

## **MEE welcomes national reports on future direction for education and training of health workforce**

Professor Sir Christopher Edwards, Chairman of Medical Education England (MEE), has welcomed two national reports setting out the future plans for the education and training of the health workforce.

Sir Christopher was responding to a report from the NHS Future Forum and the Department of Health report 'Liberating the NHS: Developing the Healthcare workforce - *From Design to Delivery*', which was published today.

Both reports emphasise the need to establish a new system that can produce the flexible workforce required to address future challenges, which aspires to excellence in training, and is supported by a fairer and more responsive funding system.

A new national body, Health Education England (HEE), will provide leadership and oversight for the new education and training system.

HEE's role will be to ensure national coherence and greater transparency in the education and training investments employers make in their workforce.

Local Education and Training Boards (LETBs) will allow NHS employers, education providers and health professionals to work together at local level to improve the quality of education and training so that it meets the needs of the NHS, patients and the wider public.

LETBs will have flexibility to invest in education, training and ongoing professional development to support local priorities in innovation and development of the health workforce. They will also be able to ensure that funding in the new system follows the student/trainee on the basis of quality education and training outcomes.

The driving principle for the new system outlined in the reports is to improve care and outcomes for patients and is based on the understanding that excellent health and healthcare depends upon high quality training and a highly skilled and educated workforce.

Sir Christopher said: 'I very much welcome the publication of these two very significant reports. I am particularly pleased that they reflect many of the comments made by MEE during the consultation stages.'

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He said: 'These include the drive for innovation, quality and excellence and the imperative of clarity and transparency of funding, ensuring that money earmarked for education and training is used solely for that purpose, and that there are clear advantages for those who provide high quality education and training.'

Sir Christopher strongly supports a multi-professional approach to the development of the workforce and a recognition that education and training need to reflect the changing pattern of the service with care increasingly being delivered in the community.

He welcomed the establishment of Health Education England, which will be a new organisation but as far as medicine, dentistry, pharmacy and healthcare science are concerned, will be able to build on the foundations established by MEE, its aspirations and achievements. It will also take on responsibility for some aspects of work that MEE is currently working on.

These include the Better Training Better Care programme, which is taking forward recommendations from Professor Sir John Temple's report 'Time for Training' and Professor John Collins' review 'Foundation for Excellence', and also work that MEE has led on the future structure of postgraduate medical education and training; work which reflects concerns that the current system does not provide enough flexibility and does not adequately address the needs of patients and the service.

HEE will also be building on MEE programmes that have been developed to improve training for dentists, pharmacists and healthcare scientists and will wish to take forward the MEE focus on partnership working and strong lay and patient representation.

**Ends**

**For further information** please contact either Richard Green, Head of Communications, 0207 972 5053/07818 588718 or Jeremy Wickremer, Communications Manager, 0207 972 5791

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