

Education (Student Support)

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

I thank the Minister for meeting me to discuss the concerns raised by the Health Committee in our nursing workforce inquiry. As he has stated, applicants for learning disability and mental health nursing tend to be older, and those applicants are more likely to stay. They are particularly affected, so I am grateful to the Minister for listening to our concerns. Putting the needs of patients first by allowing for these targeted extra packages is very welcome.

Stephen Barclay Minister of State (Department of Health and Social Care)

I am grateful for that support from the Chair of the Health Committee. Having spent four years on the Committee myself, I know the value that members of Select Committees bring to the House. The Health Committee, particularly under her chairmanship, is hugely valued in the Department. The mitigation package that has been put before the House tonight reflects the constructive engagement that we have had with the Committee. We realise the importance of having consistency between undergraduates and postgraduates, and of expanding the supply of places, but it is also important to recognise that there might be specific areas in which there are recruitment challenges, and that targeted action to mitigate those challenges is appropriate.

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