



3rd November 2021

Dear Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

Re: Once Cancer Voice charities call for clarity on workforce funding announced in the Spending Review

We are following up our letter of 8th October to seek clarity and assurance that the announcement in the Spending Review: *"The government will provide hundreds of millions of pounds in additional funding over the SR21 period to ensure a bigger and better trained NHS workforce"* will meet the needs of people affected by cancer enabling the Government to deliver on its commitments on cancer diagnosis, survival and care.

We recognise and welcome commitments in the Spending Review, notably the additional investment to tackle the backlog and the capital investment for Community Diagnostic Centres which will play a critical role in improving diagnosis of cancer. However, we fear this investment will not deliver the desired outcome if it is not mirrored by an accompanying increase in staffing levels to deliver these services. We therefore seek urgent clarity on the level of funding that Health Education England will receive and how additional investment will be targeted.

In our previous correspondence we asked that you:

- Deliver on the Government's manifesto pledge to plan for the cancer workforce by providing a multi-year settlement to train and employ more cancer staff to fill current vacancies and ensure that the workforce has the capacity to meet increasing demand, innovate and drive lifesaving research. Around £200m additional investment in Health Education England is needed over the 3 years to grow the key cancer professions by 45% by 2029.
- Create a Cancer Nurse Fund of £124 million to train the next generation of Cancer Nurse Specialists, helping to deliver on the NHS Long-Term Plan promise for every patient to get a named cancer nurse.

In response to the Parliamentary Petition to *'Invest urgently in the NHS cancer workforce in the autumn Spending Review,'* the Government said: *"Allocations and profiles will be confirmed as part of the Spending Review, which will set out the Government's spending plans for health and social care for future years, including the NHS Workforce."*

We were therefore concerned that this detail was absent in the Spending Review announcement and associated documents.

Much depends on this funding. You will be aware that our ask for investment in the cancer workforce reflects commitments in the [NHS People Plan](#) which states: "when the government further clarifies the available budget to expand the workforce and make sure that education and training is fit for the future – as expected to be set out in the forthcoming spending review – more details will follow." We are keen to understand when more information will be made available and how we can support and inform that process.

You will be aware that there is widespread support for this investment in the NHS and cancer workforce. It is recognised by the Health and Social Care Select Committee through its cancer services inquiry, that a number of All Party Parliamentary Groups have jointly [petitioned Government](#) on this issue, and it is also backed by the public polling from Ipsos MORI which recently revealed the 'biggest problems facing Britain's healthcare system' was not enough staff.

We want to support the Department and Health Education England in addressing this challenge. Long term investment in the cancer workforce is critical to clearing the cancer backlog in time, meeting early diagnosis targets and improving how we provide care. Without this action, to meet demand for diagnosis and care, patients will suffer and good investments announced last week will fail to deliver.

We look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely

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