# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE** | ***NHS Wales Bursary arrangements 2017/18*** |
| **DATE** | ***09 December 2016*** |
| **BY** | ***Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport*** |

The sustainability of the NHS relies heavily upon the ability of the workforce to respond to the challenges it faces from an ageing population to technological advances and a growing demand for healthcare.

The flexibility required must be underpinned by a variety of high quality training and development opportunities which are constantly updated to ensure each member of the workforce has the skills, knowledge and experience to do their job to the best of their ability.

This government has consistently invested in the education and training of individuals wanting to work in the NHS and will continue to do so.

I have previously said that the longer term arrangements for student support for health related subjects will be considered alongside the recommendations arising from the Diamond Review. This remains my view.

We are facing significant financial challenges within the NHS and the issues we face around recruitment and retention must also be recognised. I believe that to ensure we have the workforce we need in Wales, it is important that any enhanced investment made in training and development is combined with an opportunity to work in Wales and a commitment to invest in Wales by those who benefit.

Therefore I am today confirming that for those individuals who elect to study an eligible health related programme in Wales commencing in September 2017 the current NHS Bursary will be available. This will be based upon individuals committing in advance to take up the opportunity to work in Wales post qualification for a period of two years. Individuals who do not feel they can commit to this two year service provision will not be eligible to receive the benefits of the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme, however Welsh domiciled students will have access to the standard student support package available from Student Finance Wales. This arrangement is intended to be in place for the 2017/18 cohort only, while the longer term support package is developed.

In contrast to the approach adopted in England, the Welsh Government is taking positive action to attract more health professionals across Wales and throughout the UK to come to Wales to train, work and live.