



13 January 2013 Last updated at 11:20

17 hospitals with unsafe staffing, says Care Quality Commission

Seventeen NHS hospitals are among 26 healthcare providers that are failing to operate with safe staffing levels, the Care Quality Commission has said.

[The Daily Telegraph says the health watchdog issued the hospitals](#) with warnings after carrying out inspections as recently as November last year. Labour - which released the information - said the findings reflected a "toxic" combination of cuts and reorganisation.

The government said the number of NHS clinical staff had risen since 2010.

Late last year the commission highlighted staffing problems in NHS hospitals in its review of services. This list gives further details about those findings. BBC health correspondent Adam Brimelow says it comes at a sensitive time.

"It is in advance of the public inquiry report into the scandal at Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust. Its findings will address the failure of regulators to identify and tackle a range of problems including staff shortages," our correspondent said.

The 17 hospitals are named as: Scarborough Hospital; Milton Keynes Hospital; Royal Cornwall Hospital; Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust in Liverpool; Queen's Hospital, Romford; Stamford & Rutland Hospital; Southampton General Hospital; Croydon University Hospital; Bodmin Hospital; Northampton General Hospital; St Peter's Hospital, Maldon; Queen Mary's Hospital, London; Chase Farm Hospital, London; Westmorland General Hospital, Cumbria; Pilgrim Hospital, Lincolnshire; St Anne's House, East Sussex; and Princess Royal Hospital, West Sussex. Also named is the London Ambulance Service and eight mental health trusts. They are: Ainslie and Highams Inpatient Facility, London; Campbell Centre, Bedford; Forston Clinic, Dorset; Cavell Centre, Peterborough; Bradgate Mental Health Unit, Leicestershire; Avon and Wiltshire NHS Mental Health Trust; Blackberry Hill Hospital, Bristol; and Park House, Manchester.

A spokesman for the CQC said it had told the hospitals they must comply with its standards, and show how they were going to achieve this.

'Publish evidence'

Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt said he expected "swift action" to be taken by those named.

"There can be no excuse for not providing appropriate staff levels when across the NHS generally there are now more clinical staff working than there were in May 2010 - including nearly 5,000 more doctors and almost 900 extra midwives.

"Nursing leaders have been very clear that hospitals should publish staffing levels and the evidence to support them twice a year. We fully support this and will put an extra £12.5 billion into the health service by 2015."

Mike Farrar, chief executive of the NHS Confederation, said he was "absolutely convinced that the hospitals in these cases will have taken swift action to improve the levels of service and indeed the levels of staffing on those wards".

Labour points out that nursing numbers in England are down nearly 7,000 since the coalition came to power. It says providers could not provide the standards of care everyone wants to see if they were overstretched.

Shadow Health secretary Andy Burnham said: "The government is doing its best to lay the blame for the ills of the NHS at the door of the nursing profession. But nurses will not be able to provide the standards of care we all want to see when they are so overstretched and the wards so short-staffed."

And Labour leader Ed Miliband told the BBC's Andrew Marr programme that the figures were a "shocking set of findings".

He added: "The government's got to explain what's happening in our hospitals, why this is being allowed to happen. It's got to take action to do something about it."