



Shortest hospital waits ever in Northamptonshire

Some great news for patients in Corby and East Northants this week. The NHS now has the shortest waits since its records began.

New data shows that across England the NHS has met its target to treat patients within a maximum of 18 weeks from referral by their GP - an achievement which was unimaginable 12 years ago.

This is a tremendous achievement by NHS clinicians and staff in Northamptonshire who should be proud of the difference their hard work has made to the experience of every NHS patient.

When I talk to NHS patients you tell me that time spent waiting is important to you. This is why it was right for the Labour Government made it a priority to reduce waiting times. Shorter times will make a significant difference to the experience of millions.

Achieving the shortest waits since NHS records began has made a huge difference to patients' experiences of the NHS. In the 1990s it was not uncommon for people to wait 18 months or more for their operation - with some people dying on the waiting list.

The NHS is one of our country's greatest achievements and I will always value stand up for it. I'm proud that over Labour's years in government, we have made sure the NHS has the staff it needs and backed them to deliver improvements in standards and driving down waits.



Behind the statistics - real lives transformed

Whenever statistics are released it's easy to forget that behind every figure is a real person who has had their life transformed by being treated.

Cataracts can lead to blindness and if it's a serious case must be treated. These new figures show that across the country over 250,000 patients have a cataract removed every year.

The average referral to treatment time for these patients has reduced by half, from 14 weeks in January 2007 to 6 weeks in January 2009. Imagine what a difference it makes to the patient knowing that they will be seen quickly to have their cataract removed so they can recover and get on with their life.

