



PRESS RELEASE

EMBARGOED TO 00.01 Wednesday 11 May 2016

Managing the supply of NHS clinical staff - we need a more sustainable approach

Commenting on the publication of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) report [*Managing the supply of NHS clinical staff in England*](#), NHS Providers chief executive Chris Hopson said:

“In the past few years we’ve seen the outcome of a disjointed approach to workforce planning in the NHS – this has particularly been the case in respect of clinical staff. Our approach is unsustainable given we spend two-thirds of the NHS budget on staff, including doctors, nurses and other clinicians. Today’s report from the Public Accounts Committee rightly highlights how the NHS needs a more sustainable approach that addresses current shortages and supports a reduction in use of agency staff.

“Employing the right numbers of the right staff and deploying them in the right ways is already a challenge that will only become more pressing as budgets tighten and other pressures mount. This means the need for a more strategic and joined-up approach to developing the NHS workforce and planning for future needs has never been more urgent. The government and arm’s length bodies responsible for managing the supply of NHS clinical staff need to be much more aligned to ensure we deliver value for money for patients and taxpayers.

“As the PAC rightly says, hospital trusts in particular have been under pressure to ensure they had enough staff in place following the failings in care at Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust. Many trusts were unable to recruit enough permanent nursing staff in particular, which has led to an over-reliance on agency staff and recruitment from overseas. As we know, use of agency staff been a key contributor to the deficits most trusts are now experiencing. Combined with the unrealistic efficiency targets that have been set for trusts in the past, these two factors show the consequence of ineffective workforce planning.

“A key part of putting this right will be ensuring that the needs of local areas continue to inform and shape national workforce decisions. Efforts must be coordinated across all of NHS workforce policy and specifically across regulation, education and training, pay, and, importantly, how staff are motivated and led. As we have seen with the recent junior doctors’ strikes, this is vitally important. Evidence shows that an engaged, supported and valued workforce can deliver even better care for patients and their families.”

-Ends-

Notes to editors

About NHS Providers

- NHS Providers is the membership organisation for NHS acute hospitals, community, mental health and ambulance services. NHS Providers acts as the public voice for those NHS trusts, helping to deliver high quality care by promoting shared learning, providing support and

development and shaping the strategic system in which our members operate. NHS Providers has 95% of all NHS foundation trusts and aspirant trusts in membership

- Follow NHS Providers on twitter @NHSProviders and Chris Hopson @ChrisCEOHopson
- Contact Caroline Bernard, head of communications, 07938 524 366