

# Three quarters of paramedics burn out before sixty, shock figures show



## Lifesaving ambulance workers retire with ill health or even die in service before receiving pension

The overwhelming majority (75 per cent) of paramedics who retired last year left the NHS before the age of sixty, new figures show.



The finding comes as GMB calls for ambulance workers retirement age to be brought into line with those of other emergency service workers.

Paramedics aged 50 and above who left the NHS in 2018/19 were at a higher risk of being dismissed, of retiring early due to ill-health or with a reduced pension, or even of dying in service, than other NHS workers.

Analysis of data provided to GMB by NHS Digital reveals that only 21 per cent of paramedic retirements were at the normal retirement age last year, compared to 36 per cent of retirements for all NHS workers.

**“**It’s heart breaking to think of the paramedics who dedicate their career to saving lives working themselves so hard they have to retire – or even die in service. Our members work desperately hard saving lives – but they just can’t keep it going until they are 68.

**Rachel Harrison, GMB National Officer**

The shock figures emerge as part of GMB’s campaign to have ambulance worker pension age to be brought in line with other emergency services.

Ambulance workers are currently expected to work up until the age of 68. GMB ambulance members have asked: “How do you reassure the 59-year-old heart attack victim that the two 67-year-old ambulance personnel can safely carry him downstairs?”

**Rachel Harrison, GMB National Officer, said:**

“It’s heart breaking to think of the ambulance workers who dedicate their career to saving lives working themselves so hard they have to retire – or even die in service.

“Our members work desperately hard saving lives – but they just can’t keep it going until they are 68.

**Our NHS belongs in public hands**

[Help us scrap Section 75](#)

“They know it’s impossible and could risk the lives of their patients

“It’s not fair on our life saving ambulance staff and the Government must review this desperately unfair situation.”



---

## Press office

079859 1525698

[press.office@gmb.org.uk](mailto:press.office@gmb.org.uk)

## Member requiring help?

Click to contact your local GMB Region

[info@gmb.org.uk](mailto:info@gmb.org.uk)

