

To: • Medical Royal College and Faculty  
Presidents, Chairs and Deans

Cc: • Dr Jeanette Dickson, Chair of the  
Academy of Medical Royal Colleges

NHS England  
Wellington House  
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**11 July 2023**

Dear colleague,

## **NHS Long Term Workforce Plan**

Following the publication of the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan (LTWP) we would like to thank the Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties for helping us in its development, including through conversations facilitated by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges.

We are also grateful for your feedback on how the plan has been received to date. Our assessment is that the plan and its ambition to significantly increase education and training to record levels has been widely welcomed across the sector.

Partners have variously described the plan as ‘historic’ and a ‘significant milestone’, which reflects our own view that the LTWP represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to put staffing on a sustainable footing for the future.

There has also been broad support for the commitment to regularly refresh the plan, and consensus on the need for further detail on issues relating to higher specialty training in specific specialties and the importance of implementation.

In response to our recent conversation the following points may be of interest to your members.

- In line with discussions while developing the plan, [the document](#) and its accompanying [letter](#) are clear that its publication is the first step of an iterative process. This point was reinforced by the Prime Minister at the plan’s launch.
- While we recognise the need for continued growth and we continue to work with individual colleges around their specialty expansion in line with service planning, the plan does not cover the demand and supply of medical specialties (*as explained in paragraph 41, page 24 of the plan*). As the plan is iterated, the objective is to establish the data and methodologies to enable an accurate view to be formed with a richer and more granular range of information from across the NHS.
- NHS England will now work closely with partners, including the Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties to inform the plan’s regular review and update. This will develop the detailed understanding required to set out a supply and demand position for medical specialties, and tailor training and recruitment to best meet changing demand pressures over time (*paragraph 21, page 110 of the plan*).

- This work will also be supported by the National Audit Office which will carry out an [independent assessment](#) of the modelling behind the Long Term Workforce Plan as a basis for regular strategic workforce planning.

We were also pleased to hear the sector's readiness to support our critically important work around staff retention as a core part of how we grow our workforce. We invite partners to work with us on effective interventions as we build on the valuable work of the NHS People Plan and the NHS People Promise.

A further focus has been on medical education reform, the development of new roles and offering alternative routes into NHS careers. Specific details on the development of this work will follow and much will be subject to further engagement and consultation alongside professional regulators and health education partners.

Given the specific questions on [medical degree apprenticeships](#) we propose working with the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges to hold a dedicated session on this in the coming weeks.

Now we have achieved the milestone of the publication of our first Long Term Workforce Plan, we will focus on working with our close partners including the Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties on both implementation of the plan and its regular refresh. Our teams look forward to regular engagement with you directly and through the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges as we implement the plan's commitments.

Thank you again for your ongoing support in this critically important and shared endeavour.

Yours sincerely,



**Navina Evans**  
Chief Workforce Officer



**Professor Sir Steve Powis**  
National Medical Director