

NHS manpower plans

I have often called for an NHS manpower plan, and have been urging Ministers to agree a way forward over employment with senior NHS managers. The agenda for any talks between representatives of the 33,000 NHS managers and top Ministers should include:

1. How many medical and support staff will it take to get waiting lists down?
2. What will it take to fill existing vacancies?
3. Given the urgent need to put in more beds to hospitals, what extra staffing is needed for extra beds?
4. Are current arrangements for choice of shifts and timing of work sufficiently flexible?
5. Doctors retire early with some saying it is pension tax rules. Can these be eased?
6. The tax system hits people when they go over £100,000 a year where many doctors are. Can the anomalous 60% rate be reduced/ tapered better?
7. Are nurses correctly graded for the band based pay system?
8. How much use is made of promotions to boost the pay of good committed staff?
9. Is enough being done to train more future nurses and doctors?
10. Are there procedures and advice that can be handled by suitably trained and certified people who do not have full doctors qualification but are expert in the permitted field?
11. What will the savings be from substituting permanent employees for Agency staff?
12. How can quality and productivity overall be improved?