

£12m boost for health professionals training and education in Wales

Despite the difficult financial climate this represents an increase of £12m over last year's package.

The funding will allow more than 3,500 new students to join healthcare education programmes across Wales. Nurse training places will rise by 161 to 1,911, with increases in all four nursing fields, building on the increases delivered in the past three years.

The investment package also includes:

- A 10% increase in physiotherapy and occupational therapy training places
- Additional health visitor training places
- Maintenance of all other levels of training places commissioned in 2017 including the 40% increase in midwifery training places.
- A further cohort of physician associate training places available from September 2018, on the same basis as 2017.

In addition as part of the two year budget deal with Plaid Cymru for 2018/19 and 2019/20, £2m per year will be used to support a Welsh Buurtzorg pilot of neighbourhood nursing care, of which £1.4m for each year will be used to support the education and training programmes for district nurses including supporting the release of nurses to train.

The investment is in addition to the extra £500,000 announced earlier this year to support more medical training posts including clinical radiology, ophthalmology, oral medicine dentistry and paediatric dentistry.

Health Secretary, Vaughan Gething, said:

"The austerity policy pursued by the UK Government has significantly impacted our budget and in those circumstances training is often one of the first casualties. But this is a short-sighted approach. Instead we are actually increasing investment in training, despite the budget cuts, in order to secure the long-term future of the health service.

"I am very proud we are once again increasing training places for nurses, midwives, physiotherapist, occupational health workers and health visitors. This package of support will also maintain investment in training places for other key workers including health care scientists, paramedics, dental hygienists, therapists and radiographers.

Together with our successful Train, Work, Live campaign to bring trainee doctors and other health professionals to Wales, this demonstrates the Welsh Government's commitment to ensuring the NHS

has the workforce it needs to deliver high quality care now and in the future.”