

More than 300,000 kids miss out on new Sick Kids hospital care

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Children in need of emergency hospital care have missed out on treatment at the new Sick Kids hospital on more than 300,000 occasions because of delays to the project, it has emerged.

The £150 million facility at Edinburgh's Little France site was supposed to be up-and-running by the end of 2012, but now won't open its doors until at least the autumn of next year.

Now Scottish Conservative research has revealed that, in that time, 312,441 youngsters have received accident and emergency care at the outdated facility in Sciennes.

That's in addition to the estimated 34,000 outpatient appointments which take place at the hospital each year.

Nicola Sturgeon was challenged on the issue at First Minister's Questions today.

She admitted she was "angry" at the situation, but suggested her SNP government shouldn't take responsibility for the failings.

Yesterday, health secretary Jeane Freeman said more problems at the new building meant further delays to the scheme.

In addition to the extra year's wait, taxpayers will now also have to find an extra £16 million to fix the latest problems.

Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw said:

"The ongoing problems over the last decade in relation to the Sick Kids project have been well publicised.

"Yet it seems SNP government ministers chose either not to know, or simply failed to ask, about the full extent of these issues until way too late.

"This has been an absolute shambles.

"The Sick Kids hospital was supposed to open at the end of 2012. Since then, more than 300,000 children in A&E alone have been denied access to the new hospital they and their parents were promised.

"This saga is sadly all too common.

"Ministerial assurances are given, completion dates pushed back then costs

spiral out of control.

“Yet, at the end of it all, no-one is held to account.”