

# Community Nursing Healthcare Weekly Policy Update

Week ending 19/05/2017

## General Election

### The Labour Party

The Labour Party [published](#) their 2017 manifesto, 'For the many, not the few'. On community healthcare the following is pledged:

- *'Labour will focus resources to provide care closer to home and deliver a truly 21<sup>st</sup> century health system'*
- *'We will work towards a new model of community care that takes into account not only primary care but also social care and mental health'.*

The King's Fund [responded](#), *"We welcome the commitment to extra funding for the NHS and social care ... but investment needs to go alongside reform to develop new and better ways of delivering care ... The proposals to halt sustainability and transformation plan (STPs) risks holding back essential changes to services"*.

The Nuffield Trust [responded](#), *"... it is good that Labour have responded to these concerns [funding] by making a real and significant immediate commitment ... A longer-term commitment to keep pace with rising prices, wages and the ageing population is still needed ... Similarly, we welcome many of the proposals on the NHS workforce ... We worry that sweeping legal changes to reduce contracting with private and voluntary sector providers would take up valuable time and money without really helping tackle the biggest problems the NHS faces"*.

The Health Foundation [responded](#), *"The Labour manifesto proposes an immediate injection of significant extra funding into the NHS; £7.4bn extra this year. But for the remainder of the decade, the proposals for NHS funding would amount to an average increase of 2.2% a year when accounting for inflation"*.

### The Conservative Party

The Conservative Party [published](#) their 2017 manifesto, 'Forward, together: Our plan for a stronger Britain and a prosperous future'. On community healthcare the following is pledged:

- *'... Enable more care to be delivered closer to home, by building and upgrading primary care facilities, mental health clinics and hospitals in every part of England'*

---

QNI Community Nursing Healthcare Policy Update.

By Louise Clanfield, QNI Research Officer.

- *'We shall support more integrated working, including ensuring community pharmacies can play a stronger role to keep people healthy outside hospital within the wider health system'.*

The King's Fund [responded](#), *"Instead of fundamental reform, these proposals involve tinkering with a broken system and do not provide the sustainable solution that is desperately needed ... We welcome the commitment to back the 'NHS Five Year Forward View' and sustainability and transformation plans and to legislate, if necessary, to speed up implementation of essential changes to NHS services".*

The Nuffield Trust [responded](#), *"We welcome this manifesto's commitment to the principle of a comprehensive National Health Service. But the pledge of a further £8 billion by 2022/23 above 2017/18 spending, does not get us to a long-term funding settlement to support this ... The approach to new legislation for the NHS is sensible ... The manifesto is right to focus on the NHS workforce as a pressing issue, and the intention to allow NHS staff from the EU to stay in Britain is vital".*

The Health Foundation [responded](#), *"The Conservatives' proposals would mean NHS spending per person would not fall in real terms in the next two years, as currently planned. But it would leave a funding gap for the NHS in England of £12bn by 2020/21".*

### **The Liberal Democrats**

The Liberal Democrats [published](#) their 2017 manifesto 'Change Britain's future'. On community healthcare the following is pledged:

- *'Home for social not hospital: better integration of health and social care and limiting the amount elderly people have to pay care'*
- *'Support innovation in how organisations can empower staff and patients, including learning from innovative social enterprises delivering community and mental health services'*
- *'Provide national support to struggling GP practices, preventing mass practice closures'*
- *'Use innovation funding to promote GP-led multidisciplinary health and care hubs, including mobile services to keep people out of hospital'*
- *'Encourage GPs and other community clinicians to work in disadvantaged areas through our Patient Premium – which would give incentive payments to clinicians'.*

The King's Fund [responded](#), *"We welcome the recognition that sustaining health and social care services needs extra investment funded by tax increases ... It is right that*

*services outside of hospital should be the priority for extra funding. The NHS needs to move to a new way of delivering care that meets the changing needs of patients by providing care closer to people's homes".*

The Nuffield Trust [responded](#), *"The Lib Dems have pledged to raise income tax across the board in order to give the NHS and adult social care 'an extra £6 billion a year' above existing spending plans. However, approximately a third of this amount will go to social care, and the funding is not just for the NHS in England, but also for Wales and Northern Ireland ... It is good to see that the party would end the pay cap for staff, guarantee the rights of EU workers and develop a more strategic approach to workforce planning".*

The Health Foundation [responded](#), *"The Liberal Democrats' proposals would result in a £3.5bn cash injection for the NHS in England next year rising to an extra £5bn in 2020/21, with an additional £2bn a year ring-fenced for social care. But it would leave a funding gap for the NHS in England of £9bn by 2020/21".*

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) [responded](#), *"Putting children first' as the Liberal Democrats pledge to do is a sound, long-sighted strategy for improving the health, wellbeing and economic prosperity of the nation that we applaud ... The emphasis on education and mental health is also very welcome".*

### **Election briefings**

The Health Foundation published their [second](#) and [third](#) election briefings.

*'Quality of care in the English NHS – In the balance'*

- NHS targets for ambulance response times, in cases of an immediate threat to life, were not met in 2016/17. The number of ambulance calls, of this nature, has increased from 1.6 million in 2011/12 to 9.8 million in 2016/17
- The last time NHS A&E waiting time targets (95% of patients admitted, discharged or transferred within four hours of arrival) were met was 2013/14
- The number of A&E visits has increased by 2.4% over the past decade
- An increasing number of patients experience delayed discharge from hospital – in 2016/17 the number of delayed discharges was 77,782 and increase of 29,081 in 2011/12. A lack of appropriate social care accounted for a third of delayed discharges in 2016/17
- The next government should ensure that the NHS has the resource and time to continuously improve care, with adequate funding and staff in the social care and health system

- The next government should commit and back the agreement created under the 'NHS Five Year Forward View' around mental health, primary care and clinical strategies for cancer.

*'A sustainable workforce – the lifeblood of the NHS and social care'*

- Staff recruitment and retention is one of the biggest problems facing the NHS
- In 2015, Health Education England estimated the NHS was short of 30,000 full-time equivalent nurses, whilst The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) estimate one in nine nursing posts is vacant. Declining numbers are expected to continue
- Between 2009 and 2016, community and mental health nurses (full-time equivalent) employed by the NHS fell by 13%, whilst district nurse numbers decreased by 42%
- Approximately 900 social care employees leave their job each day. In 2016, 15% of all vacant positions in the UK economy were health and social work roles
- NHS Spending on agency staff increased by 37% between 2013/14 and 2015/16
- 150,000 NHS and social care employees are from the EU (more than 7% of NHS nurses) and one in eight registered nurses was trained abroad
- Staff morale is a significant concern and staff are under significant pressure
- Pay restraint in the public sector should be abolished and an assessment into how a total reward package for NHS staff is determined should be undertaken
- The next government must ensure there are enough NHS and social care staff to meet demand, lower reliance on internationally trained staff and shift to a policy in which more staff than needed are trained.

## **Nurses**

### **Industrial action**

Over 52,000 members participated in the Royal College of Nursing's (RCN) pay poll and whilst this is not enough to mandate a formal ballot, the poll found an appetite for industrial action. 91% voted in favour of taking industrial action short of a strike and 78% were prepared to strike.

---

*QNI Community Nursing Healthcare Policy Update.*

*By Louise Clanfield, QNI Research Officer.*

An emergency resolution has been proposed for a summer of protest. If the next government fail to address pay restraint; an industrial action ballot will take place. RCN members have been encouraged to adopt 'pay champion' roles and coordinate local action.

### **Record number of nursing positions vacant**

Figures [released](#) by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) show 40,000 nurse positions in England are vacant. Whilst there are approximately 12,000 health care support vacancies, community care and mental health is experiencing the greatest staff shortages. Four in five NHS nursing directors are concerned that services are running on the reliance of staff goodwill.

NHS Providers [commented](#), *"These figures are further evidence of the severe workforce pressures NHS trusts face. An important part of the problem is that we are seven years into a period of pay restraint. This must end, and politicians must be clear about when during the lifetime of the next parliament it will happen and how"*.

### **Declining numbers of school nurses and health visitors**

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) published a [report](#) looking into the declining number of school nurses and reductions in the health visiting workforce.

- Investment in early year's development is a key in addressing health and social inequality. Practical interventions have a significant impact in addressing disadvantage and supporting the development of resilient individuals able to effectively contribute to society and their community
- Changes in the commissioning of school nursing and health visitors, at a time of cuts to public health spending, puts services at significant risk. 14% of cuts fell on services aiming to improve the health of young people and children
- Considerable changes to services are being planned including, decommissioning non-statutory services, service reviews and services being redesigned. At the core of many service changes is a prospective reduction in the number of public health nurses
- Services are being administered by independent providers which present challenges in tracking workforce development, and therefore impacting on workforce planning and strategy
- Health visitors and school nurses are subject to a significant increase in workload, compromising their ability to provide efficient services for families and children
- The number of health visitors has decreased by 1,000 since 2015

- Between 2010 and 2017, the number of full-time school nurses decreased by 16%, whilst the number of school aged pupils increased by 450,000.

### Guide on people trafficking

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) have [published](#) a pocket-sized guide for nursing staff to help them identify victims of people trafficking. Approximately 13,000 children, women and men are trafficked in the UK each year, with a fifth of victims having contact with health and care services. Yet, 86% of staff report feeling inadequately trained. The guide also seeks raise awareness in the NHS about modern slavery.

## **Mental Health**

### **Social media has negative impacts on young people's mental health**

The Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) and the Young Health Movement published a [report](#) on the effects social media has on young people's mental health.

91% of young people (16-24 year olds) use social networks and whilst such can create communities, provide emotional support, enable communication and serve as a catalyst for good mental health, it also entails negative effects:

- **Anxiety and depression.** Young people reported that some social media platforms increased their feelings of anxiety, whilst those spending over two hours a day on these platforms are more likely to report poor mental health
- **Sleep** and mental health are intertwined; poor mental health impacts on sleep, whilst poor sleep impacts upon mental health. Evidence suggest social media is linked to poor sleep with one in five young people waking during the night to check social media
- **Body image** concerns are higher in young girls and women who use Facebook
- **Cyberbullying** is experienced by seven in ten young people.

### **Mental health and new care models**

The King's Fund published a [report](#) on mental health and care models. The research found:

- Many vanguards include elements of mental health within their care models
- In general, the extent to which integrated approaches to care can have in mental health are not fully realised
- In developing new care models, mental health has been a relatively low priority.

---

*QNI Community Nursing Healthcare Policy Update.*

*By Louise Clanfield, QNI Research Officer.*

Recommendations include:

- Ensure mental health is a fundamental aspect of work on new models of care
- Increase the primary and community health workforces mental health capability and bolster mental health professionals comprehension of physical health
- Share examples of best practice with local systems
- Ensure local system leaders are accountable for ensuring integrated approaches to mental health within STPs and ensuring such are implemented well.

## Other

### **STPs overlooking needs of infants, children and young people**

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPH) published a [review](#) of 44 sustainability and transformation partnership (STP) proposals. By and large, there was a lack of attention paid to the health and wellbeing needs of infants, children and young people.

The key findings include:

- The majority of STPs overlook the health and wellbeing needs of children and fail to understand the reforms needed in order to meet children's needs
- A significant proportion of STPs failed to meet statutory requirements to engage with young people, children and their families. There was also little engagement with paediatricians and other child health clinicians
- Demand for children's healthcare is increasing, yet 241 full-time equivalent positions are vacant and approximately 752 extra consultants are needed. STPs fail to clearly demonstrate how workforce shortages will be addressed.

### **Britain's healthcare system ranked 30<sup>th</sup> globally**

A [study](#) ranking 192 countries healthcare systems, on access and quality, has ranked Britain 30<sup>th</sup>. The UK scored 84.6 out of 100, with a particularly low score on cancer care, lower than other European countries such as Ireland, Spain, Italy, Slovenia and Germany and the lowest in Western Europe. Whilst the UK has improved, it still underperforms in comparison to the level of development in the UK. Globally, the quality of healthcare has improved.

---

*QNI Community Nursing Healthcare Policy Update.*

*By Louise Clanfield, QNI Research Officer.*

### **Three in four believe the NHS is in a poor condition**

An [opinion poll](#) by 'The Independent' has found three in four people think the NHS is in a poor condition.

51% of respondents felt that the Conservative party were responsible for the problems the NHS currently faces, whilst 20% blamed the Labour party and 13% felt responsibility lied with NHS staff.

### **Public Health (Wales) Bill**

The Public Health (Wales) Bill passed under which smoking in public playgrounds, hospital grounds and school grounds is illegal. It also requires the Welsh Government to develop a strategy on obesity.

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) [responded](#), '*Tackling childhood obesity and restricting smoking in public areas such as playgrounds, schools and hospital grounds are key public health priorities that will have a major impact on improving child health*'.