

NHS Staff Pay

Sarah Wollaston Chair, Health and Social Care Committee, Chair, Liaison Committee (Commons)

I warmly welcome today's announcement of a well-deserved pay rise for NHS staff and, in particular, that this will be additional funding of Â£4.2 billion over three years, rather than it coming out of existing resources. I particularly welcome the focus on staff health and wellbeing, which was raised by the recent Health Committee inquiry into the nursing workforce. In particular, I ask the Secretary of State to go further and talk about what will be done on continuing professional development for NHS staff, because this was identified as a key factor in retention. He referred to it partially in his comments, but I wonder whether he could go further.

Jeremy Hunt Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

I thank my hon. Friend for her comments. Underneath this agreement, there is a very important new partnership between NHS employers and the unions to improve the health and wellbeing of staff through mental health provision and the implementation of the Stevenson-Farmer review, taking on board a number of points raised by the Health Committee, and through improved support for people with musculoskeletal conditions, because a lot of NHS work is very physical. However, she is absolutely right: professional development is also very important. By reforming the increments system that we have been using for many years, we will give staff the chance to see their pay go up in a way that is linked to their skills going up as well. That is something that many staff will welcome.