

# NHS workforce crisis: A longer-term solution needs to be a priority

Submitted by: BlueSky Public Relations Ltd

Monday, 25 July 2022

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Responding to reports today that the NHS is facing the worst workforce crisis in NHS history, Shazia Imtiaz, General Counsel at the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo) commented:

“The shortage of healthcare staff is, without doubt, a concern. However the skills gap has been growing for some time now, and short-term solutions won’t pay off in the future. Back in 2015, APSCo warned of the retirement cliff approaching for nurses and we’ve seen the impact of this play out, which has only been exacerbated by the pandemic and the UK’s exit from the EU. While there is a need to keep the NHS running now – and agency workers will no doubt play a crucial role during this time – we would also urge the Government to consider longer-term workforce planning to limit the chances of another crisis on this scale in the future.

“With a dearth of talent rife across the sector and little progress made in the last decade, there’s a need to look at, and adequately address, what is impacting both the attraction and retention of skills, including the widely reported high levels of burnout and concerns around pay in healthcare. While at APSCo we’ve implemented a new compliance standard which helps more recruiters meet the requirements of the associated frameworks, allowing staffing firms to support better healthcare recruitment, greater collaboration is needed. Recruitment firms have the knowledge and data to know where skills can be recruited and how, as well as the direct contact with healthcare professionals to be able to identify what is causing people to leave not only their current roles, but also the sector altogether. We urge the Government to work closely with the healthcare staffing sector to help build an impactful workforce plan across healthcare.”

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