

News story: Jeremy Hunt announces salary supplement for trainee GPs

The Health Secretary has today (12 October 2017) announced a package of measures to strengthen general practice.

From 2018, surgeries in hard-to-recruit-to areas will benefit from a new government-backed scheme – the Targeted Enhanced Recruitment Scheme – which will offer a one-off payment of £20,000 to attract trainees to work in areas of the country where training places have been unfilled for a number of years.

The Department of Health has also asked Health Education England (HEE) to make sure many of the 1,500 additional medical training places that will be funded from next year are located in priority areas, including rural and coastal communities.

Speaking at the Royal College of General Practitioners Conference in Liverpool, Jeremy Hunt focused on recruitment and retention across general practice, with other measures including:

- new flexible working arrangements, including the opportunity to take on mentoring and leadership roles, for GPs considering retirement
- a new international recruitment office set up by NHS England to help local areas to recruit GPs from overseas, with plans to expand fast-track routes into general practice for doctors trained outside the European Economic Area in countries such as Australia
- a consultation on the regulation of physician associates to provide further clarity on the scope of the role, and exploring how support staff can bolster healthcare teams across the country

Jeremy Hunt said:

Last month, the Care Quality Commission gave a glowing verdict on the state of general practice in England, but this should not distract us from the fact that the profession is under considerable pressure at the moment.

By introducing targeted support for vulnerable areas and tackling head on critical issues such as higher indemnity fees and the recruitment and retention of more doctors, we can strengthen and secure general practice for the future.

Our talented GP workforce is one of the reasons why we have the best healthcare system in the world, and our commitment of an additional £2.4 billion a year for primary care by 2021 will ensure this continues.