

Press release: Lord Darzi's Report 'Independent Investigation of the National Health Service in England'

Date: 12th September 2024

Unfair and Ignored

The health of children and young people has been overlooked for over a decade. The lack of funding and focus has had detrimental long-term effects of the health of the population, with a significant impact on the UK economy.

The true measure of a nation's standing is how well it attends to the health and safety of children and young people (UNICEF, 2007)

Lord Darzi's report published today clearly outlines that health systems in England have failed children and young people, with

- 100,000 infants waited more than 6 hours in Emergency departments to be seen, with nearly 500,000 children and young people waiting more than four hours and 225,00 waiting more than six hours
- 40,000 children and young people waiting more than a year for access to community services
- 343,000 referrals for children and young people under the age of 18 are on waiting lists for mental health services, with 109,000 waiting more than a year for mental health support.

The new Government has articulated the intention to build the NHS fit for the future and to create the healthiest generation of children ever, the Prime Minister has outlined three top priorities for reform: moving the NHS away "from an analogue to a digital" service; shifting more care from hospitals into communities; and "to be much bolder" with policies to prevent illness.

To assure the health of children and young people and to address deficiencies in the NHS and partner organisations, the Association of British Paediatric Nurses calls for the Government to urgently set out their plans to deliver solutions to address the major deficits which are impacting on children's health and well-being and end the long-term disparity in children's health care including:

- Investment in health promotion services to overturn the £191 million cuts to services for young children especially in relation to health visiting and school nursing services.

- Investment in primary care for children, to ensure that children can access appropriate, equitable community services, especially Community Children’s Nursing (CCN) services and help keep children out of hospital.
- Establish equitable child and adolescent mental health and emotional well-being services.

“The ambition to ‘create the healthiest generation of children ever’ is a laudable one and one that children’s nurses can contribute their skills, knowledge and expertise to achieving. Children’s nurses, regardless of what setting they are working in, have a unique opportunity to be part of incredible change to the lives, health and well-being of the children and families we work with”

Professor Bernie Carter, President

Notes for editors

The term child refers to infants, children, young people and young adults up to 25 years of age

The ABPN recognises that primary and community services, as well as child public health and mental health services, including school nurses and health visitors also have a key role in supporting children, young people and families.

Lord Darzi’s report – [Independent Investigation of the National Health Service in England](#)

Association of British Paediatric Nurses position statement in relation to Lord Darzi’s Independent Investigation of the National Health Service in England – see www.abpn-uk.com

UNICEF - <https://www.unicef.org.uk/>

UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund) (2007) Child Poverty in Perspective: An overview of child well-being in rich countries, Innocenti Report Card 7. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

The ABPN is a network of children’s nurses with a wide membership of experts in clinical practice, education, leadership and research. It is the oldest children’s nursing association in the world, established in 1938.

www.abpn-uk.com

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