

Two written answers from the Department of Health and Social Care

The Department of Health and Social Care has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (119388):

Question :To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of how many additional health professionals he needs to recruit to NHS England in 2022-23. (119388)

Tabled on: 07 February 2022

Answer:
Edward Argar:

The Department has made no specific estimate. In July 2021, the Department commissioned Health Education England to work with partners to review long term strategic trends for the health workforce and regulated professionals in the social care workforce. The Department has also recently commissioned NHS England to develop a workforce strategy which will set out its conclusions in due course.

The answer was submitted on 22 Mar 2022 at 11:16.

This is a strange reply. How can the NHS have put in a large demand for extra cash when it has no idea how many extra people it needs or wants? Wages and employment costs are its main item of spending.

How can it claim to have a serious working plan to get the waiting lists down if it is not recruiting a decent number of doctors, nurses and other medical professionals to carry out the operations and treatments needed?

What do the senior managers administrators do that prevents them from knowing how many staff they need? What signal does it send to medical schools and potential students that the near monopoly employer still does not have a plan to recruit more staff?

The Department of Health and Social Care has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (119392):

Question:
To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what forecast he has made for the likely increase in staff costs for 2022-23 for NHS England. (119392)

Tabled on: 07 February 2022

Answer:
Edward Argar:

A forecast has not yet been made. The Government is seeking pay recommendations from the independent Pay Review Bodies (PRBs) for most public sector workers not in multi-year pay and contract reform deals. Remit letters were issued to the PRBs in November 2021. As the PRBs are independent, the Government cannot pre-empt the recommendations, which we expect to receive in May 2022.

The answer was submitted on 22 Mar 2022 at 16:18.

This reply confirms that the NHS had not forecast the detailed spending needed to get waiting lists down when it was agreed to impose a tax and send that cash to the NHS. I find this surprising. Surely NHS managers need to know staff numbers and staff costs before submitting a bid for more money for waiting lists?