

Today's stats reveal a relentlessly bleak picture for patients – Ashworth

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, responding to the latest NHS performance data,

said:

"Today's stats reveal a relentlessly bleak picture for patients at the start of the NHS's 70th Birthday. Eight years of severe austerity has left our health service woefully underfunded, understaffed and unprepared for the rise in demand as the cold period hits.

"Since the Tories took control of our NHS, there has been a staggering 400% increase in trolley waits and a 234% rise in patients waiting longer than four hours in A&E.

"December's A&E performance is the worst on record, with just 85.1% of patients being seen within four hours. This is a substantial performance decline and raises serious questions as to whether the Government can meet its pledge of meeting the 95% A&E target by their promised deadline of March 2018.

"Over the past few weeks we've heard the appalling human stories arising from the worst winter crisis on record. Enough is enough.

"Today NHS Providers has rightly warned that the funding settlement for the NHS is simply inadequate to provide the standards of patient care expected. The Government must listen. Only Labour will put in place a long term plan for the NHS giving it the funding needed for the future."