



NHS covid staffing crisis 'bitter fruit of Conservative cuts'

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GMB Union says the 'catastrophic' NHS covid staffing crisis is the 'bitter fruit' of a decade of Conservative cuts – long before the pandemic.

A total of 39,142 NHS staff at hospital trusts in England were absent for covid-related reasons on January 2, up 59 per cent from 24,632 the previous week and more than three times the 12,508 at the start of December. [1]

GMB members at ambulance trusts across the UK report thousands of absences – as high as one in five in some trusts.

Rachel Harrison, GMB National Officer, said:

“Our NHS and ambulance service have been chronically understaffed for years – long before covid.



“Now we face a catastrophic staffing crisis.

“A decade of Conservative cuts and austerity left is bearing bitter fruit.

“Thousands of ambulance trust staff are off – as high as one in five in some trusts.

“After years of extreme pressure and nearly two years of working in a state of fear, staff are angry and exhausted - they have nothing left to give.

“Meanwhile the Government has no plan and is desperately spinning plates in the hope of keeping our NHS and social care on life support.

"This is crisis caused by cuts and exposed by covid."