

Dear Incoming UK Government

The NHS is one of the key priorities for voters in this General Election. Ensuring it better delivers for the British people and is set up on a sustainable basis will be a major task for any government formed after 4 July.

The Council of Deans of Health, MillionPlus, and University Alliance collectively represent over 100 universities and further education colleges that educate the overwhelming majority of nurses, midwives and allied health professionals for the NHS. Between us, we traverse the education and health sectors, both crucial for ensuring the future workforce.

Despite welcome progress, both nationally and locally these sectors still do not work as closely as needed to make the necessary strides forward on issues such as student recruitment, retention, placement provision and employment. To deliver the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan, the incentives of both health and education sectors need closer alignment and their individual challenges tackling collaboratively.

Together, we are calling for prime ministerial responsibility for the closer departmental join-up required for the NHS to have the homegrown workforce it needs. Active Secretaries of State and ministers working together remain crucial to delivering the workforce plan, but progressing to the next level will need the coordinating power of a Prime Minister for a whole-of-government approach to this essential mission.

Almost a year on from the launch of the Long Term Workforce Plan, our experience in supporting its delivery leads to this call - to avoid confusion on where responsibility lies and prevent pressing issues 'falling between the gaps'.

Whatever the result of the election on 4 July, we will be ready to support the government and Prime Minister to:

- Urgently tackle the shortfall in healthcare educators and researchers needed to sustain, let alone grow, the domestically educated NHS workforce.
- Reverse the significant decline in student applicants for many healthcare courses.
- Ensure join-up between NHS trusts and university and FE College education providers locally, regionally and nationally to provide clear pathways, with high-quality placement provision, through education into employment.
- Bring together the multiple health and education regulators to deliver a streamlined regulatory regime needed to deliver the workforce plan.

The party manifestos set out bold ambitions for the NHS. We will continue to do our part to ensure our health service continues to have the nurses, midwives and allied health professionals it needs.

Whoever the Prime Minister and relevant ministers are after next month's election, they will have a golden opportunity to bring departments and sectors together so they can deliver on their promises to the British people. We stand ready to offer our full support for them in this endeavour.

Yours sincerely,



Ed Hughes, Council of Deans of Health, CEO



Vanessa Wilson, University Alliance, CEO



Rachel Hewitt, MillionPlus, Chief Executive