

## Midwife shortage due to Government underfunding is failing families in their time of need – Justin Madders

**Justin Madders MP, Labour's Shadow Health Minister**, responding

to today's Royal College of Midwives report on agency spending in the NHS, said:

"The Government's management of the NHS workforce has been a disaster for both staff and patients. The country is now 3,500 short of the number of midwives needed and the RCM say almost £100m is being used to plug the gaps with temporary staff.

"It's essential that hospitals are able to get the right number of midwives in place to keep mothers and their babies safe. Labour's research published earlier this year showed a huge rise in temporary closures of maternity units because of short staffing. The Government's underfunding of the NHS is failing families in their time of need.

"Ministers must step in with a long term workforce plan for the NHS and they should put an end to the self-defeating pay cap. At the moment too much money is going to employment agencies when it should be going to frontline patient care."

---

## The pressures facing children's services are unsustainable – Andrew Gwynne MP

**Andrew**

**Gwynne MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**,

commenting on the National Children's Bureau's survey of local councillors responsible for children's services, which has revealed that rising demand and a lack of resources are leaving children's needs unmet, said:

"The pressures facing children's services are unsustainable, with a combination of

Government funding cuts and huge increases in demand leaving many authorities struggling to cope.

"The Government urgently needs to get a grip of the crisis facing children's social services, as the £2 billion funding gap facing these services by 2020 threatens to put more children at risk."

---

## [The Government must repair damage caused to legal aid reforms, not apply a plaster to a broken system – Richard Burgon](#)

**Richard Burgon MP, Labour's Shadow Justice Secretary**, responding to today's statement by Justice Secretary David Lidington that the government's review into its Legal Aid reforms will conclude by July 2018, said:

"When people can't afford to defend their rights, those rights are worth nothing more than the paper they are written on. Government cuts to legal aid have priced out hundreds of thousands of people from being able to enforce their hard won rights.

"Justice delayed is justice denied, so it is disappointing that even though the Government first announced its review nine months ago, it still won't conclude for another nine months.

"The Government must use this review to fundamentally repair the damage caused by its legal aid reforms, rather than simply applying a sticking plaster to a broken system."

---

# Ministers have squandered a real opportunity to curb highly addictive Fixed Odds Betting Terminals – Tom Watson MP

**Tom Watson MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport**, responding to the Government's review into gambling stakes and prizes and social responsibility measures, said:

"This response from the Government is deeply disappointing.

"Ministers have squandered a real opportunity to curb highly addictive Fixed Odds Betting Terminals, which can cause real harm to individuals, their families and local communities. After months of delays they've simply decided to have another consultation.

"And instead of taking firm measures on the proliferation of gambling advertising, on TV and online, the Government have again been found wanting.

"Britain is suffering from a hidden epidemic of gambling addiction. The measures announced today will do very little for those suffering from gambling addiction and for the millions, including hundreds of thousands of children, who are at risk of developing an addiction.

"Labour is committed to reducing the maximum stake for FOBTs to £2 a spin and will ban gambling company advertising on football shirts."

---

## Next month's budget must address unprecedented workforce crisis in our

# NHS – Jonathan Ashworth

**Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's**

**Shadow Health Secretary**, responding

to the Health Foundation's warning that NHS workforce planning is 'not fit for purpose', said:

"Theresa May has overseen an unprecedented workforce crisis in the NHS. This latest warning is the culmination of an incompetent strategy, which has left our health service with a shortage of 40,000 nurses, 3,500 midwives and 10,000 GPs.

"For years the Tories have taken NHS staff for granted and asked them to do more for less, resulting in a recruitment and retention crisis which threatens patient care on a daily basis.

Evidently the Government's hope of recruiting 2,000 extra foreign GPs by 2020 looks thoroughly unlikely.

"The public is under no illusions:

a repeat of last winter is entirely intolerable. In next month's Budget the Government must take urgent action to secure a sustainable workforce in our NHS in years to come."