

Hospitals: There simply aren't enough beds

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In a report released by the [British Medical Association](#) (the BMA) on 20 February 2017, doctors have blamed a lack of beds for the failure to provide a good standard of care to patients.

The statistics are frightening. Between 2006 and 2015 alone, the number of overnight beds dropped by 20%. The BMA describe this as a supply and demand problem which hugely effects the emergency departments. The long wait for beds is now routinely reported in the National Press, with patients being treated in corridors.

Pre-booked and often urgent operations, known as elective operations, are regularly cancelled to create space for higher priority cases, causing distress to both patients and their families; logistically and emotionally.

The BMA further refer to the UK having the second lowest number of beds in the whole of Europe. [The Department of Health](#), continues to bury its head in the sand. Its response so far has been only to query the BMA's figures without a convincing explanation as to why the figures are disputed.

With emergency doctors and trauma departments unable to carry out their work and spending longer periods of time juggling beds, the less time they have treating patients. Mistakes are bound to happen. The result: patients feel desperately let down.

Currently there appears to be very little in the way of encouraging news to counter these worsening statistics.

For more information, please contact Jodi Newton, a partner in our Clinical Negligence Department. Jodi can assist you with any questions you may have relating to medical negligence or personal injury.

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Note: This is not legal advice; it is intended to provide information of general interest about current legal issues.