

Trade body responds to Winter Plan

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Responding to the Winter Plan which has been unveiled by the Government today, Tania Bowers, Legal Counsel and Head of Public Policy at the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo) comments:

“Although it is understandable that the trajectory of the pandemic remains a relative ‘unknown’, as our second Covid winter approaches the lack of clarity around many aspects of the guidance is only exacerbating the uncertainty that many employers and individuals across the UK still face. Recruiters are being asked by some clients, particularly those with US head offices, to only supply contractors and candidates who can prove double vaccination. This, coupled with the lack of clarity from Government about mandatory vaccination in sectors such as healthcare, creates uncertainty and discrimination risks for recruiters. Although we appreciate the need to be flexible on policy the introduction of a Plan A and Plan B may hinder the progress that many firms have made as the economy recovers from the events of the last 18 months, as policies such as vaccine certificates could be introduced urgently.

“The preparations of a ‘Plan B’ which could see stricter restrictions imposed at short notice is understandable given the constantly shifting nature of the virus, however the high level of speculation creates uncertainty for businesses. There is also no clarity around the furlough scheme being reintroduced should emergency measures be put back into place.

“Government policy can have unintended effects on the economy - labour shortages arising from the “pingdemic”, for example - and we are seeing skills and labour shortages across all of our members’ sectors, something neither the Government, nor our industry would have expected this time last year. The Government must balance the implementation of the plans with the need to provide clear guidance to boost business confidence and to support workers filling job vacancies.

“APSCo will continue to lobby on behalf of the professional recruitment sector to ensure that our members are best equipped to handle what lies ahead over the coming months.”

ENDS

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