



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## **WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

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**TITLE** Health Professional Education Commissioning – 2015/16

**DATE** 11 February 2015

**BY** Mark Drakeford, Minister for Health and Social Services

The success of the NHS relies on having a workforce which responds to the health and wellbeing needs of the Welsh population and is able to provide high-quality care now and in the future. In many respects, the NHS has been a victim of its success.

Developments in research, together with technological advances, mean people are living longer and are surviving diseases which would have once cut their lives short. As a result, the demand placed on the health service is now greater than at any time in its history. This makes it even more important to ensure the NHS workforce is able to keep pace with the changes required to ensure has the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to provide sustainable services.

Wales' population is ageing and there are now more older people than children living in Wales. This trend is set to continue, with the number of people aged 65 and over projected to increase by 50% between 2012 and 2037 and the number aged 85 projected to more than double.

This will have significant implications for the way services are delivered in Wales. The Welsh Government is committed to moving care closer to people's homes by ensuring more community-based services are developed, which aim to keep people out of hospital and as independent as possible.

This approach will require a fundamental change in the way services are planned and delivered and will present challenges to the way we educate and train the workforce to deliver care both now and in the future.

Our NHS workforce is highly-trained but we must capitalise on the huge range of skills that exist within the healthcare family to find ways of enabling everyone to make the best

possible contribution they can. This means working across professional boundaries, recognising and valuing the contribution each individual makes to the NHS while looking for ways to simplify services in the interest of patients.

As part of that process I am today announcing an £80m package to support a range of education and training programmes for healthcare professionals, including midwives, physiotherapists and occupational therapists.

The increase in the number of training places in 2015-16 includes:

- Nursing – 230 extra places, an increase of 22% from 2014-15;
- Paramedic training – 58 extra places, an increase of 161%;
- Occupational therapists – 23 extra places, an increase of 26%;
- Physiotherapy – 25 extra places, an increase of 26%;
- Diagnostic radiography – 19 extra places, an increase of 26%;
- Speech and language therapy - seven extra places, an increase of 19%;
- Clinical scientists – nine extra places, an increase of 52%;
- Dental hygienists and technicians – nine extra places, an increase of 41%.

These additional training places will increase the capacity of the NHS to develop community-based models of care by ensuring a wide range of healthcare professionals work together in the interest of their patients.