

Spring Conference 2026

Woburn House, London

Conference Programme

Tuesday 19 May 2026

09.30	Registration and networking
10.15	<p>Welcome Ed Hughes, Chief Executive, Council of Deans of Health Professor Alison Machin, Chair, Council of Deans of Health</p>
10.25	<p>Beyond Cost and Concern: Making Health Degrees an Attractive Choice <i>This session will explore challenges surrounding student recruitment in light of negative perceptions of student finance, the rising cost of living, and concerns about graduate employability. It will provide an opportunity to discuss how members are responding to these pressures and to share approaches and strategies for recruiting students.</i></p> <p>Dr David Cousens, Dean, Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education, Middlesex University; Trustee, Council of Deans of Health</p>
11.15	Refreshments and networking
11.40	<p>Student retention and reasonable adjustments: data, experience, and action <i>This session explores the relationship between student retention and reasonable adjustments across health education, drawing on sector-level data, institutional practice and student experience. Building on an evidence base, it will examine in more depth the reasons why students do not complete programmes, with particular attention to the role of reasonable adjustments in supporting retention.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Lorraine Dixon, Director, Oxford School of Nursing and Midwifery; Chair, Regulation Strategic Policy Group, Council of Deans of Health • Jessica Sainsbury, Student Support Officer, Chartered Society of Physiotherapists • Dr Siân Shaw, Associate Professor of Digital Innovation in Nursing, Anglia Ruskin University <p>Facilitated by Ed Hughes</p> <p><i>This session is supported by MyKnowledgeMap</i></p>
12.55	<p>Keynote: Chief Nursing Officer for England Duncan Burton, Chief Nursing Officer for England</p>

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13.20	Lunch and networking
14.10	Council Policy Update James Hallwood, Director of Policy and External Affairs, Council of Deans of Health
14.25	From ambition to adoption: delivering simulation at scale <i>Simulation is widely recognised as a powerful approach to education for improving clinical competence, decision-making, and patient safety. Despite strong ambition across institutions, scaling simulation remains difficult. This panel will explore whether staff are ready to deliver simulation confidently and whether are our institutions structured to support and sustain it.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professor Stephen Corbett, Pro-Vice Chancellor and Executive Dean (Interim), Faculty of Education, Health and Human Sciences, University of Greenwich• Dr Kevin Stirling, Programme Lead for Quality Improvement and Patient Safety, University of Dundee; Secretary & Commercial Partners Lead, ASPiH• Amy Wilkinson, Account and Impact Manager, Oxford Medical Simulation Facilitated by Dr Mary Edmonds, Deputy Dean in Practice Learning and Simulation, Anglia Ruskin University; Deputy Chair, Innovation in Education Strategic Policy Group, Council of Deans of Health <i>This session is supported by Oxford Medical Simulation</i>
15.25	Refreshments and networking
15.50	Healthcare Education: a time of political and policy change <i>This session will explore the wider landscape of healthcare higher education through a political and policy lens. It will consider the implications of current and emerging government priorities for health education, including the long-term direction of workforce planning, post-16 education and skills reform, and the financial and structural sustainability of universities. The discussion will also reflect on recent election outcomes in Scotland and Wales, examining what these signal for devolved approaches to health policy and workforce development across the UK.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Steve Race MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Department of Health and Social Care• Sebastian Rees, Principal Research Fellow and Head of Health, Institute for Public Policy Research• Vanessa Wilson, Chief Executive, University Alliance Facilitated by James Hallwood
16.45	Closing remarks and end of conference