

To:

- NHS provider organisations – chief nurses and medical directors

15 December 2020

CC:

- NHS provider organisations – HR directors
- NHS England and NHS Improvement – regional chief nurses, regional medical directors, regional workforce directors
- Health Education England – Professor Wendy Reid, Director of Education and Quality and Medical Director

Dear Colleagues,

Additional funds to support winter workforce pressures

Our NHS workforce continues to be central to the successful NHS response in these challenging and unprecedented times, and we would like to thank you and your teams for all your ongoing efforts to support patients, colleagues and our population.

We write to inform you of £80 million of new funding to support recruitment of international nurses, healthcare support workers (HCSWs) and medical support workers (MSWs) in Q4 20/21. Rapid, large-scale recruitment activity will support you in meeting urgent and emergency care, elective, COVID-19 surge and vaccination requirements in the coming months.

HCSW recruitment

The recruitment of new HCSWs is essential to support the existing workforce. Funding is available to significantly reduce HCSW vacancies by March 2021. It will enable trusts to accelerate recruitment and provide additional support to enhance recruitment of HCSWs new to healthcare and the NHS.

All trusts employing HCSWs can access:

- Up to c.£9,500 to identify designated HR recruitment capacity, to support accelerated HCSW recruitment activity.
- Up to c.£33,000 to provide pastoral support to new HCSWs.
- £500 per WTE HCSW vacancy, as reported in the October 2020 Provider Workforce Return (PWR), to support intensive induction programmes or competency assessments.
- £1,150 per WTE HCSW to reimburse a supernumerary training period of two weeks. This will be released in April 2021, based on a significantly reduced vacancy position evidenced in March's PWR return. In order to receive this

funding, providers will therefore need to **urgently increase recruitment activity**, in order to demonstrate the required reductions.

We have additional intensive induction and supernumerary funding available for additional HCSW supply if required, although this does not extend to salary costs of new HCSW posts. The funding can be used to facilitate over-recruitment of existing establishment, supporting the multidisciplinary team approach to the delivery of post-COVID assessment clinics, hospital discharge service: policy and operating model (discharge to assess), and urgent community response (two-hour crisis response and two-day reablement response).

This funding and support offer represent a real opportunity to urgently increase your HCSW recruitment to mitigate COVID-19 and seasonal pressures and address longer-term workforce challenges.

HCSW next steps

The HCSW programme will continue supporting trusts to reduce vacancies through the national recruitment campaigns, enhanced induction and onboarding, and sharing good practice; and continue offering targeted support to those trusts with the most vacancies.

We encourage you to review your HCSW recruitment and onboarding programmes, and consider how these can be tailored to support new recruits to healthcare with the aim of reducing your vacancy position to as close to zero as possible. Please consider local turnover and future demand for the HCSW workforce in new settings. The HCSW elements of the provider workforce return (PWR) will be used to release supernumerary funding in April 2021, so please ensure this is completed accurately each month.

The HCSW programme team will shortly provide each trust with a specific breakdown of funding available.

International nurse recruitment

We will provide targeted £19.7m funding to selected trusts to support further international nurse recruitment and facilitate new overseas nurses arriving by April 2021. This is in addition to the £28m already committed to trusts (Strands A & B) within the international nurse recruitment programme. Allocations to trusts will be managed via the regional chief nurses.

MSW recruitment

We are prioritising £15m of national funding to trusts to provide additional clinical support for the short-term recruitment of up to 1,000 doctors as MSWs.

The [MSW role](#) is suitable for those who have a medical qualification but have been out of clinical practice for over a year and need to work under clinical supervision.

Trusts can claim from NHS England and NHS Improvement (via their region):

- 100% basic salary and on-costs of any MSWs they employ from now until end of March 2021 (up to a national total of 1,000)
- 0.2WTE consultant time per trust as educational supervisor for this group £250 per MSW employed for training costs.

MSW next steps

Establish rapidly where MSWs can usefully augment your medical workforce on wards and in theatres. Contact your regional [Bringing Back Staff \(BBS\) hub](#) with any questions and for information about the [doctors who are ready to work](#). It is estimated nationally that the regional BBS hubs have over 500 suitable doctors.

For any questions about HCSW and international nurse recruitment, please contact the nursing workforce team via nhsi.workforce@nhs.net.

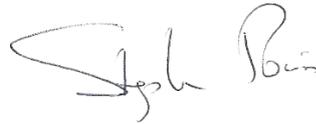
If you have any questions in relation to MSW, please contact [your regional BBS hub](#).

Thank you for your continued support and leadership throughout this period.

With best wishes,



Ruth May
Chief Nursing Officer for England



Professor Stephen Powis
National Medical Director for England