MillionPlus

**The Association for
Modern Universities**

A manifesto for health education

Funding the education of health and social care staff

Funding for the education and professional development of staff working in the NHS and in social care is under pressure. Demand for health and social care services is increasing. Many NHS providers are in deficit. The majority of the funding provided to Health Education England is spent on the training and professional development of medical staff rather than nurses, midwives and key health professions such as radiographers, physiotherapists and podiatrists.

The abolition of NHS bursaries in England and their replacement by student loans for nursing, midwifery and other health professional students from 2017-18 has resulted in a decline in applications from mature students and those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. As graduates, these NHS staff are unlikely to repay their student loans in full over the thirty-year repayment period but the new system will not necessarily assist with the challenge of recruiting, training and retaining staff in the NHS.

Local councils are also facing funding challenges to deliver the social care system required by an ageing population while the number of school nurses being trained has fallen. In addition, staff from the European Union may be discouraged from working in the NHS and in social care during negotiations for the UK to leave the European Union and may be prevented from working in these sectors after Brexit.

> Since 1992, modern universities have played a vital role in the success of the NHS workforce. They educate **60%** of the students on courses in subjects allied to medicine. These professions are the ones enabling the NHS to adapt and evolve as the demands for its services increase.

To avoid future staff shortages, improve health outcomes and move to the greater integration of health and social care, the next government will have to deliver

- **an improved system of strategic and local planning** of current and future workforce needs across all NHS and social-care commissioned services
- much more funding for **the education and professional development** of staff
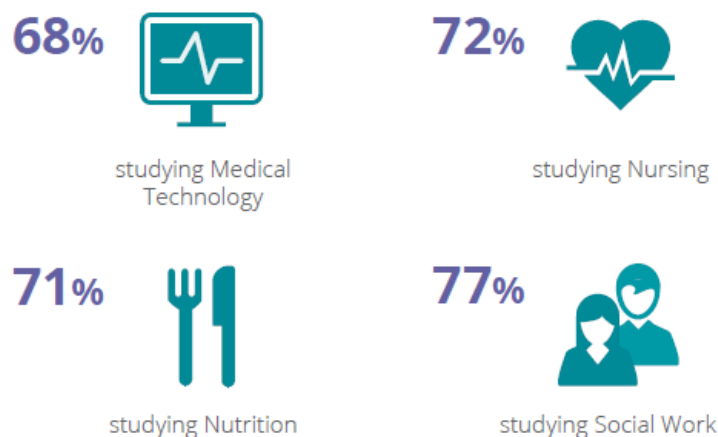
The role of modern universities

The role of modern universities in building new capacity, increasing capabilities and improving the well-being of the NHS and social care workforce of the future, should be recognised by the new government. These universities already deliver high quality health, social work and social care programmes and are developing new medical schools and new apprenticeship programmes. Modern 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

Modern universities are at the forefront of health and social care training across the UK, educating almost two thirds (64%) of all students studying subjects allied to medicine as well as three quarters of all social work students.

These include:

68% studying Medical Technology

72% studying Nursing

71% studying Nutrition

77% studying Social Work

In order to support the NHS and social care workforce of the future, the next government should

- **expand the funding for nursing and allied health education**, including continuing professional education, through Health Education England
- **write-off the student loans** of nurses and NHS professional staff in England who work in the NHS after qualification
- develop **national commissioning** of small and medium sized professions
- fund universities at the level required to **provide high quality clinical training**
- **restore and expand funding for continuous professional development** and the post-registration training that are vital to improved and integrated health and social care
- require providers of NHS, Local Authority and other relevant services to offer **sufficient opportunities for high quality practice placements** for students
- **ensure that placement funding is ring-fenced** and goes directly to providers
- support improved **quality and progression data systems** to monitor students' progression from graduation and registration to employment and subsequent career pathways
- **ensure that modern universities are engaged in local workforce planning and strategy**, including discussions about the delivery of Sustainability and Transformation Plans
- **maintain first level qualification** to practise as part of an undergraduate or postgraduate degree based within a university

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. Modern universities undertake a vital role in research which informs practice, underpins innovation and develops new products but this needs to be underpinned by new initiatives.

The next government should therefore fund

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

MillionPlus is the Association for Modern Universities, representing modern universities across the UK. Visit our website at www.millionplus.ac.uk for more details, or contact us on 020 7717 1655 or info@millionplus.ac.uk