

Corbyn demands answers from PM over NHS 'humanitarian crisis'

sky **news.sky.com**/story/red-cross-britains-emergency-health-system-is-humanitarian-crisis-10720437

Jeremy Corbyn is demanding Prime Minister Theresa May comes to the Commons on Monday to set out how she plans to "fix her failure on the NHS".

It comes after the head of the British Red Cross claimed the National Health Service was facing a "humanitarian crisis" due to Government cuts.

Mike Adamson told Sky News he was "not trying to embarrass anyone" but hospitals are "feeling the pressure" amid "increasingly chaotic situations".

The chief executive said the phrase "humanitarian crisis" was justified because those the charity had spoken to feel like they are in crisis as they are not able to get the assistance they need.

Mr Adamson said: "We have been called in to support the NHS and help get people home from hospital and free up much-needed beds."

Labour leader Mr Corbyn said "this is a national scandal" and the NHS "crisis" was "unprecedented".

He went on: "People are lying on trolleys in corridors waiting to be seen. Hospitals have had to close their doors, unable to admit patients.

"The health service is at breaking point. But this crisis is not due to an outbreak of disease. It is a crisis made in Downing Street by this government - a crisis we warned them about."

Hundreds of thousands who used to get assistance from social care are no longer doing so because of billions of pounds of cuts, according to Mr Adamson.



Image Caption: Ambulances were diverted 42 times in Christmas week alone

He said his Red Cross volunteers were working with more than 100 hospitals across the country and were "picking up some of the slack".

They have already helped staff at the East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) across Nottingham, Leicester, Kettering, Northampton and Lincoln.

Sky's Frazer Maude said about a third of NHS trusts in England and Wales are on black alert, meaning they are encouraging anyone who needs A&E treatment to try and find help elsewhere.

Meanwhile, he said, EMAS has for the first time had to implement a level four 'capacity management plan', which is what prompted it to call on partners like the Red Cross to help transfer patients.

It comes as new figures show that between 1 December and 1 January, there were 143 A&E diverts across England - a 63% rise on the 88 recorded for 1 December to 3 January the previous year.

Diverts occur when an A&E department cannot cope with any more patients so people are sent to a different A&E.

Data from the Nuffield Trust shows that a third of England's 150 hospitals trusts warned last month that they needed urgent action to cope. Seven of those admitted they were unable to provide comprehensive care.

Worcestershire Royal Hospital is investigating three deaths, two of them in A&E, within the space of four days in the last week.