



DEBATE PACK

Number CDP-2018-0252, 19 November 2018

Investing in nursing higher education in England

Summary

This House of Commons Library debate pack briefing has been prepared in advance of a debate entitled “Investing in nursing higher education in England”. This will be led by Ms Eleanor Smith MP and will take place in Westminster Hall on Wednesday 21st November from 2.30pm.

This briefing contains background information, relevant parliamentary and press material, and well as suggested further reading which Members may find useful when preparing for this debate.

Since August 2017 students taking nursing degrees in England have been funded in the same way as other higher education students via a package of loans for tuition fees and maintenance. Previously nursing students and other students on healthcare courses were funded by NHS bursaries. This change has been controversial and has impacted on applications to nursing courses.

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

By Sue Hubble
Paul Bolton
Andrew Mackley
Selena Steele

Contents

1. Reform of funding for trainee nurses in England	2
1.1 Abolition of undergraduate NHS bursaries	2
1.2 Postgraduate nursing students	3
1.3 Argument around the reforms	4
2. Impact of the reforms	6
2.1 Applicants and new entrants to nursing degree courses	6
2017	6
2018	7
2.2 Savings to public expenditure	7
3. Parliamentary material	8
3.1 Parliamentary debates	8
3.2 Select Committees	8
3.3 Written Parliamentary Questions	8
4. Press articles	16
5. Press notices	17
6. Further reading	19
6.1 Government publications	19
6.2 Commons Library publications	19
6.3 Sector/external comment and analysis	19

1. Reform of funding for trainee nurses in England

Up until **1 August 2017** students in England taking certain healthcare degrees – including degrees in nursing and midwifery – were entitled to **NHS bursaries**

NHS Bursaries were a package of support to help healthcare students in England, including nurses and midwives, with the costs of studying.

For new full-time students starting in 2016-17 the NHS Bursary consisted of the following elements:

- A **non-means tested grant** of £1,000 per year (pro-rata for part-time students)
- A **means tested bursary** to help with living costs of up to: –
£3,191 for students living away from home and in London
£2,643 for students living away from home and outside London
£2,207 for students living at home.
- Other **bursary elements** such as extra week's allowances for courses that run for longer than 30 weeks and 3 days each academic year, and practice placement expenses.

Students who qualified for a bursary also had the costs of their **tuition paid** directly to their higher education institution by the NHS. Healthcare students could also apply for a non-income assessed **reduced rate maintenance loan** from Student Finance England.

All students accepted onto an NHS-funded course in England that led to professional registration as a nurse, midwife or other allied health professional were eligible to apply for an NHS bursary.

Information on NHS bursaries is available at [NHS bursaries](#).

1.1 Abolition of undergraduate NHS bursaries

In the Autumn Statement 2015 the Government announced that it intended to replace NHS bursaries for most healthcare students with the **standard student finance package** of loans for tuition fees and maintenance:

The Spending Review reforms the funding system for health students by replacing grants with student loans and abolishing the cap on the number of student places for nursing, midwifery and allied health subjects. The current grant system means that there is a cap on student nurses and over half of all applicants to

nursing courses are turned 2015 away. This reform will enable universities to provide up to 10,000 additional nursing and other health professional training places this Parliament. This will ensure that there are enough nurses for the NHS while cutting the current reliance on expensive agency staff. The move to loans will also mean access to 25% more financial support for health students during their studies. The government will work with key stakeholders to implement the reforms. (HM Treasury, [Spending Review and Autumn Statement, November 2015](#), p31)

The Chancellor said in his statement that the change would allow universities to provide **10,000 additional training places** and that **students would receive 25% more funding**.

The changes to NHS bursaries were highly controversial. A consultation on the proposals was carried out and an [Equality Analysis](#) and [Impact Assessment](#) were published. In July 2016 the Government published its [response](#) to the consultation and said that the changes would go ahead.

The changes to NHS bursaries for most undergraduate healthcare students were brought in under the [Education \(Student Fees, Awards and Support\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2017](#) SI 2017 No 114. This regulation allows student support for students starting courses in nursing, nursing and social work, midwifery, operating department practice and the allied health professions to be paid under the standard student support system.

Information on the reforms are available in the following papers and websites:

- Commons Library briefing paper, [Reform of support for healthcare for students in England](#), 2 February 2017
- GOV.UK website at [NHS bursary reform](#), January 2017.
- NHS Health Careers website at [Financial support at university](#).

1.2 Postgraduate nursing students

Students taking two-year postgraduate nursing degrees were also eligible for NHS bursaries. Respondents to the consultation on the reforms to healthcare funding expressed concerns about the impact of changes on postgraduate students. In response to these concerns the government decided to allow a **one-year transition period** for postgraduate nursing students before they also transferred to the standard student support package.

After the one year transition period [the Education \(Student Support\) \(Amendment\) \(No. 2\) Regulations 2018](#) SI 2018 No 433 brought all other postgraduate and undergraduate healthcare students into the student support system from **1 August 2018**.

The following Commons Library briefing paper provides further information on the legislation abolishing bursaries for postgraduate nursing students:

- [Debate on SI 2018/443 relating to funding for healthcare students](#), 4 May 2018

Since the academic year **2017/18** all students in England on undergraduate nursing degrees have received funding through the standard student loan system from Student Loans Company.

An overview of the changes was given in a PQ response on 14 May 2018:

Health Professions: Training: Written question - 142450

Dan Jarvis: 09 May 2018

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support his Department provides to people studying healthcare courses; whether he plans to provide further support for those people's (a) living costs and (b) course fees; and if he will make statement.

Stephen Barclay: 14 May 2018

Since August 2017, new undergraduate nursing, midwifery and some allied health profession students are able to access loans through the standard student support system.

A number of provisions are available to support these students whilst undertaking the clinical placement element of their courses. These include child dependants allowance, travel and dual accommodation support and, in eligible cases, an exceptional hardship fund. Allowing students to access the student loans system also enables them to be up to 25% better off while they study than under the previous funding system.

From August 2018 new postgraduate pre-registration students and most new undergraduate pre-registration dental hygiene and dental therapy students will also be able to access loans through the standard student support system. This change will allow eligible students to access child dependants allowance, travel and dual accommodation support and, in eligible cases, an exceptional hardship fund.

The Department will also put in place incentives for postgraduate healthcare students who go on to work in the healthcare sector - such as 'golden' hellos for postgraduates who go on to work in mental health and learning disability fields and those postgraduates who go on to work in community nursing roles. The Department will provide up to £10 million to support this.¹

1.3 Argument around the reforms

The reforms to funding for healthcare students have been widely debated, below are some of the main arguments made for and against the changes:

Points made for the reforms:

- The reform of the healthcare student financing system will **reduce the burdens on the taxpayer**, and enable Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to provide places on nursing, midwifery and AHP courses to meet expressed demand from potential students. It should reduce the risks that the number of student places offered is constrained by financial issues. The reforms should **improve the supply of qualified healthcare graduates and thus reduce the health system's reliance on agency and overseas staff** (Impact assessment, 21 July 2016)
- The total **NPV benefit of £15,926m over ten years** comes from a saving to the taxpayer of no longer paying Bursaries to new

¹ [PQ 142450 \[Health Professions: Training\], 9 May 2018](#)

students, payments of loans, grants and allowances to students whilst studying, and funding to HEIs. There are also **administrative savings from no longer having a separate student finance system administered by the NHS Business Services Authority (BSA)**. (Impact assessment, 21 July 2016)

- Enabling students to fund their courses through loans removes the constraint on course numbers which should encourage HEIs to offer more nursing, midwifery and AHP courses. The precise impact is difficult to estimate with certainty, and has not been included in the monetised benefits. However, it has been estimated that some **10,000 more places** in total might be made available by the end of this parliament. Further benefits from more directly linking study and costs include **increasing the motivation of students** to study and for Institutions to provide excellent courses. (Impact assessment, 21 July 2016)
- The student benefits from the system of loans, grants and allowances (which is typically **25% more than the living support** provided by the current system), therefore there is a net gain to the student while they are studying (Impact assessment, 21 July 2016)

Points against:

- Healthcare students will receive increased student support in the form of loans and this will **increase student's debt**.
- Increased debt could **deter potential applicants** especially from particularly debt averse groups such as mature students. A document by [Unison](#)² notes a **drop in nursing applications from mature and part-time students**:
 "The increase in student debt has already deterred many potential healthcare students from applying for courses, with UCAS reporting a **23% decline in nursing degree applications** in England".
- Potential negative Issues with **future nursing supply**:
 "Following the drop in UCAS applications and EU nurses and the inadequate clinical placement capacity, it is unlikely that the removal of NHS bursaries will deliver on its policy objective of increasing training places by 10,000 by 2020.
 Fewer nurses qualifying will exacerbate the current recruitment shortage in the NHS and put patient safety at risk" [Unison](#)

² [NHS bursary abolition: the Education \(Student Fees, Awards and Support\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2017 House of Lords secondary legislation committee UNISON briefing](#), February 2017

2. Impact of the reforms

The impact of the changes to funding for nursing students was discussed in a Health Committee report, *The nursing workforce*,³ published in January 2018, and further information was given in a PQ response on 6 June 2018:

[Nurses: Training: Written question - 148797](#)

Rushanara Ali: 01 June 2018

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of the withdrawal of NHS bursaries on the number of applications for nursing degrees.

Stephen Barclay: 06 June 2018

The University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) published data 5 April 2018 which shows that the number of students applying to study nursing and midwifery has decreased by 13% from this point in the cycle last year.

There is still strong demand for nursing courses with more applicants than available training places. The UCAS data show that up to March 2018 there had been around 1.4 nursing and midwifery applicants per available training place. The university application cycle for 2018/19 is on-going up until 30 June 2018. Applications received after 30 June are entered in to Clearing.

In support of this, Health Education England has recently launched a national clearing campaign to recruit more students to courses in the lead up to the end of clearing, 23 October 2018. Further information is available at the following link:

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/knowaboutnursing>.

Officials in the Department are also introducing the 'golden hello' incentive scheme for postgraduate nursing students, which I announced on 9 May.

These payment incentives offer £10,000 to future postgraduates who completed courses funded by loans in the 2018/19 academic year and are anticipated to be contingent on these graduates working in specific fields of the health and care sector including mental health, learning disability and community, including district, nursing.⁴

2.1 Applicants and new entrants to nursing degree courses

2017

The number of applicants through UCAS for nursing from England up to the 30 June (pre-clearing) deadline was down from 51,840 in 2016 to 40,060 in 2017; **a fall of 23%**. There were falls in applicants from the other home countries, but these were much smaller; 2% from Scotland 6% from Northern Ireland and 10% from Wales.⁵

³ Health Committee report, *The nursing workforce*, 26 January 2018 HC 353 p20

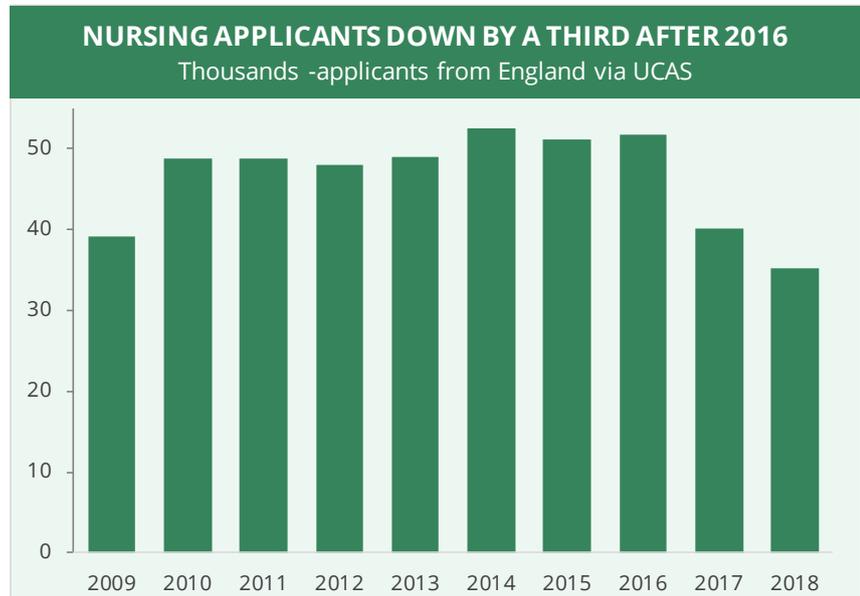
⁴ [PQ 148797 \[Nurses: Training\], 6 June 2018](#)

⁵ [2017 cycle applicant figures – June deadline](#), UCAS

There have always been many more applicants than places for nursing. The recent drop in applicants has reduced this gap but has not seen the number of applicants fall below places. This means that the number of applicants from England who were accepted fell by a much smaller amount; from 22,630 to 22,046, **a fall of 3%**. The acceptance rate was 2016 44% in 2016 and increased to 55% in 2017.⁶

2018

The latest data on the 2018 cycle is also for the 30 June deadline. When applicant numbers from England were again down; here to 35,260 or **12% down** on the equivalent stage in the 2017 cycle. The chart opposite shows that the 2018 figure was the lowest since nursing courses first started to be included in the UCAS system a decade ago.⁷



2.2 Savings to public expenditure

The impact assessment published alongside the proposals estimated that the reforms to funding for nursing, midwifery and allied health professionals would eventually save around **£1.1 billion** in bursary costs each year (2016/17 prices). Against this we need to set the government's estimates of costs of providing loans (their subsidy element) and other grants which replaced bursary funding in part. These come to around **£0.6 billion** per year making estimated **annual net savings of just under £0.6 billion in 2016/17 prices**.⁸ These are forecasts only and are subject to a large degree of uncertainty especially concerning numbers of students and loan repayments.

⁶ ['End of cycle data resources'](#), UCAS

⁷ ['2018 cycle applicant figures – June deadline'](#), UCAS

⁸ Department of Health, [Impact assessment - Reforms to funding and financial support for nursing, midwifery and AHP Bursary students](#), 21 July 2016

3. Parliamentary material

3.1 Parliamentary debates

- [NHS: Staff](#) (HL Deb 13 November 2018 cc1777-78)
- [Education \(Student Support\) \(Amendment\) \(No. 2\) Regulations 2018](#) (HL Deb 21 May 2018 cc957-72)
- [Education \(Student Support\)](#) (HC Deb 9 May 2018 c836-60)
- [NHS Bursaries](#) (HC Deb 4 May 2016 cc189-241)
- [NHS Bursary](#) (HC Deb 11 January 2016 cc201-241WH)

3.2 Select Committees

Health and Social Care Committee, [The Nursing Workforce](#), HC 33, 26 January 2018

3.3 Written Parliamentary Questions

- [Learning Disability: Nurses](#)

Asked by: Jarvis, Dan | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of the removal of nursing student bursaries on the number of people entering a career in learning disabilities nursing.

Answering member: Stephen Barclay | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department of Health and Social Care

The Department is working with relevant bodies across health and education to monitor the effects of the healthcare funding reforms, including the impact on application numbers on all the professions affected.

We have been working with Health Education England (HEE) and the university sector to ensure students continued to apply for courses up to the end of clearing in October 2018. We are also working with HEE on a campaign to improve perceptions of nursing, the allied health professions and midwifery and encourage applications to relevant undergraduate courses for Universities and Colleges Admissions Service applications in 2019.

We have also opened new work based learning routes into the nursing profession for those who may not be able to study full-time.

Students who commence loan funded postgraduate pre-registration nursing courses in the 2018/19 academic year will be eligible for a golden hello payment once they have graduated and go on to work in learning disability, mental health or district nursing. Payments will be made to these graduates once they take up employment in the health and care sector in England.

Working with the National Health Service and the university sector, the Government is finalising the most effective way to administer and introduce the scheme and will set out details in due course.

29 Oct 2018 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 183358

Date tabled: 24 Oct 2018 | **Date for answer:** 29 Oct 2018 | **Date answered:** 29 Oct 2018

- [Health Professions: Training](#)

Asked by: Lamb, Norman | **Party:** Liberal Democrats

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the diversity of students taking (a) pre-registration physiotherapy and (b) nursing, midwifery and other allied health courses since the NHS bursary reforms in 2017.

Answering member: Stephen Barclay | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department of Health and Social Care

The Department is working with relevant bodies across health and education to monitor the effects of the healthcare funding reforms on all the professions affected.

A preliminary Equality Analysis was published alongside the public consultation document on 7 April 2016. This document provided the assessment of the potential effect of the replacement of National Health Service bursaries by student loans for all the protected characteristics of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010).

The Equality Analysis and the Government consultation can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changing-how-healthcare-education-is-funded>

A revised version of the original Equality Analysis, was published in February 2018 to accompany the reforms to pre-registration postgraduate healthcare funding.

The revised Equality Analysis can be found at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/680681/Equality_Analysis_healthcare_education_funding.pdf

29 Oct 2018 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 183289

Date tabled: 24 Oct 2018 | **Date for answer:** 29 Oct 2018 | **Date answered:** 29 Oct 2018

- [Nurses: Training](#)

Asked by: Lucas, Caroline | **Party:** Green Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to reintroduce bursaries for nursing degrees; and if he will make a statement.

Answering member: Stephen Barclay | **Party:** Conservative Party |
Department: Department of Health and Social Care

The removal of bursaries and introduction of student loans for nursing degrees has increased the number of nursing degree places that are available. Latest Universities and Colleges Admissions Service data for September 2018 show that there are still more applicants than places available for nursing courses.

As such we have no plans to reinstate a bursary cap on places, which would limit the number of places available.

17 Sep 2018 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 172541

Date tabled: 10 Sep 2018 | **Date for answer:** 12 Sep 2018 | **Date answered:** 17 Sep 2018

- [Nurses: Apprentices](#)

Asked by: Walker, Thelma | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what additional funding his Department plans to provide to employers to cover the educational costs of nursing degree apprenticeships.

Answering member: Stephen Barclay | **Party:** Conservative Party |
Department: Department of Health and Social Care

There is no recruitment target for the nurse degree apprenticeship. The Government has a clear aspiration that once the apprentice route is established, up to 1,000 apprentice nurses could join the National Health Service each year.

The registered nurse (degree) apprenticeship standard was approved for delivery on 9 May 2017. To date, there have been 260 starts on the registered nurse (degree) apprenticeship in the 2017 to 2018 academic year (August 2017 to April 2018) in England but this will continue to increase over the full year August 2017 to August 2018.

The Department has no immediate plans to provide additional funding for the costs of education for the nurse degree apprenticeship, which should be met from the apprentice levy.

16 Jul 2018 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 163192

Date tabled: 11 Jul 2018 | **Date for answer:** 16 Jul 2018 | **Date answered:** 16 Jul 2018

- [Nurses: Apprentices](#)

Asked by: Walker, Thelma | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many students started a nursing degree apprenticeship in 2017-18.

Answering member: Anne Milton | **Party:** Conservative Party |
Department: Department for Education

There have been 64,830 apprenticeship starts in Health, Public Services and Care, reported to date, in the first three quarters of the 2017 to 2018 academic year (August 2017 to April 2018) in England:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-apprenticeships>.

We want to increase the number of nursing apprenticeships and now have a complete apprentice pathway from entry level to postgraduate advanced clinical practice in nursing. This will support people from all backgrounds to enter a nursing career in the NHS.

The registered nurse (degree) apprenticeship standard was approved for delivery on 9 May 2017. To date, there have been 260 starts on the registered nurse (degree) apprenticeship in the 2017 to 2018 academic year (August 2017 to April 2018) in England.

We have also created a new programme for nursing associate (Level 5 standard approved for delivery on 20 November 2017) apprentices to broaden the routes into the profession. 5,000 starts are planned in 2018, with a further 7,500 in 2019. To date, there have been 640 starts on the nursing associate apprenticeship in the 2017 to 2018 academic year (August 2017 to April 2018) in England.

We are working closely with employers, Health Education England and ministers in the Department of Health and Social Care to make sure the NHS is fully supported to recruit apprentices, both in nursing and in a range of other occupations.

16 Jul 2018 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 163190

Date tabled: 11 Jul 2018 | **Date for answer:** 16 Jul 2018 | **Date answered:** 16 Jul 2018

- [Nurses: Training](#)

Asked by: Ali, Rushanara | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of the withdrawal of NHS bursaries on the number of applications for nursing degrees.

Answering member: Stephen Barclay | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department of Health and Social Care

The University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) published data 5 April 2018 which shows that the number of students applying to study nursing and midwifery has decreased by 13% from this point in the cycle last year.

There is still strong demand for nursing courses with more applicants than available training places. The UCAS data show that up to March 2018 there had been around 1.4 nursing and midwifery applicants per available training place. The university application cycle for 2018/19 is on-going up until 30 June 2018. Applications received after 30 June are entered in to Clearing.

In support of this, Health Education England has recently launched a national clearing campaign to recruit more students to courses in the lead up to the end of clearing, 23 October 2018. Further information is available at the following link:

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/knowaboutnursing>

Officials in the Department are also introducing the 'golden hello' incentive scheme for postgraduate nursing students, which I announced on 9 May.

These payment incentives offer £10,000 to future postgraduates who completed courses funded by loans in the 2018/19 academic year and are anticipated to be contingent on these graduates working in specific fields of the health and care sector including mental health, learning disability and community, including district, nursing.

06 Jun 2018 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 148797

Date tabled: 01 Jun 2018 | **Date for answer:** 05 Jun 2018 | **Date answered:** 06 Jun 2018

- [Health Professions: Training](#)

Asked by: Rayner, Angela | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister for Health of 9 May 2018, Official Report, column 844, whether the £9.1 million in golden hellos to postgraduate students in specific hard-to-recruit disciplines such mental health, learning and disability, and district nursing will be made available to applicants for the 2018-19 academic year.

Answering member: Stephen Barclay | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department of Health and Social Care

Further to the announcement of 9 May, the Government is considering the most effective way to implement the 'golden hello' incentive scheme for postgraduate nursing students.

These payment incentives offer £10,000 to future postgraduates who completed courses funded by loans in the 2018/19 academic year. The golden hello payments are anticipated to be contingent on these graduates working in specific fields of the health and care sector including mental health, learning disability and community, including district, nursing.

The detail of the scheme is being developed by the Department. Officials will engage with stakeholders as part of finalising proposals; including determining whether it is in the best interests of the National Health Service to split out the numbers eligible for a payment determined by branch of nursing. The conclusions of this will inform assessments of the potential impact of such incentives.

Our cost projections were based on current numbers, and if the number of students increases we will consider how best to implement the incentives to continue meeting objectives to fill hard-to-recruit places.

23 May 2018 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 145579

Date tabled: 18 May 2018 | **Date for answer:** 23 May 2018 | **Date answered:** 23 May 2018

- [Health Professions: Training](#)

Asked by: Jarvis, Dan | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support his Department provides to people studying healthcare courses; whether he plans to provide further support for those people's (a) living costs and (b) course fees; and if he will make statement.

Answering member: Stephen Barclay | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department of Health and Social Care

Since August 2017, new undergraduate nursing, midwifery and some allied health profession students are able to access loans through the standard student support system.

A number of provisions are available to support these students whilst undertaking the clinical placement element of their courses. These include child dependants allowance, travel and dual accommodation support and, in eligible cases, an exceptional hardship fund. Allowing students to access the student loans system also enables them to be up to 25% better off while they study than under the previous funding system.

From August 2018 new postgraduate pre-registration students and most new undergraduate pre-registration dental hygiene and dental therapy students will also be able to access loans through the standard student support system. This change will allow eligible students to access child dependants allowance, travel and dual accommodation support and, in eligible cases, an exceptional hardship fund.

The Department will also put in place incentives for postgraduate healthcare students who go on to work in the healthcare sector - such as 'golden' hellos for postgraduates who go on to work in mental health and learning disability fields and those postgraduates who go on to work in community nursing roles. The Department will provide up to £10 million to support this.

14 May 2018 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 142450

Date tabled: 09 May 2018 | **Date for answer:** 14 May 2018 | **Date answered:** 14 May 2018

- [Nurses: Training](#)

Asked by: Jones, Helen | **Party:** Labour Party

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of nursing students who have received incorrect payments from the Student Loans Company and who have been told that money will as a result be deducted from their future payments.

Answering member: Mr Sam Gyimah | **Party:** Conservative Party |
Department: Department for Education

793 Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions students are currently known to have received an overpayment of student support as a result of an error by the Student Loans Company (SLC).

The government announced on 18 April that the SLC will provide support to ensure that none of the students affected by the error suffer hardship.

Students affected by this will be eligible to apply for additional, non-repayable, support of up to £1,000 for the remainder of this academic year, and should contact the SLC. In addition, repayment of overpaid maintenance support will be deferred for all students affected until they have finished their courses and can afford to repay.

25 Apr 2018 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 136237

Date tabled: 17 Apr 2018 | **Date for answer:** 19 Apr 2018 | **Date answered:** 25 Apr 2018

- [Nurses: Training](#)

Asked by: Baroness Neville-Rolfe | **Party:** Conservative Party

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have any evidence that difficulties in recruiting UK nationals as nurses reflect changes in the UK's higher education system in recent years.

Answering member: Viscount Younger of Leckie | **Party:** Conservative Party | **Department:** Department for Education

Until 1 August 2017, nursing, midwifery and allied health profession students had their training costs largely borne by the NHS, and this was not affected by changes to the wider higher education system.

From 1 August 2017, most new undergraduate healthcare students receive tuition fee loans and, for full-time courses, living costs support, administered by the Student Loans Company. The former Department of Health also confirmed that it would fund up to an additional 10,000 clinical placements to support this expansion. These students are in their first year of university study.

These reforms to healthcare student funding will help secure the future supply of nurses to the NHS by removing the artificial cap on training numbers in these professions, and enabling thousands of additional UK applicants to gain a place to study nursing at university.

31 Jan 2018 | Written questions | Answered | House of Lords | HL4893

Date tabled: 18 Jan 2018 | **Date for answer:** 01 Feb 2018 | **Date answered:** 31 Jan 2018

- [Health Professions: Training](#)

Asked by: Lord Roberts of Llandudno | **Party:** Liberal Democrats

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they plan to train additional medical staff from the UK to replace existing staff from other EU countries who have left or might leave the NHS.

Answering member: Lord O'Shaughnessy | **Party:** Conservative Party |
Department: Department of Health

In October 2016, the Government announced a historic expansion of medical school places increasing medical school places in England by 1,500. The first 500 places have already been allocated and will be available to students in September 2018. The remaining 1,000 additional medical school places would be available to medical schools in England via a competitive bidding process managed jointly by the Higher Education Funding Council for England and Health Education England.

We have also announced a 25% increase in nurse training places to provide at least 5,000 extra nurse training places every year from 2018/19 - 25,850 from 2018/19 compared to 20,680 in 2016/17.

National Health Service workforce training in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are matters for the devolved administrations in each of those countries.

22 Dec 2017 | Written questions | Answered | House of Lords | HL4058

Date tabled: 11 Dec 2017 | **Date for answer:** 27 Dec 2017 | **Date answered:** 22 Dec 2017

4. Press articles

[Hospitals 'plugging' shortages of nurses by using cheaper workers, experts fear](#)

The Telegraph, 18 October 2018

[Subscription required; article available via Nexis News]

[Quarter of UK student nurses drop out before graduation, study finds](#)

The Guardian, 3 September 2018

[Student nurses face financial hardship over loan error, says nursing body](#)

The Guardian, 16 April 2018

[New university rankings 'put nursing and social work degrees at risk'](#)

The Guardian, 27 March 2018

[Nursing course applications fall for second year after student bursary scrapped](#)

The Independent, 5 February 2018

[Nursing has been woefully managed. No wonder there's a crisis](#)

The Guardian, 27 January 2018

Comment piece by Richard Vize – public policy analyst and commentator

[Mental health care crisis looming because trainee nurses are being driven away by bursary cuts, MPs warn](#)

The Independent, 26 January 2018

[Earn as you learn – will it deliver more trained nurses?](#)

BBC News, 3 October 2017

[Government 'renegeing on promise to fund 10,000 extra nursing places'](#)

The Guardian, 27 June 2017

[Nursing degree applications slump after NHS bursaries abolished](#)

The Guardian, 2 February 2017

5. Press notices

[Nursing leaders call for £1bn to put back into nurse education](#)

Nursing Notes, 5 November 2018

[Student nurses struggling as financial hardship payments rise](#)

Nursing Notes, 29 October 2018

[Government says nurse bursaries will not return despite petition](#)

Nursing Times, 15 October 2018

[Scottish student nurse and midwife bursaries rise to £10,000](#)

Nursing Times, 9 October 2018

[Petition for return of nursing bursaries gaining momentum](#)

Nursing Times, 3 October 2018

[Bursary or Bust](#)

Nursing in Practice, 2 October 2018

[Looking beyond the Bursary](#)

Royal College of Nursing (Bulletin), September 2018

[Maintaining student enrolment after the removal of bursaries](#)

Nursing Times, 18 June 2018

[Government intends to offer financial support for postgraduate nurses](#)

Independent Nurse, 11th May 2018

[Nurses don't need bursaries: here are four reasons why](#)

The Conversation, 17th April 2018

[MP says nursing bursaries were 'far from ideal](#)

Nursing Notes, 10th April 201

[Government abolishes post-graduate nursing bursaries](#)

Nursing Notes, 10th April 2018

[Nursing student numbers, should we panic yet?](#)

Kings Fund (Blog), 14th February 2018

['Short-sighted' removal of bursaries for postgraduate student nurses](#)

Nursing Times, 12th February 2018

[Postgraduate nursing bursaries axed by DH](#)

Nursing in Practice, 12th February 2018

[Falling nursing degree applicant numbers show folly of bursary and fee changes](#)

Nursing Standard, 6th February 2018

[Why we shouldn't panic about nursing students... yet](#)

King's Fund, 25th July 2017

[Health education: a terminal problem?](#)

Guild HE, 28th April 2017

[General Election 2017: why were nurse bursaries removed?](#)

The Conversation, 27th April 2017

[Will scrapping nurse bursaries address shortages](#)

Nuffield Trust, 7th July 2016

6. Further reading

6.1 Government publications

- Department of Health, [NHS bursary reform: Policy Paper](#), 27 January 2017
- Department of Health, [Reforming healthcare education funding: creating a sustainable future workforce](#), May 2016
- Department of Health, [Impact assessment - Reforms to funding and financial support for nursing, midwifery and AHP Bursary students](#), 21 July 2016

6.2 Commons Library publications

- Commons Library briefing paper CBP07436, [Reform of support for healthcare students in England](#), 3 February 2017
- Commons Library briefing paper CBP08301, [Debate on SI 2018/443 \(on student support\): 9 May 2018](#), 4 May 2018

6.3 Sector/external comment and analysis

- Nuffield Trust, [The health care workforce in England: make or break?](#) 15th November 2018
- Royal College of Nursing, [Fund Our Future](#) [campaign webpage]

This campaign asserts that “Many nursing students are struggling financially because they don’t have time to work to support themselves. It’s causing some students to quit their courses”.

It calls on the Government to commit “a minimum of £1bn a year to be put back into nursing higher education.”

- Reform, [Getting into shape: delivering a work force for integrated care](#), September 2017
- Health Org, [Staffing matters, funding counts, pressure point: student nurses](#), July 2016
- NUS, [Reforming Healthcare Education Funding: Creating a sustainable workforce: Response](#), May 2016
- Middlesex University research, [Nurse education is big business for British universities: Discussion Paper](#), 2016

About the Library

The House of Commons Library research service provides MPs and their staff with the impartial briefing and evidence base they need to do their work in scrutinising Government, proposing legislation, and supporting constituents.

As well as providing MPs with a confidential service we publish open briefing papers, which are available on the Parliament website.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in these publically available research briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

If you have any comments on our briefings please email papers@parliament.uk. Authors are available to discuss the content of this briefing only with Members and their staff.

If you have any general questions about the work of the House of Commons you can email hcinfo@parliament.uk.

Disclaimer

This information is provided to Members of Parliament in support of their parliamentary duties. It is a general briefing only and should not be relied on as a substitute for specific advice. The House of Commons or the author(s) shall not be liable for any errors or omissions, or for any loss or damage of any kind arising from its use, and may remove, vary or amend any information at any time without prior notice.

The House of Commons accepts no responsibility for any references or links to, or the content of, information maintained by third parties. This information is provided subject to the [conditions of the Open Parliament Licence](#).