

## Joint statement on Workforce Challenges across health and care

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We have come together as a coalition of patient charities and professional bodies to call on the Government to commit to a serious, comprehensive and fully-resourced response to workforce challenges across health and care, which are now badly impacting people's experience of health and care.

The current workforce crisis has been developing over decades across the health and care system. While the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath have left many staff feeling burnt out, challenges with recruitment and retention across health and care long pre-date the pandemic. They have real, life and death, implications for people and communities up and down the country.

The impacts of the workforce crisis are felt from cradle to grave, and from diagnosis, through treatment to after care. Gaps in General Practice, secondary care, community-based support, mental health services, and social care impact across every patient group, and are particularly felt in already underserved communities. Too often the debate on staffing health and care happens without people who use these services in the room.

As patient groups we are vocal about the changes we want to see in health and care, including when we need more or better from our health and care staff. But we also know that the changes we want can't be delivered by staff who are under-supported, over-stretched, and (increasingly) planning to leave. We need an NHS that works for everyone, but we will not get that as long as it is underfunded and under-resourced.

The Government's response on workforce to date has been far from proportionate to the scale of the challenges faced. As a result, people's experiences of health and care are getting worse, and, as recent analysis of the [British Social Attitudes survey](#) demonstrated, confidence in the health and care system is faltering.

Together with professional bodies, we reject narratives that pit the workforce against the people who use health and care services. Many of us are, or will at some point be, both patients and staff members of these services. The health and wellbeing of our communities is enhanced when health and care services offer good work to local people.

It is critical that the long-anticipated NHS workforce plan is fully-funded, clearly sets out the workforce numbers required, and is built on the needs

and aspirations of people who use health and social care services both now and in the future. It must be designed and delivered with the diverse range of people who work in health and care services and who use them.

Health and care professionals must have the time, energy and training they need to deliver personalised care and support that focusses on what matters to us, rather than what is the matter with us.

We ask the Government to treat this challenge with the urgency, seriousness and resource it deserves.

With kind regards,



Sarah Sweeney  
Interim Chief Executive  
National Voices

**With the support of 85 patient charities and professional bodies:**

Action against Medical Accidents  
Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis  
Adfam  
Allergy UK  
Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance  
Association of Anaesthetists  
Behçet's UK  
Birth Trauma Association  
Birthrights  
Blood Cancer UK  
British Medical Association Patient Liaison Group  
Bowel Cancer UK  
British Geriatrics Society  
British Liver Trust  
C3 Collaborating for Health  
Cancer52  
Cardiomyopathy UK  
Cauda Equina Champions Charity  
Crohn's & Colitis UK  
CRPS UK

Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance  
Diabetes UK  
Disability Rights UK  
Dystonia UK  
East Staffordshire District Patient Engagement Group  
Endometriosis UK  
Faculty of Public Health  
FND Hope UK  
Friends and Families – Empowering Families with Disabled Children  
Future Care Capital  
Guillain-Barre & Associated Inflammatory Neuropathies  
Gender Identity Research and Education Society  
Help2Change CIC  
Hounslow Borough Respiratory Support Group  
ICUsteps  
Juvenile Arthritis Research  
Kidney Care UK  
Long Covid Kids  
Long Covid SOS  
Long Covid Support  
LUPUS UK  
Lymphoedema Support Network  
Macmillan Cancer Support  
Mental Health Foundation  
Mental Health UK  
Mind  
Motor Neurone Disease Association  
MS Society  
National Association of Deafened People  
National Counselling Society  
National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society  
National Survivor User Network  
National Ugly Mugs  
Out with Prostate Cancer  
Parathyroid UK  
Parkinson's UK  
Patient Safety Learning  
Patients Association  
Positively UK  
Pseudomyxoma Survivor  
Royal College of Emergency Medicine  
Rethink Mental Illness  
Royal College of General Practitioners

Royal College of Physicians  
Royal College of Psychiatrists  
Royal College of Radiologists  
Royal Pharmaceutical Society  
Scleroderma & Raynaud's UK  
Shine Cancer Support  
Stripy Lightbulb CIC  
Stroke Association  
The Hibbs Lupus Trust  
The Neurological Alliance  
The Point of Care Foundation  
The Richmond Group of Charities  
The Royal College of Anaesthetists  
The Royal College of Pathologists  
Time To Talk Mental Health UK  
Together for Short Lives  
Turning Point  
United Kingdom Acquired Brain Injury Forum  
Urostomy Association  
Versus Arthritis  
Viewpoint  
Your SimPal