

“Urgent action required” as Theresa May’s NHS Crisis continues – Jonathan Ashworth

New figures published today show that there were 315 cancelled urgent operations in the NHS in December, including 12 cancelled for the second or more time.

In total there were 4,093 cancelled urgent operations in 2016, up from 3779 in 2015 and 3216 in 2014.

The NHS situation report for the week ending 22 January has been published today, showing further evidence of the strain on the health service:

- 51 different trusts reported serious operational pressures at some point.
- 11 trusts registered an OPEL 4 incident – indicating that they were unable to deliver comprehensive care, with increased potential for patient care and safety to be compromised.
- 43 temporary diverts from one A&E to another to provide temporary respite.
- 18 Trusts had bed occupancy over 99 per cent.

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour’s Shadow Health Secretary, responding to the latest winter pressure data, said:

“Theresa May’s NHS crisis continues, and the problems are worse and more widespread than in previous years. By underfunding and overstretching the NHS, the Tories have pushed health services to the brink.

“Even urgent operations are now being cancelled in record numbers – 4,093 in 2016, up 27 per cent in just two years. The Prime Minister needs to explain what she’s going to do to fix this mess – not just pass the buck to local health providers. Cuts to social care have left patients stuck in hospitals across the country even when they are ready to leave, with knock on effects for those waiting for treatment.

“Urgent action is required and Labour is calling for a sustainable health and social care package to be brought forward in the March Budget, so that the NHS and its patients never have to go through a winter like this again.”

[News story: The first English EMFF FLAG launch events get underway](#)

From:

First published:

27 January 2017

Part of:

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) supports launch event.

The MMO is delighted to support the launch events of two of our European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) over the next few days.

The launch events mark the next stage in the process after each of the successful English FLAGs were [issued £800,000 under the EMFF scheme](#) to deliver their community led local development strategies in England. The MMO is pleased to be able to attend both events.

Holderness FLAG will hold their launch event on 27 January 2017 at The Spa, Bridlington and Hastings FLAG will launch on 30 January 2017 at The Stade, Hastings.

Commenting on the FLAG launches Andrew Wells (MMO Board Member) said:

“It is very rewarding for the MMO to see Holderness and Hastings formally launch their FLAGs, knowing that they will use the knowledge of local stakeholders to tackle fisheries issues at a local level.

The journey the FLAGs have taken from application to refinement to panel has been a challenging one and it is a testament to the FLAGs that they were successful in securing EMFF funding. They can now use that funding to benefit fisheries communities.

I very much enjoyed reading about the Holderness FLAG journey to this point on our [marine developments blog](#) and I am looking forward to attending the Hastings FLAG launch in person on 30 January 2017.”

Press release: Interim Manager appointed: Support the Heroes

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has opened a statutory inquiry into [Support the Heroes \(registered charity number 1155853\)](#) and appointed an interim manager to run the charity. The inquiry was opened on 10 November 2016.

The charity has objects to support those serving or who have served in the Armed Forces. The charity currently furthers its objects by making grants to other charities.

The regulator opened the inquiry following its investigation into a number of complaints about the charity, in particular about its fundraising activities. The Commission has serious concerns about an agreement that the charity has entered with a commercial fundraising company. It is particularly concerned about the transparency of the charity's fundraising arrangements and the ability of the public to make an informed decision about donating to the charity. The regulator is also examining the charity's governance arrangements and the ability of the trustees to avoid or manage potential conflicts of interest. The Commission is also liaising with the Fundraising Regulator about its concerns with the charity's fundraising practices.

As a result of these serious concerns the Commission ordered the trustees not to part with any of the charity's property on 11 November 2016, as well as directing them to cease all fundraising while it conducts further investigations. The Commission froze the charity's and subsidiary's bank accounts on 18 November 2016.

The Commission appointed Brian Johnson of HW Fisher & Company as interim manager on 9 December 2016 to assist the Commission in swiftly addressing its regulatory concerns. The interim manager is appointed with all the powers and duties of a trustee and will act to the exclusion of the current charity trustees. This is a temporary appointment and will be reviewed on a regular basis in line with normal procedures.

The inquiry will examine the administration, governance and management of the charity by the trustees, in particular the extent to which the trustees have:

- ensured that conflicts of interest in the charity and its subsidiary have been adequately avoided or managed
- acted in the charity's best interests and acted in accordance with their legal duties
- responsibly managed the charity's resources and acted with reasonable care and skill in respect of its fundraising agreement with a professional fundraiser and associated risks to the charity's property
- adequately protected the charity's reputation and managed significant risks to public trust and confidence in the charity especially with regards to the conduct and reporting of fundraising activities conducted

by the charity or on its behalf

The charity's trustees have filed an appeal with the First-tier Tribunal (Charity) challenging the regulator's decision to appoint an interim manager.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. Reports of previous inquiries by the Commission are available on its website.

The charity's details can be viewed on the Commission's [online charity search tool](#).

Ends

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Notes to editors

1. The charity was featured in the programme '[The Great Military Charity Scandal](#)' which was broadcast on BBC One Scotland at 19:00, Tuesday 8 November 2016.
2. Fundraising is subject to a self-regulatory system. [The Fundraising Regulator](#) regulates all types of fundraising by charities based in England and Wales and adjudicate concerns and complaints about fundraising against the Code of Fundraising Practice. The Commission does however have a role in fundraising regulation where there is evidence that trustee actions or failings, in fulfilling their duties towards their charity, pose a serious risk to the charity or where it is identified that there is a serious risk to charitable funds, or to public trust and confidence.
3. The Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our [annual report](#).
4. Search for charities on our [online register](#).
5. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the Commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.
6. The Commission's decision to announce the opening of a statutory inquiry is based on whether it is in the public interest to do so and with

consideration of our objective to increase public trust and confidence in charities.

Speech: Ambassador Quarrey's speech for International Holocaust Remembrance day

I am very proud to be here at the Massuah Institute for the Study of the Holocaust on International Holocaust Remembrance Day. I would like to thank the leadership and staff of the centre and Minister of Justice Ayelet Shaked.

One of the most distressing conversations I have had in my time in Israel was in my first couple of weeks. I was visiting Cafe Britannia, a meeting place for Holocaust survivors, in Eshkol Regional Council. I spoke to several survivors that day, but one conversation really stuck with me. A lady in her 90s who had lived through the Holocaust in Romania told me how, in old age, the memories had got worse. In her youth, as she came to Israel and built a family, a home and a country, she had been able to contain those memories and look to the future. But now, with time for reflection and perhaps some loneliness, the memories of that terrible time – of family members lost and lives devastated – had come flooding back.

It was a stark, terrible reminder of the continuing human cost of the worst crime in history.

As time passes, there are fewer survivors. We must cherish them while we can. The responsibility becomes even greater for all of us – governments, civil society, individuals – to preserve the memory. In the UK, Holocaust Memorial Day has been marked each year since 2001. In 2016, around 6,000 different events took place across the UK. The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, whose patron is HRH The Prince of Wales, has chosen as its theme for this year – How can life go on? They will ask audiences to think about what happens after genocide and our own responsibilities in the wake of such a crime.

David Cameron, when he was Prime Minister, launched the UK Holocaust Commission to ensure the preservation of the memory. I was with him and the members of the Commission when they met at Yad Vashem in April 2014. One of their main recommendations was that a new Holocaust Memorial should be created. The British Government has since announced that it will be built right next to The Houses of Parliament by the River Thames. The design competition is underway and the memorial should be completed within a couple of years.

The Holocaust Memorial Foundation undertakes many other activities, including

ensuring that Holocaust education is a compulsory part of history education for 11-14 year olds; taking 28,000 students and teachers to Auschwitz-Birkenau; and helping the Anne Frank Trust work with more than 50,000 students in British schools.

Holocaust remembrance is vital. But it is also futile if we do not tackle contemporary anti-Semitism. We make a grave mistake if we think this is only a problem of the past.

The UK is one of the safest places in the world to be Jewish. The Jewish community in the UK is stable in terms of numbers, and thriving in every other sense. It makes a precious contribution to Britain. Levels of anti-Semitism are low as measured by international surveys. But we cannot ignore the fact that the number of anti-Semitic attacks has increased in recent years.

Theresa May, both when she was Home Secretary and now as Prime Minister, has been clear in her determination to fight anti-Semitism. The Government works closely with the Community Security Trust to protect the Jewish community in the UK. And Prime Minister May announced last month that the UK would be one of the first countries formally to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism, and that the British Government would confront all those who seek to undermine the right of Jewish people to live free of fear and harassment.

I pay tribute to the work of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, which has done so much over the last 20 years to rally international support for Holocaust education, remembrance and research. This cannot just be a national responsibility – it requires effective international leadership. Sir Eric Pickles leads this work for the UK. Other organisations such as the OSCE also have a vital role to play. We would like to see the OSCE adopt the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism as soon as possible. And are working with European partners to share best practice, for example from our own Community Security Trust. The CST's Police Officer's Guide to Judaism is being translated into several European languages.

For someone of my generation, the Holocaust was one of the central moral facts of our education. Sometimes, as I look at the appalling anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial that can be found so easily online, I wonder if that is still the case today. But then I think of the meeting I have with the Holocaust Education Trust's young ambassadors. Each year, around 20 of them come from the UK to Israel – none Jewish, but all committed to understanding and preserving the memory of the Holocaust and learning its lessons for our own societies today, as well as getting to know Israel and Judaism. The conversation is profound and inspiring. It gives me hope.

Thanks you again for inviting me to speak here today. It has been a great privilege.

Green Party politicians join Irish Brexit court case



Green Party

27 January 2017

*** Jonathan Bartley: "This is about putting power in Britain's hands."**

*** Keith Taylor: "The Government plans to force an extreme Brexit on the public without a mandate to do so."**

*** Steven Agnew: "This case should be welcomed by all UK citizens whether they voted leave or remain."**

UK Green Party politicians are among the politicians named today as plaintiffs in the 'Dublin Case' which seeks legal clarity on revocability of Article 50.

Jonathan Bartley, Co-leader of the Green Party of England and Wales, Northern Irish Green Party leader, Steven Agnew MLA, and the Green Party MEP for the South East of England, Keith Taylor, will join Jolyon Maugham QC, Director of the Good Law Project, as litigants in the case.

The proceedings seek a referral to the Court of Justice of the European Union on the question of whether Article 50, once triggered, can be unilaterally revoked by the UK government without requiring consent from all other 27 EU Member States.

The Green Party campaigned passionately for Remain in the EU referendum, but Bartley is clear that this case is about giving all of the British and Northern Irish public a 'legal safety net'.

He said:

"Any deal that will be negotiated around leaving the European Union would have consequences for the country for decades to come. The British people must not be kept in the dark. They must know what control and what options the country really has. This is about putting power in Britain's hands. We're asking the courts to give everyone clarity on the legal question of whether, in the event of things going badly wrong, or the country being driven over a cliff edge, the Government would be able to revoke Article 50."

"The Government claims that it can't revoke Article 50. But if it is wrong, the British people would have a safety net that could allow them a real choice in a referendum on the terms of the Brexit deal. They would be able to choose between accepting Theresa May's vision of extreme Brexit or rejecting it."

Keith Taylor, who represents the South East of England in the European Parliament, added:

"This case is particularly important as we learn more about the Conservative government's plan to force an extreme Brexit on the public without a mandate to do so."

"I believe Theresa May and Philip Hammond's proposals to send the country hurtling towards an extreme Brexit will see Britain as the ultimate loser in a global race to the bottom on everything from environmental regulations to workers' rights. The plan looks bad for Britain, the environment, jobs, and, ultimately, the British people. If the electorate reaches the same conclusion when the details become clearer, they must have the choice of putting a stop to the process."

Steven Agnew MLA believes the case is all the more important following the Supreme Court's ruling this week that the devolved administration has no legal right to have a say in Theresa May's negotiations with the EU.

Northern Ireland voted 56% to 44% to Remain in the EU in the June referendum.

Agnew said:

"The unique status of Northern Ireland is being ignored with our traditional parties involved in local squabbles. Any deal on the Irish border will have massive implications across the island and it is vital that the people of Northern Ireland have a say on the final proposal."

"For that to be meaningful the option to Remain must still be on the table. Otherwise, the UK has no leverage in Article 50 negotiations, as the current assumption is that if we like the Brexit deal, we leave, and if we don't like it, we leave anyway."

"Only if this case is successful will the UK have a choice, which is why I believe that this case should be welcomed by all UK citizens whether they voted leave or remain."

The £70,000 costs of the litigation were crowd-funded by Jolyon Maugham QC largely from small donations. There were almost 1,300 donations of £25 or less and over 1,700 donations of £50 or less.

Jolyon Maugham QC said:

"In 2016 the Country looked at the evidence and decided to leave the EU. I respect that decision: Article 50 should be triggered. But no one knows what lies around the corner. And it's in our interests that we have the option of remaining if new evidence shows that leaving is damaging people's job

security or rights at work or our ability to fund the NHS or national security.”

“Establishing that the Article 50 notification can be revoked gives us a free option in an uncertain world. Whether to exercise that option is for the electorate. But no one can deny that our national interest is served by us having it.”

The plenary summons will be filed with the Irish High Court on Friday. The Plaintiffs are targeting a hearing date of the application for a reference of March or April.

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