



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Minister of State for Health (Secondary Care)

39 Victoria Street
London
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Ms Joanne Andrews
HM Area Coroner
West Sussex, Brighton and Hove Coroner Service
The Coroner's Office
Woodvale
Lewes Road
Brighton
BN2 3QB

19 January 2025

Dear Ms Andrews,

Thank you for the Regulation 28 report of 5 August sent to the Secretary of State regarding the death of Maureen Brenda Batchelor. I am replying as the Minister with responsibility for urgent and emergency care.

Firstly, I would like to say how saddened I was to read of the circumstances of Ms Batchelor's death and I offer my sincere condolences to their family and loved ones. The circumstances your report describes are very concerning and I am grateful to you for bringing these matters to my attention. Please accept my sincere apologies for the delay in responding to this matter.

The report raises concerns over unsafe use of non-clinical corridors for patient care, and persistent and severe emergency department overcrowding.

In preparing this response, my officials have made enquiries with NHS England and I understand they have already responded to address your concerns.

The Government acknowledges that urgent and emergency care (UEC) performance has not consistently met expectations in recent years. However, we are committed to ensuring patients receive the highest standard of service and care from the NHS. That is why our 10-Year Health Plan set out commitments to restoring waiting standards to those set out in the NHS Constitution by the end of this Parliament.

We are taking serious steps to achieve this. Our [Urgent and Emergency Care Plan for 2025/26](#) focuses on improvements to deliver better UEC performance both daily and during winter pressures, ensuring more patients receive timely and clinically appropriate care. We are aiming for 78% of patients to be seen in in 4 hours this year, meaning over 800,000 people will receive more timely care. Key actions to help achieve this include:

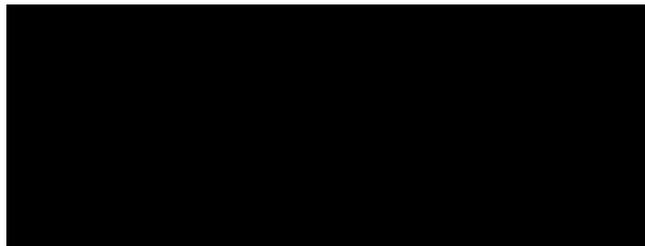
- Investing £250 million into expanding same day and urgent care services, helping avoid unnecessary admissions to hospital and supporting faster diagnosis, treatment and discharge for patients.
- Increasing the number of patients receiving urgent care in primary, community and mental health settings.
- Introducing new clinical operational standards for the first 72 hours of care to support better hospital flow. These set minimum expectations for timely review, availability of advice, and coordinated care when multiple specialist teams are involved.
- In the longer-term, our 10 Year Health Plan will increase the urgent care capacity outside hospital through new neighbourhood health services, reducing demand pressures on A&E.

Regarding your concerns on corridor care, the provision of clinical care in corridors is unacceptable. We will publish data on the prevalence of corridor care for the first time to support transparency and drive improvement. NHS England has been working with trusts since 2024 to put in place new reporting arrangements. The data quality is currently being reviewed, and we expect to publish the information shortly.

Despite increasing demand, A&E 4-hour performance has improved, supporting better patient flow, and showing that the measures we are taking are already having a positive impact. The latest NHS figures show that in November 2025, 4-hour A&E performance improved to 74.2%, up from 72.2% in November last year.

I hope this response provides reassurance that the Government is taking meaningful action to improve urgent and emergency care services. Thank you once again for bringing these concerns to my attention.

Yours sincerely,



MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH