused on her plan for a divisive second independence referendum, here are ten things that happened under the SNP government this week:

- 1. New statistics revealed the SNP government has failed cancer patients for the FOURTH year running as waiting time standards were missed again.*
- 2. Victims of rape and sexual assault are being forced to wait days for being examined according to a damning report published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland. It found that services for rape victims were 'unacceptable' and often lagging behind those available in England and Wales.*
- 3. It was revealed there are 6,000 fewer beds in Scotland's hospitals since the SNP took office in 2007.*
- 4. Hundreds of women who have suffered life-changing injuries because of mesh operations used to treat issues such as post-childbirth incontinence were let down by a whitewash government report which withheld information about the dangers of the implants.*
- 5. The SNP ditched a promise to reduce junior doctors working hours – a promise made after a young female doctor died after driving home following a nightshift.*
- 6. It was announced that the opening of the Queensferry Crossing, the third bridge across the Forth, will be delayed by eight months.*
- 7. The alarming scale of overcrowding on ScotRail trains emerged, with some services recording up to 146% occupancy at rush hour.*
- 8. SNP government minister Keith Brown was forced to apologise for the collapse of a secretive investment deal with two Chinese firms, one of which was revealed to have been named in an Amnesty International report on human rights abuses.*
- 9. The redevelopment of Glasgow's Queen Street Station has been delayed, MSPs were informed by Network Rail.*
- 10. New figures revealed that fewer students from poorer backgrounds are going to Scotland's ancient universities for the second year in a row.*

The SNP government should focus on the job of governing. That means focusing on jobs, growing the economy and helping family incomes. That's why Labour has set out costed plans to stop the SNP's £170m cuts to local communities and why we'll support families by campaigning for an increase in Child Benefit.

On May 4th, there are local elections across Scotland. Only Labour has a plan to move Scotland forward, not backwards with another divisive referendum. Labour will be focused on delivering quality local services, such as schools, social care and standing up for our NHS. Read more [here](#)

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## [Kezia Dugdale responds to Brexit](#)

Commenting on the triggering of Article 50, which will start the Brexit process, Scottish Labour leader Kezia Dugdale said:

*"This is a deeply divisive moment in our country's history. The letter signed by the Prime Minister will have a seismic impact on Scotland's economy, risking thousands of jobs and livelihoods.*

*"At a time of such uncertainty, Scotland deserves better than two governments – the Tories and the SNP – which have adopted such extreme constitutional positions and are so determined to create deep divisions with our closest neighbours.*

*"I accept that those of us who backed Remain lost the EU referendum and the strength of our democracy rests on our respect for the will of the people.*

*"But while I accept that the UK is leaving the European Union, I am not prepared to stand by as Theresa May forges ahead with a plan for a settlement that will do incalculable damage to Scotland and the UK.*

*"Leave voters didn't back Brexit to make themselves poorer, but that is exactly what will happen under the current plans.*

*"I have written to the Prime Minister urging her to change her approach and secure the best possible Brexit deal, which should include free access to the single market for Scottish exporters, and allow Scottish firms to continue to recruit workers from elsewhere in the EU.*

*"The only thing more damaging for our economy than a Tory Brexit is the SNP's reckless plan for independence. We will never support something that brings greater hardship to working families. Unlike the SNP and the Tories, we will always stand up for Scotland and the best interests of people who live and work here."*

Read Kez's letter to the Prime Minister

here: <http://www.scottishlabour.org.uk/blog/entry/kezia-dugdale-outlines-best-brexit-deal-for-scotland>