

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

22nd November 2018

LONDON SW1A 0AA

New Consultant,

RE: HEALTH EDUCATION SYSTEM.

Thank you for contacting me recently about reforms to the health education system; your comments upon which I read with great interest.

While there are over 13,000 more nurses on wards since 2010, more remains to be done to boost the training of nurses in the NHS. Nurses, midwives, and allied health professionals (AHPs) are absolutely essential to our NHS, and I firmly believe that everybody with the qualifications and commitment to undertake these degrees should have the chance to do so.

The previous system of NHS-funded bursaries had the cost of training nurses, midwives, and AHPs largely borne by the NHS. This led, in effect, to an artificial cap on the numbers in training, limited to only those numbers needed as a minimum to meet NHS workforce requirements in line with Health Education England's annual workforce plan. Under the bursary system, over 30,000 people who applied to be a nurse were rejected.

In order to deliver more nurses and health professionals for the NHS, a better funding system for health students and a more sustainable model for universities, it was necessary to move health students' grants and bursaries onto the standard student support system, in line with all other degrees. This change came into force in August 2017.

Please rest assured that the Government recognises that nursing students in particular often have unique circumstances. Following a consultation on these reforms, the Government will look to provide extra funding to help cover additional expenses like travel and more support for students with children. Ministers will work with the Royal College of Nursing, hospitals and other partners in taking this forward.

After lengthy public consultation, it was decided to maintain a limited number of postgraduate bursaries for the 2017 to 2018 academic year, with all postgraduate courses coming into line with the wider funding model from September 2018. Before reforms to the funding model for postgraduates, just 2,500 students successfully entered postgraduate routes to nursing, midwifery and AHPs, compared to 28,000 undergraduates. Ministers are hopeful the new model will help to drive up the number of nurses coming from postgraduate routes.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

with best wishes

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE