

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.

[News story: GP indemnity: development of state-backed scheme for England](#)

Department of Health will work with GP representatives on how a scheme could work.

The government is planning to develop a state-backed indemnity scheme for GPs, to protect them from the costs of clinical negligence claims, subject to further work on relevant issues.

Our ambition is to provide a more stable and affordable system for GPs. The scheme could provide financially sustainable cover for claims arising from the delivery of NHS services.

We have been working with the 4 medical defence organisations that currently provide indemnity cover to GPs and with GPs on how a state-backed scheme could work. Any new scheme should:

- meet the needs of current and future GPs
- be in the interest of patients
- represent value for money for taxpayers

We will discuss urgently with GP representatives how best to engage with the sector. The scheme will need careful negotiation and will take at least 12 to 18 months to establish. GPs should continue to make sure they have appropriate indemnity cover, in line with General Medical Council (GMC) requirements, to enable them to practise.

See the [indemnity in general practice factsheet](#) for more information.

Read the [written ministerial statement](#).

[News story: The Ofqual handbook is now live](#)

Ofqual publishes preview version of new online handbook.

Today, Thursday 12 October, Ofqual has published a preview version of the Ofqual handbook, a new online resource that brings together all our general rules and guidance.

The handbook can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook>, as well as from the Ofqual homepage and our awarding organisation portal.

To help users navigate their way around the content we hosted a webinar. A recording of the webinar is now available.

[A recording of the webinar is also available](#)

We will be [gathering feedback](#) on this new format for the rest of the year, before taking decisions on roll-out early in 2018.

[News story: Chancellor in Washington and New York promoting Global Britain](#)

The Chancellor, Philip Hammond, will attend IMF, G20 and G7 meetings in Washington, where he will meet with fellow finance ministers and central bankers to discuss common challenges like global productivity, digital taxation and climate sustainability. In response to the recovery in global growth and the IMF's call for policymakers to guard against complacency, the Chancellor will urge his colleagues to work together to boost trade.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond:

I will be in the US this week to demonstrate that Global Britain is not just a phrase, it is a reality. I am looking forward to productive discussions with my international colleagues as we work together to ensure that economic growth works for everyone.

In Washington, he will also attend the meeting of Commonwealth Finance Ministers, the first time a Chancellor has attended for seven years. He will set out the government's ambitions for next year's Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London. At the meeting, a key topic of discussion will

be climate sustainability in light of the recent hurricanes that have devastated the Caribbean and affected many thousands of citizens of Commonwealth countries. The Chancellor will reiterate the UK's commitment to supporting small island states to boost their resilience to natural disasters.

The Chancellor will also meet colleagues in the United States administration.

The Chancellor will then visit New York where he will meet with CEOs of major US financial service companies that together have a market capitalisation of almost £600 billion.

Press release: PHE urges those at highest risk of flu to get vaccinated

People who are the most vulnerable to flu are being urged to get their free vaccination from today (12 October 2017), ahead of the winter period when the virus is most common.

This year, Public Health England (PHE) are aiming to vaccinate more people than ever – around 13 million people in total. Children in school year 4 will be offered the vaccine for the first time and children over age 4 in reception year can get their vaccine in school.

The national drive marks the start of 'Stay Well This Winter', an initiative from PHE and NHS England to help the most vulnerable people prepare for winter and avoid having to visit hospital due to common winter illnesses.

Professor Paul Cosford, PHE's Medical Director, said:

This year we are offering the nasal spray vaccine to more children than ever. Ensuring children get vaccinated is extremely important not only to protect them from flu but also to stop them spreading it to vulnerable groups they come in to contact with. For someone with a long term health condition like asthma or COPD, flu has the potential to turn very serious. We want as many eligible people as possible to get their jab, as it is the best way to protect everyone from flu and minimise the burden on the NHS during the season when it faces the most pressures.

Around 6.3 million people under 65 in England have a long-term health condition and are more at risk of suffering potentially fatal complications from flu. Last year, uptake amongst high risk groups increased by 3.5% amongst eligible people.

Those who are eligible for the free flu vaccine include:

- adults over 65
- pregnant women
- children aged 2 and 3 as well as pupils in reception class and school years 1 to 4
- people with long-term health conditions (including asthma, COPD and cardiovascular issues)

Another way of protecting vulnerable adults is to vaccinate children, who are 'super-spreaders' of the vaccine. For healthy children aged 2 and 3 the flu vaccine is in the form of a nasal spray, administered by a health professional. Parents of over 3 million children in reception class and school years 1, 2, 3 and 4 will be asked to agree to have their children vaccinated in school.

Last year's flu vaccination programme reduced the risk of flu in children who received the vaccine by 65.8% compared to those that didn't.

Dr. Rosemary Leonard, GP and broadcaster, said:

Young children's bodies can find it hard to cope with flu, so it is especially important to protect them with the vaccine. The nasal spray is a quick, effective and painless alternative to needles.

Once ill, children also tend to spread infection more than adults. The vaccine helps to reduce the spread of flu to other more vulnerable family members, such as grandparents.

To get your vaccine or find out if you are eligible, contact your GP, pharmacist or midwife for more information. Visit [nhs.uk/staywell](https://www.nhs.uk/staywell) for more details on how to help you and your family to stay well this winter.

1. [Public Health England](https://www.gov.uk/public-health-england) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities. It does this through advocacy, partnerships, world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, and the delivery of specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health. Follow us on Twitter [@PHE_uk](https://twitter.com/PHE_uk).
2. The national flu campaign will also encourage pregnant women to protect themselves against flu in the run up to winter. Pregnancy naturally weakens the body's immune system and as a result, flu can cause serious complications for the mother and baby.
3. For the first time, year 4 children will be offered the vaccine in a school setting, along with year groups 1, 2 and 3. Evidence shows this method ensures greater uptake of the vaccine, and consequently offers

greater population protection through herd immunity.