

Email your MP and ask them to sign EDM 1081: “The NHS Bursary”

Ask your MP to support healthcare students

UNISON's save the NHS bursary campaign will ensure that there is adequate and fair funding for healthcare students; our future NHS workforce.

Contacting your Member of Parliament (MP) about UNISON's save the NHS bursary campaign is a good way of raising the profile of the campaign and bringing attention to the impact of the proposed bursary cuts on healthcare students.

An Early Day Motion has now been tabled in Parliament and MPs can show their support for the campaign by adding their name to this. It has already been signed by MPs from a number of different political parties.

Please put your postcode in the box then fill in a few details to send an email to your MP. There is a template email for you to use but please do edit it, and include your full address as MPs need to know you are one of their constituents.

Thank you for being part of the save the NHS bursary campaign!

Step 1: Find Your MP

Got to <https://www.writetothem.com/> and type your post code in the search field and press 'go'. Click on your MP's name.

Step 2: Compose Email

Write your message using the suggested wording below and click on 'preview and send'.

Dear [Name of your MP]

I am writing to you to ask you to show your support for the NHS staff of the future by signing EDM 1081, “The NHS Bursary”.

In the autumn statement, George Osborne announced the scrapping of the NHS bursary for new student nurses, midwives and allied health professionals in England from 2017.

The NHS bursary system will be replaced with the standard undergraduate system, with fees of up to £9,000 and a much larger student loan for maintenance.

These changes would see students burdened with at least £51,600 of debt, plus interest and any overdraft and commercial debt. This is an enormous sum for many in these professions:

for example, the current starting salary for a nurse is £21,692. Loan repayments will mean a nurse, midwife or allied health professional will lose over £900 a year.

A pre-registration degree requires significant time spent in clinical practice, including early, late, night and weekend shifts as a normal part of their studies. For example, nursing students must complete a minimum of 2,300 hours in clinical practice over the course of their studies. These changes effectively charge students for working in the NHS.

While more training places are welcomed, the system is struggling to cope on current numbers: one in five placements report concerns with educating student nurses while they are on placement. To increase numbers dramatically will adversely impact on 50% of future students' education.

The government needs to reconsider these proposals and discuss how best we invest in and support students, rather than making a reckless decision driven by the desire to achieve deficit targets.

UNISON's campaign to save the NHS bursary seeks to highlight these and other important issues for healthcare students.

So please show your support for this campaign and for all healthcare students in our NHS by signing EDM 1081, "The NHS Bursary".

Yours sincerely

[Your name]