
London hospitals facing 'tsunami' of Covid-19 patients

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Chris Hopson, the chief executive of NHS Providers, is sounding the alarm that hospitals in London may collapse within days due to a “continuous tsunami” of Covid-19 patients, despite increasing critical care capacity sevenfold.

“They are struggling with the explosion of demand in seriously ill patients. They are saying it’s the number arriving and the speed with which they are arriving and how ill they are. They talk about wave after wave after wave,” Hopson told BBC Radio 4’s Today program.

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Hopson said that despite a between five and sevenfold increase in critical care capacity in recent weeks, hospital staff are horrified by the rate at which beds are filling up, at a rate “greater... than you can ever have possibly imagined.”

To make matters worse, in some NHS trusts between 30 and 50 percent of staff are off sick with suspected coronavirus infection or because they are part of an at-risk group for Covid-19 infection.

Hopson added that the “unprecedented absence rate,” along with the rampant infection rate had created a “wicked combination” that will place the already beleaguered NHS under yet more pressure at the worst possible time.

An analysis produced by the University of Cambridge estimated that five of the seven NHS commissioning regions would run out of intensive care unit beds within a fortnight.

According to the John Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Centre, the UK currently has 9,529 confirmed cases of

coronavirus infection with 465 fatalities so far.

The government has ordered a three-week lockdown of the country which began on Monday evening, though a lack of clear guidance has led to widespread confusion.
