



Improvement of Care for Eating Disorders QSD on 4 February 2020

On 4 February 2020, Baroness Parminter (Liberal Democrat) is due to ask Her Majesty's Government "what steps they are taking to improve the care offered to sufferers of eating disorders".

Summary

- The NHS states that the most common eating disorders are anorexia nervosa, bulimia, binge eating disorder (BED) and other specified feeding or eating disorder (OSFED). OSFED is the most common, followed by BED and bulimia. Anorexia is the least common.
- On 2 January 2020, data from NHS Digital showed that hospital admissions for eating disorders have risen by more than a third (37 percent) across all age groups over the last two years. The chief executive of charity Young Minds described these figures as "worrying" and emphasised that getting earlier support can prevent problems escalating.
- On 7 January 2020, Baroness Parminter asked the Government what steps it was taking following the reported rise in hospital admissions for eating disorders. The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care, Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford, advised that eating disorder services are due to be "ramped up" as part of the £2.3 billion that is being invested into adult mental health services by 2023/24, as stated in the NHS Long Term Plan.
- The NHS Mental Health Dashboard states that, during the first quarter of 2019/20, 77.7 percent of children and young people with an eating disorder received treatment within one week in urgent cases and 83.4 percent within four weeks for non-urgent cases. The NHS Long Term Plan commits to increasing investment in children and young people's eating disorder services over the next five years.
- In December 2017, the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) published the *Ignoring the Alarms: How NHS Eating Disorder Services are Failing Patients* report. The report made five recommendations for improvements in NHS eating disorder services.
- In June 2019, the House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee inquiry concluded that insufficient progress had been made on delivering the PHSO's report recommendations. In response, the Government advised of the renewed commitment to mental health services in the NHS Long Term Plan.
- The UK's eating disorder charity, Beat, has recently spoken of the limited funding for research into eating disorders and has called for further research into the development of earlier interventions.

Claire Brader | 28 January 2020

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Any comments on Library briefings should be sent to the Head of Research Services, House of Lords Library, London SW1A 0PW or emailed to purvism@parliament.uk.

Further Information

- NHS England, [Eating Disorders](#), 16 January 2018

NHS overview of the different types of eating disorders, treatments and causes.

- NHS England, '[NHS Mental Health Dashboard: Key Points](#)', accessed 24 January 2020

Summary of latest statistics and figures around mental health funding, investment and treatment in England.

- NHS England, [NHS Mental Health Dashboard](#), December 2019

This dashboard collates key data from mental health services to measure the performance of the NHS. It shows how mental health services are performing and provides technical details explaining how mental health services are funded and delivered. The dashboard is published on a quarterly basis.

- NHS England, [The NHS Long Term Plan](#), January 2019, pp 50 and 68–9

Paper providing a short overview of planned investments in children and young people's eating disorder services, as set out in the NHS Long Term Plan.

- Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, [Ignoring the Alarms: How NHS Eating Disorder Services are Failing Patients](#), 6 December 2017, pp 4–5 and 15–17

Paper providing a summary of key recommendations made to NHS organisations by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) in 2017. This followed the PHSO's investigation into the death of Averil Hart to anorexia nervosa.

- House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee, [Ignoring the Alarms Follow-up: Too Many Avoidable Deaths from Eating Disorders](#), 18 June 2019, HC 855 of session 2017–19, pp 3 and 29–34

Paper published in June 2019 following the aforementioned PHSO's report into the death of Averil Hart. The House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee launched an inquiry to investigate what progress had been made in implementing the PHSO's wider recommendations. This paper includes five recommendations, including those relating to the training of doctors and the quality and availability of adult eating disorder services.

- HM Government, [Government Response to the Recommendations of the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee's Seventeenth Report of Session 2017–19: Ignoring the Alarms Follow-up: Too Many Avoidable Deaths from Eating Disorders](#), August 2019, CP 105

Paper providing the Government's response to the House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee's 2019 report. It sets out the Government's response to the committee's conclusions and recommendations.

- Royal College of Psychiatrists, [Position Statement on Early Intervention for Eating Disorders](#), May 2019

Paper providing the Royal College of Psychiatrists' view, with supporting evidence, that early intervention for eating disorders is essential. It also makes recommendations for actions to improve service provision in this area.

Parliamentary Debate, Statements and Questions

- [Oral Question on 'Health: Eating Disorders'](#), HL Hansard, 7 January 2020, cols 35–7
- House of Commons, ['Written Question: NHS: Standards'](#), 7 January 2020, 64

Press Articles and Comment

- Sarah Marsh and Pamela Duncan, ['Eating Disorders: 12 Deaths in Seven Years Led to Coroner Warnings'](#), *Guardian*, 19 January 2020
- Andrew Griffin, ['Hospital Admissions for Eating Disorders Soar in 'Very Worrying' Trend'](#), *Independent*, 2 January 2020
- Beat, ['Rise in Reported Cases of Anorexia Among Children, BMJ Research Shows'](#), 24 October 2020