

Tory manifesto commitment on mixed sex wards in tatters as incidents rise 50% in a year

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Theresa May has been accused of abandoning yet another Tory Manifesto commitment as new figures reveal the number of NHS patients in mixed sex wards running 50% higher than this time last year.

New figures published by NHS England today show that hospitals breached mixed sex accommodation rules 1750 times during January and February this year – compared to 1164 in the same period last year

Mixed sex accommodation breaches have gone through the roof since Theresa May took over last July – with 5618 in the 8 months since she became Prime Minister, compared with just 4259 in the whole of 2015.

Ending mixed sex wards was a key pledge of David Cameron's Government in 2010 and the 2015 Conservative Manifesto included a promise to "continue to eliminate mixed sex wards".

Labour said today's figures showed that Theresa May's decision to restrain NHS spending was pushing hospitals to the brink.

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, said:

"Tory cuts to social care have seen hospital attendances rocket and now it seems Theresa May has given up on her manifesto promise to eliminate mixed sex wards. Patients expect dignity and respect when they're being treated in hospital but this Government is letting them down. The Government has overseen a

catastrophic collapse of patient standards and this failure on mixed sex wards is yet another sign that England's hospitals are at breaking point.

"The Prime Minister needs to get a grip and explain what she is going to do to fix the crisis which she has created. Every day that goes by brings more news of patient care getting worse under this Government. Quite simply the Government's policy of underfunding and mismanaging the NHS has left hospitals on the brink."

Ends

Editors notes

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The [Conservative Manifesto 2015](#) (P37) said: "We will ensure that English hospitals and GP surgeries are the safest in the world, places where you are treated with dignity and respect. We will continue to eliminate mixed-sex wards."

"Mixed sex wards virtually gone." *Jeremy Hunt, Speech to Conservative Party Conference, 1 October 2013*

<http://www.ukpol.co.uk/jeremy-hunt-2013-conservative-party-conference-speech/>

"The number of hospital-acquired infections continues to go down and *mixed-sex* wards have been virtually eliminated." *Jeremy Hunt, Hansard, 23 October 2012*

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2012-10-23/debates/12102347000022/NHSCost?highlight=mixed%20sex#contribution-12102347000044>

"We said that we would sort out mixed-sex wards and hospital-acquired infections—promise delivered."

David Cameron, Hansard, 18 March 2015, Column 756

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Mixed sex accommodation breaches available here:
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/mixed-sex-accommodation/msa-data/>

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There were 1040 breaches in January and 710 in

February – a 50% rise on the combined 1164 for the same two months last year.

We need protection from terrorism, but pointless laws serve no purpose – Diane Abbott

Diane Abbott MP, Labour's Shadow Home Secretary, responding to comments from the new independent reviewer of terrorism legislation, said:

"This review is welcome. Max Hill makes some good points on removing laws that are never used. We need protection from terrorism, but pointless laws serve no purpose.

"He also highlights the fact certain communities, in particular Muslims, feel unfairly targeted. This will add to wider concerns around the Government's Prevent strategy, which should also be reviewed."

These statistics show a worrying increase in both poverty and inequality – Debbie Abrahams

Debbie

Abrahams MP, Labour's Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, commenting on the Households Below Average Income statistics, said:

"These statistics show a worrying increase in both poverty and inequality. Four million children and two million older people are now living below the breadline. Those living with a disabled person are more likely than ever to be struggling to make ends meet.

"This is a direct result of this Government's seven wasted years of austerity and punitive social security cuts.

"The Tories' shocking failure to tackle the increasing costs of basic essentials, stagnating wages and their ruthless

slashing of social security is leaving working families worse off up to 2020.”

“Labour would reverse cuts to in-work support, ban the exploitative zero hours contracts being used on hundreds of thousands of workers, and guarantee a real Living Wage.”

Tory Government is not doing enough to ensure young people are on the electoral register – Cat Smith

Cat

Smith MP, Labour’s Shadow Minister for Voter Engagement and Youth Affairs, commenting on today’s Electoral Registration Statistics, said:

“While the increase in electoral registration numbers following the EU referendum is welcome, this Tory Government is still not doing enough to ensure that young people are on the register.

“That is why the Lords voted in favour of a Labour motion to the Higher Education and Research Bill, requiring universities to give students the option to register to vote when they sign up at university.

“If the Tories are serious about making every voice matter they need to keep this sensible addition when the Bill comes back to the Commons.”

Ends

Notes to editors:

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The total number of UK parliamentary electors increased by just over 1 million (2.3%) between December 2015 and December 2016, reflecting the high levels of public engagement with the EU referendum. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/elections/electoralregistration/bulletins/electoralstatisticsforuk/2016>

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A study from the Electoral

Commission in 2014 found that young people were a particularly under-represented group on the electoral register

http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/169889/Completeness-and-accuracy-of-the-2014-electoral-registers-in-Great-Britain.pdf

· Before the Conservatives rushed the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration, students were automatically enrolled by their universities. However, the Electoral Administration Act of 2013 did not provide for a suitable student registration to be put in place when the old system of household registration was abolished.

· On Monday 7th March the House of Lords voted in favour of Baroness Royall's amendment to the Higher Education and Research Bill. The amendment was passed, defeating the Government, by a majority of 200 to 189. The amendment would require universities to offer students the opportunity to register to vote at the point of enrolment or re-registration as a student at their university, a proposal first made by Paul Blomfield MP in the Commons.

[John McDonnell response to the Government's u-turn on £2 billion NICs rise in the Budget](#)

John

McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor,

responding to the Government's u-turn on its £2 billion NICs rise in the Budget last week, said:

"This is a humiliating reversal for the Chancellor forced upon him by Labour's opposition. His authority is now shredded after just one Budget, and he tore up a manifesto commitment to do it.

"We

welcome the Government's decision to finally listen to Labour's calls made in Jeremy Corbyn's Budget response along with those of business groups like the Federation of Small Businesses to not go ahead with an unfair £2bn tax rise on low and middle earners. But they should never have been placed in this

position

to start with, and now we face yet another Tory Budget only a year on with a blackhole in the billions. In 2015, we had the tax credit shambles. In 2016, we had Personal Independence Payments reversal. Now in 2017 we have the u-turn on National Insurance Contributions.

"There will be millions of working people who are now breathing a sigh of relief, but it is the Chancellor who should be holding his breath as this episode throws up urgent questions that he and the Cabinet must now answer.

"Did the

Prime Minister or the rest of the Cabinet, who must have seen the Budget in advance and known this measure was to be implemented, raise their concerns with the Chancellor before he announced it, worrying millions of families? It was in the weekend papers before the Budget so they can't say they were unaware it was to happen.

"This is also the second year we have had a Tory Budget with a black hole in it worth billions. This is not acceptable. What will he do to fill the shortfall in a Budget he delivered less than a week ago without pursuing unfair tax increases or further cuts to public services? As the Budget will still see working people £1,400 worse off under the Government.

"On

the day the Brexit Secretary has admitted that he hasn't looked into the costs of the Prime Minister's negotiating strategy, this is yet more proof that there is disarray at the top of a government clearly making things up as they go along.

"We need answers from the Chancellor and accountability at the top of government. In no workplace would such practices be allowed to continue, and it

should not be allowed from those responsible for the public finances. Labour's

new roundtable on self-employment will bring together business organisations, trade unions and self-employed groups to lay out a serious and realistic strategy to provide a fair deal for the self-employed at a time of major labour

market changes. We are proud to be the party of working people, small businesses, and the self-employed."