

2019 general election

A statement from the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges

November / 2019

The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges believes that the general election must properly address issues other than just Brexit. Ensuring the sustainability of the health and social care system across the whole of the UK must be a central issue for the next Government while recognising that health services are a devolved responsibility. This depends on not putting in jeopardy NHS funding, staffing and plans for service reform.

The NHS and social care across the UK remain under sustained pressure. Rising workload and demand coupled with persistent staff shortages across the system are creating unparalleled strains on the system and on staff. It has been recognised that this is not sustainable. The NHS England Long Term Plan in England and the additional NHS funding have been broadly welcomed and set the right direction of travel. The NHS People Plan, also, is seeking to address the issues of workforce supply and how NHS staff are treated and valued.

However, the Academy believes that,

- This is just the beginning of journey and the next Government has to commit to sustained support for the health and care system
- Effectively addressing the healthcare workforce problems must be the central priority for Government and the service. Unless this happens, the situation will only get worse
- Delivery of the Long Term Plan and a sustainable NHS depends on supporting all parts of the interdependent health and social care infrastructure
- Adequate resources are required for social care, public health and prevention, capital expenditure and education and training to enable improvements in frontline NHS services.

We call on all political parties in the forthcoming election to commit to,

- The delivery of an equitable, high quality, safe and sustainable health and care system for the UK ensuring that the impact on health inequalities is considered in all policy proposals
- Recognise the impact of wider social determinants on health and health outcomes and ensure policy initiatives tackle the causes as well as the symptoms of ill health
- Increase funding for the NHS and social care in real terms to ensure delivery of a health and care system for the foreseeable future that meets the needs of all the population
- Recognise the importance of all aspects of health and care, providing adequate funds for prevention, social care, education and capital development
- Support ongoing change to maintain and improve the quality of care and standard of services
- Fully involve the public in the development and change of services; and patients in shared decision making in regard to their own care
- Continue to expand medical school places to move towards the stated objective of being self-sufficient in the production of doctors



- Ensure that the health and social care workforce is properly valued and enabled to lead change and improvement
- Reform the social care system in England to deliver a sustainable and equitable model of social care based on the principle of shared and pooled risk across the population.

As the professional representatives of Britain's 220,000 doctors we will work with the next Government to implement these commitments by,

- Engaging constructively in the development and delivery of change working across specialties and professions
- Providing advice, ideas and workable solutions for the health and social care systems
- Encouraging the active participation of doctors in change and leadership.