



Scottish Parliament elections 2021: Manifesto

March 2021

University healthcare faculties have been key to the nation's response to the pandemic. They have continued their efforts to ensure that Scotland has enough nurses, midwives, and allied health professionals equipped with the right skills and knowledge to meet our population's health challenges and lead innovation in clinical practice. They have worked across the health and social care sector to deploy thousands of healthcare students and academic staff to expand the workforce, provided training to upskill current staff and offered facilities and equipment to NHS services. Healthcare research in universities has been fundamental to informing our ongoing response to Covid-19.

The next Scottish Government must continue to work closely with the healthcare higher education sector to help it to deliver on its civic mission to support local and regional communities as we come out of the pandemic and to grow and shape the future health and social care workforce in Scotland.

Key messages

We call on the next Scottish Government to:

- **sustain funding for our disciplines and invest in technology**
- **provide strategic funding for continuing professional development**
- **invest in teaching and research opportunities for healthcare staff to build the academic workforce**
- **involve universities in workforce planning**
- **increase funding for healthcare research and international partnerships**

Sustain funding for our disciplines

Nursing, midwifery and allied health profession courses are more expensive to deliver than typical university degree programmes. The full costs of educating healthcare professionals must be met to ensure the sustainability and quality of healthcare education. Universities need stability and certainty to invest for the future.

We welcome the recent funding provided by Scottish Government to support the use of simulation and technology-assisted placement experiences. The Government now needs to consider how to sustain the increasing use of technology and simulation in healthcare and invest in the infrastructure and equipment needed by higher education to produce a healthcare workforce equipped to deliver future services.



Strategic funding for continuing professional development (CPD)

The Scottish Government must ensure continued, sustained and strategic CPD funding for the existing workforce to support service improvement and staff retention.

Invest in teaching and research opportunities

Investment is crucial to support service improvement and staff retention and is made more important by recent changes to regulatory standards of proficiency for the healthcare profession workforce, including the NMC future nurse and future midwife standards. We need a robust academic workforce to educate future professionals. This requires adequate investment in teaching qualifications and research opportunities for the healthcare workforce including proactive support for joint appointments.



Involve universities in workforce planning

The Scottish Government needs to develop a workforce planning strategy for nursing, midwifery

and allied health professions that is evidence based and collaborative. Universities need to be involved as equal partners in workforce strategy development from the outset at local, regional and national levels. There is a significant risk to workforce sustainability and capability without university input and partnership. Academic workforce needs to be recognised as part of this planning.



Invest in healthcare research and international partnerships

Universities drive research outputs and innovation in healthcare. The Scottish Government needs to increase nursing, midwifery and allied health profession research capacity and invest in funding for clinical research to increase the quality and efficiency of care delivery. There should be a commitment to invest in international health research collaboration and student and staff exchange programme opportunities, in place of Erasmus+.



About us

The Council of Deans of Health Scotland represents the 12 Scottish university faculties engaged in education and research for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals.



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