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Hopkins concerned over hospital superbug

The Government must do more to support local hospitals such as Airedale in the fight against the spread of new superbug clostridium difficile ('C difficile'), Cllr Kris Hopkins, the Conservative Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Keighley and Ilkley, has insisted.

Newly published figures have revealed that June was the worst month on record for patients, staff and visitors at Airedale contracting C-difficile with 33 cases reported – bringing the hospital's total for the period April to June to 80, almost double its own target of 45.

These statistics come on the back of statistics published in May which showed that almost 600 patients aged 65 or over were treated at Airedale Hospital for symptoms of C-difficile over the last three years including 179 in 2006.

Across England as a whole, there were almost 60,000 cases of C-diff amongst pensioners – figures are not kept for younger people – an increase of 12,000 from 2004 when records first began.

Cllr Hopkins said he believed the spread of hospital superbugs such as C-difficile and MRSA were an inevitable consequence of the Government's decision to cut 6,000 nursing jobs to save money in the NHS.

He said:

“Outbreaks such as this are extremely distressing for everyone affected but, sadly, also very predictable.

“I would like to pay great credit to managers at Airedale Hospital for setting up the summit meeting to decide how best to tackle these problems and no doubt the limited amount of additional funding they are due to receive will help with this process.

“However, the fact remains that this is a crisis that should never have happened, and the blame for it lies firmly at the door of Gordon Brown who was the mastermind of the huge NHS we have witnessed in recent years.

“People got to hospital to get better, not to be made more ill.

“The Government must learn by the consequences of its action that such its NHS cutbacks are putting people’s lives at risk.

“We must ensure that such a man-made crisis is not created in our hospitals ever again.”

Notes to Editors

Kris Hopkins was elected Leader of Bradford Council in May 2006

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