

Ambulance admission and transfer deaths more than double, shock figures reveal



True figure likely to be higher as reporting voluntary for NHS trusts, warns GMB Union

The crisis in the nation's ambulance service is laid bare in a letter to the Secretary of State, Steve Barclay MP, from Rachel Harrison, GMB National Secretary.

The union is releasing the figures, obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, ahead of tomorrow's ambulance industrial action.



GMB, which represents ambulance workers, said that its members are taking a stand over pay and unsafe conditions for patients and staff.

The NHS England disclosure reveals that deaths associated with patient transfer from ambulances to hospitals increased by 133% last year.

According to the NHS England National Reporting and Learning System show that:

- 93 deaths were reported in the 'access, admission, transfer, discharge' category in 2021/22, up from 40 in 2020/21.
- 'Severe harm' incidents tripled – from 51 cases to 154 in a year. Severe harm means incidents that 'appears to have resulted in permanent harm'.
- 5,092 patient incidents were recorded – up from 3,866 from 2017/18 (an increase of 32%).

GMB ambulance members report that these figures partly reflect increasing delays in ambulance services caused by understaffing and rising demand.

The union is calling on Ministers to enter into negotiations to resolve the dispute.

Rachel Harrison, GMB National Secretary, said:

"These shocking figures prove what our ambulance members tell us: services are less safe due to rising demand and delays.

"The Government knows about this really worrying situation, yet they continue to under resource our NHS.

"There is a recruitment and retention crisis in the NHS with 133,500 unfilled vacancies in England alone. Ambulance women and men are leaving the NHS to take better paid, less stressful jobs.

"If Ministers are serious about patient safety they need to enter into negotiations and talk pay now."

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