

Theresa May Refuses To Accept Government Responsible For Nurses Using Food Banks

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Theresa May has been condemned for refusing to accept the government's public sector pay freeze could be responsible for reports that nurses are having to use food banks.

The prime minister was repeatedly challenged this morning by the BBC's Andrew Marr over Royal College of Nursing figures that show some nurses have had a 14% pay cut since 2010 and are having to resort to using food banks in order to eat.

"That is not the kind of country you want to run is it?" he asked. "We have nurses going to food banks, that must be wrong?"



Andrew Marr quizzes Theresa May over reports nurses are using food banks.

The BBC presenter cited figures from the Trussell Trust charity which showed 1.2 million food parcels had been delivered under the Conservatives.

"You said you were going to be out there for the ordinary working people, those are people who are really suffering. I have asked you under your government, if people vote Conservative again, is that going to carry on and the answer seems to be 'yes'," Marr told the prime minister.

In a separate interview with ITV's Peston on Sunday programme this morning, May also refused to say she would see it as a failure if the gap between the rich and poor widened under her leadership.

According to the [Sunday People](#), trainee nurses have been forced to turn to food banks and payday loans to get by. The newspaper reports 6,500 nurses have had to receive help.

Labour's shadow business secretary Barry Gardiner said the reason nurses were having to resort to using food banks to eat was simply "not enough money to buy food. And this Tory government".

And Ian Lavery, Labour's election campaign coordinator, told BBC's Sunday Politics that May's answers showed she lacked "common decency"

"The heroes of the NHS, have had a reduction of 14% in their wages since 2010 and are using food banks to feed themselves. Does that not say everything that's wrong with today's society?" he added.

Liberal Democrat MP Alistair Carmichael said the interview with May showed "just how out of touch Theresa May is".

"When asked about the scandal of nurses going to food banks, all she could respond with were empty slogans," he said.

"Nurses, teachers and police are all seeing a relentless Brexit squeeze to their incomes under this Conservative government, as wages fall and prices go up. This problem is set to get worse, with nurses facing a 12% pay cut by the end of the decade as a result of rising inflation.

He added: "This election is a chance to change Britain's future and protect our NHS and people's living standards from a disastrous hard Brexit."