

Statement

Academy welcomes the 'new reality' on NHS funding.

The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges welcomes the straight-forward and honest approach taken by Jeremy Hunt MP, The Secretary of State for Health and Simon Stevens, the Chief Executive of NHS England, in their speeches at the NHS Providers' annual conference yesterday. Both articulated the Academy's long held view that a truly sustainable NHS can only be achieved with an increased overall budget as well as improved efficiencies.

Patient need, demand and expectations have all risen dramatically in recent years but funding has not kept pace. If patients are to be treated to the best of our ability, more money must be found. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has the opportunity to right this underfunding in the imminent Autumn Statement and the Academy wholeheartedly supports Simon Stevens' call for an increase in funds.

Clinicians recognise they must, and will, play their part in driving efficiencies and cutting unnecessary costs. System change, proper integration of health and social care and tighter controls on waste and variation will all result better care for patients. But, transformation takes time and requires investment – both of which have been in short supply.

Professor Carrie MacEwen, Chair of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges said, *'It's no secret that the system is stretched and we hear from our members that it is at breaking point in some places. Both speeches tell us, in different ways, that we need be honest about funding and cost control or we need to decide what's affordable and what's not.'*

'It is absolutely critical that a health and care system that is fit for the UK population today and in the future requires sustainable funds. All doctors and healthcare staff are playing their part but need recognition and support to be able to continue to do so effectively.'

ENDS