

The NHS: some facts

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Some facts on the NHS seem to be important to inform debate. Try these:

- * New Accident and Emergency waiting times figures are the worst since targets were introduced in 2004, with one in six patients waiting longer than four hours for an appointment.
- * 83.6% of patients were treated in four hours or less in October, down from 89.1% in October 2018

- * Cancer waiting times are the worst on record
- * Health spending has risen by an average of 3.7% per year since the NHS was founded, but only by 1.5% since 2010.
- * Cuts to public services spending in other departments - of 25% per head since 2010 - have added to pressures on the NHS, as has the UK's ageing population.
- * A major increase in health investment spending is needed to bring the UK up to the OECD average.
- * There are £3bn of critical maintenance issues to fix, including basic building problems such as collapsing ceilings and leaking sewage.

- * It is estimated that £5.6bn per year of additional investment is needed - an 80% increase in annual spend - over the next five years to bring our spending on health capital per head up to the OECD average.

- * Spending on public health has fallen by £850m since 2014, hitting the poorest areas the hardest. These cuts increase pressures on health and other public services, and make little economic sense given the high rates of return on public health spending.

It's pretty dispiriting. And that's before Brexit privatisation is considered.