

UK ambulance workers left with no hand sanitiser, wipes or masks and faulty testing gear



GMB's hardworking ambulance members put patients first – but they shouldn't have to risk their lives to do so

Ambulance workers across the UK turned up for shifts this morning to find no hand sanitiser, face masks or wipes and faulty testing equipment, GMB Union says.



Paramedics and ambulance workers are also being forced to deal with inconsistent guidance and fatigue due to increased workloads as colleagues self-isolate.



Meanwhile 111 call numbers are up to 70% higher than this time last year.

GMB has five key demands the Government must meet to keep emergency workers – and the British public – safe:

1. Priority testing for vital workers.
2. Full pay for all vital workers who have to self-isolate and the Government to underwrite any employers who can't afford it.
3. Priority emergency PPE given as a priority to vital health workers e.g. goggles, thermometers, masks, hand sanitisers.
4. Full Agenda for Change for all vital workers to reflect risks and overtime.
5. Paid-time childcare or care support for vital health workers.

Rachel Harrison, GMB National Officer, said:

"The stories we are getting from the front line are obscene.

"How can you expect our emergency workers to deal with the COVID-19 crisis without hand sanitiser, wipes or masks?

"Our hardworking ambulance members will always put the patients first – but they shouldn't have to unnecessarily risk their lives to do so.

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"This terrible situation is the direct result of ten years of crushing cuts to our NHS. Managers of ambulance services are at a loss as to what to do – they want to protect staff but are unable to.

"But the Government and Public Health England can take steps to make it right – starting by meeting our five key demands to keep the country safe."



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