

SNP must heed warnings to prepare NHS for ageing population

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The SNP has been urged to start listening to warnings about an ageing population, after projections today showed the number of pensioners is set to increase by 28 per cent.

The National Records of Scotland estimated the hike over the next 25 years, which would bring with it a rise in conditions like dementia.

Hospitals across the country are already struggling to cope with increasing numbers of patients, particularly those with diseases linked to living longer.

Shadow health secretary Miles Briggs said the NHS was already struggling as a result of the SNP's failure to plan for an ageing population.

And he said the problems would only worsen as that demographic increased.

Today's report revealed how the elderly population has rocketed in the last 10 years north of the border.

But by 2039, the number of over 75s will have gone from 430,000 to around 800,000.

In contrast, the population of 0-15-year-olds will rise by only one per cent.

Scottish Conservative shadow health secretary Miles Briggs said:

"Scotland's population has been ageing for some time, but this is a trend that's been utterly neglected by the SNP.

"We can already see the strain this Scottish Government complacency has put on the NHS.

"The warnings have been sounded for years, but the SNP has done nothing.

"Unless we see swift action now, the problems for hospital staff and patients are only going to get worse in the years ahead.

"The report is quite clear that there's going to be a heavily increasing elderly population north of the border, who risk being served by an NHS which

won't be remotely equipped to provide the help they need."

To see the full report, visit:

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/rgar/16/16rgar.pdf>