

Hospitals at risk

✘ Scottish Labour's Jackie Baillie has said that hospitals are being put at greater risk of infections, such as C. Difficile and MRSA, after it emerged that more than 100 cleaning posts have been cut by the NHS in the past year.

According to Freedom of Information requests submitted by the Labour Party, four out of Scotland's 14 health boards have cut cleaning jobs, despite promises by the SNP of 600 new jobs across the country.

In her speech to the SNP Conference in Glasgow, in April 2009, Nicola Sturgeon announced that she was giving health boards an additional £5.4 million, which she said would employ more hundreds of hospital cleaners.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde has cut 65 cleaners jobs over the past year. Forth Valley is eight down on last year, Fife has shed nine jobs and Dumfries and Galloway is down 20.

✘ Shadow Health Secretary **Jackie Baillie** said:

"These figures make me angry.

"The SNP Government is forcing health boards across Scotland to make savings in frontline services, but hospital cleaning must be protected if we are to stand a chance of beating superbugs like C. difficile and MRSA.

"Nicola Sturgeon stood up at the SNP conference in Glasgow and promised hundreds more hospital cleaners. Instead, what we are seeing is cutbacks in hospital cleaning.

"There is no doubt that when NHS boards cuts cleaning then infection rates go up and patients get ill."