

Health and Social Care: NHS Workforce Vacancies

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

The workforce shortfall is not evenly distributed across the NHS either geographically or by specialty. The Minister will know that there are particularly serious nursing shortfalls in learning disability and community services. He will also know of the implications of shortfalls—for example, for the ambition to deliver 75% of cancer diagnoses at stages 1 and 2. Will he look again at the evidence on mature students and the impact of losing bursaries on that section of the workforce? Will he meet me to discuss that?

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

The Chair of the Select Committee is right: the vacancies are not evenly spread and are of particular concern in learning difficulties and a number of other areas. Of course we want to ensure that mature students come back to and stay within the health service. That is why a number of incentives are being put in place to encourage, recruit and retain mature students. I would, of course, be happy to meet her to discuss this matter in more depth.

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