

## Delivering a sustainable health and care system

18<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Health and social care are interdependent and the NHS and social care systems across the UK are under pressure as never before. Changing demographics, rising demand and unprecedented financial pressures are leading to huge strains on the system and its staff. The pressures on social care funding constrain the ability of the NHS to improve its efficiency.

We need a wide and honest conversation across the UK about how we can first prevent ill health and then provide a health and care system for the future that meets the needs of the population, is sustainable in terms of the range of services it offers, the quality of care it provides and its affordability.

This requires an informed conversation between policy makers, professionals, service providers and above all patients and the public to develop a shared understanding of the contract with society for providing our health and care system.

The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges is setting out its views of what is required and how proposals can be implemented. Common key issues will be drawn from a synthesis of College and Faculty views. These will be fed into any wider societal debates about what the healthcare system we want looks like, how it will be provided and how it will be funded.

Through the Academy, Medical Royal Colleges have agreed the following core principles which should underpin any change:

- The NHS and Social Care systems need more resources
- The NHS and its staff have been hugely successful but we recognise there are many things that can be done differently, better and more efficiently for the benefit of patients.
- Patients, carers and the public must be part of every stage of development and change
- Clinicians will need and want to take a leading role in change and improvement
- No change and improvement will be effective without having a valued and enabled workforce

The Academy and Colleges will work with all partners on how change can be delivered across the system, but is clear that such work will in itself be insufficient without the further investment of financial and staffing resources required to maintain a properly integrated social and health care system.

Whilst the Academy, as a UK organisation, recognises that services are organised differently in the four nations, we are clear that the challenges facing health and care are the same. The requirements for additional resources coupled with more effective performance apply across the UK. As a first step the Academy calls on the Government to use the opportunity of its Autumn Statement to provide clarity over its intentions on NHS funding in England in the immediate and medium term and to urgently provide additional funding to support social care provision which would, in turn, help improve the capacity and efficiency of the NHS.