

million +

leading the
university agenda

A MANIFESTO FOR HEALTH EDUCATION



“UNISON believes improved funding is vital. We must ensure that our universities can produce the highly skilled practitioners we need to meet the challenges of delivering health and social care services fit for the 21st century.”

Christina McAnea,
National Secretary of Health,
UNISON



“The College of Podiatry welcomes the manifesto highlighting as it does the podiatric health needs of the population. It is imperative that all involved in the delivery of health care are adequately trained and employed to meet these needs. The drivers of an ageing population, increasing levels of diabetes, and the economic benefits derived from preventing rather than curing can only serve to underscore the key messages of your manifesto, to which our College gives full support.”

Joanna Brown, Chief Executive,
The College of Podiatry



This manifesto sets out a road-map and the steps which the next government must take to secure the education and training of the health and social care workforce of the future. The government must commit to a significant increase in investment in education and professional development to fund:

- > the additional undergraduate (pre-registration) training places in universities in nursing, midwifery and the allied health professions required to meet national demand and regional need
- > the education, training and development of the support workforce
- > postgraduate qualifications and post-qualifying professional development to deliver improvements in high quality patient care, innovation in practice and the highly qualified practitioners of the future
- > programmes to support collaboration between universities, health and social care providers, professionals, practitioners and users to develop new programmes and the education and training provision required to deliver the integration of care

Educating the health and social care workforce of the future:

There are over 670,000 nurses and midwives¹, over 237,253 Health and Care registered health professionals² and over 100,000 registered social workers in the UK. Working alongside the wider workforce, these health and social care staff and the universities and education providers that support their education and professional development are crucial to the delivery of high quality patient care, innovation and the more integrated approach outlined in the NHS's *Five Year Forward View*³.

The role of universities and other education providers

Universities and other providers of education have a crucial role in delivering health and social care education and will have a key role in ensuring the integration of services.

Universities:

- > provide bridging programmes and award foundation degrees which widen entry routes into pre-registration training
- > teach and award undergraduate qualifications and other qualifications for health and social care staff in liaison with healthcare providers, complying with the requirements of the professional organisations

- > ensure students acquire knowledge, skills and develop the reflective practice essential to the delivery of high quality and preventative care
- > integrate into programmes the placements that students require to apply their knowledge and develop skills to become safe and effective practitioners
- > offer postgraduate and post-registration programmes to allow staff to update and specialise
- > undertake research to develop and disseminate innovative and interdisciplinary practice, new products and solutions

"The NHS is recognised as one of the most cost efficient in the world. This is largely due to the very high level of professionalism and commitment of the clinical and non-clinical staff that choose a healthcare career. The pre and postgraduate education of these employees is similarly world class and results in levels of integration and multidisciplinary working that contribute directly to the efficiency and high quality care upon which we all rely. It is vital that resources for health education across the spectrum of careers are increased to meet the health care and public health demands of the UK population."

Richard Evans, Chief Executive,
Society of Radiographers



¹ Source www.nmc-uk.org/registration (accessed 09.01.15).

² Source www.hcpc-uk.org/about/registration/statistics-current (accessed 09.01.15); 91,001 social workers in England had been removed from the figure of total HCPC registrants as at 01.10.14.

³ DH 23 October 2014.

Funding education and training

Health Education England (HEE) is responsible for medical and dental training but also the education and training of nurses, midwives and allied health professional staff such as radiographers, podiatrists, physiotherapists and paramedics. Currently the overwhelming majority of HEE's budget is focused on the training of doctors and dentists. In 2013-14 HEE sought to amend the Benchmark Price and National Framework contract which govern the arrangements with universities for the education of health professional staff. Following lengthy negotiations HEE agreed that the BMP would be frozen from 2014-16.

It is vital that the training and education budget of Health Education England is increased if the commitment of all political parties to increase the number of nurses and other health professional staff is to be realised. Additional resources must also be allocated to support postgraduate and post-registration education, *The Talent for Care* programme for support staff including healthcare assistants and the new professional education and training programmes that will be required to integrate health and social care.

Delivering high quality education and training

The first step in the qualifications ladder for nursing, midwifery, health and social care staff provides the foundation for further professional development and postgraduate specialisms. Students also need access to high quality placements and supervision by experienced mentors. Changes in providers, budget constraints and the increasing use of agency staff have made it increasingly difficult to identify the number and high quality placements and supervision which students require.

Recommendations

The Government should:

- > fund universities at the level required to provide high quality clinical training
- > maintain first level qualification to practise as part of an undergraduate or postgraduate degree based within a university
- > require providers of NHS, Local Authority and other relevant services to offer sufficient opportunities for high quality practice placements for students
- > ensure that funding allocated to providers for placements is ring-fenced and goes directly to the provider
- > support improved quality and progression data systems to monitor students' progression from graduation and registration to employment and subsequent career pathways

Supporting clinical practice academic careers and research

The quality and practitioner experience of staff in universities is crucial to the quality of health and social care education. Universities also undertake a vital role in research which informs practice, underpins innovation and develops new products.

Recommendations

The Government should fund:

- > the development of clinical practice academic career pathways, joint appointments and secondments between healthcare organisations and universities
- > health and social care research within universities to support research in practice, promote innovation and their dissemination to health and social care professionals

Planning for the NHS workforce of the future

Prior to 2013 the Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) were responsible for the delivery at regional level of a national plan for the education and training of nurses, midwives and the allied health professions. The SHAs took into account the needs of hospitals and community providers in their localities and agreed the commissions required to respond to those needs with universities.

The NHS and Social Care Act changed these arrangements. In 2013 the responsibilities of the Department of Health for workforce planning and education were transferred to Health

Education England, a Special Health Authority newly established for this purpose. Following the abolition of the 10 SHAs⁴, 13 Local Education Training Boards (LETBs) with reduced university representation were set-up. The LETBs work with a much more diverse group of providers and commissioners and there are concerns that the new arrangements have led to a more fragmented approach to education and training at local and regional level. Trusts are also increasing their use of agency staff and recruiting overseas. This is costly, inefficient and risks reducing the number of staff with the leadership and mentoring skills required to support students on placement.

By concentrating on local needs, areas of the country which lack an educational provider for a specific profession can also suffer. For example, there is no School of Podiatry in East Anglia and it is difficult to see how patients in that area would benefit from the treatment of podiatrists if all commissioning was done at a local level.

Recommendations:

The Government should:

- > evaluate the role and effectiveness of Health Education England and the Local Education Training Boards in delivering the high quality workforce planning that the NHS needs
- > ensure that workforce development planning is informed with a robust evidence base to enable universities to better prepare students for the health and social needs of both the nation and their local communities
- > consider national commissioning of small and medium sized professions

⁴ The SHAs were abolished on 31 March 2013 as part of the NHS and Social Care Act 2012.

"This manifesto should be warmly welcomed and adhered to. It sets out the clear and necessary steps needed to ensure the future health and social care workforce gets the appropriate education and training which, ultimately, benefits patient safety and the wider health of the nation."

Sue Kellie, BDA Deputy
Chief Executive, British Dietetic
Association



**million+ is a university think-tank
which publishes research reports
and evidence-based policy papers
on issues that affect the higher
education sector and beyond.**

million+
90 London Road
London SE1 6LN

Phone 020 7717 1655
Twitter: @million_plus
info@millionplus.ac.uk
www.millionplus.ac.uk