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For immediate release

Staffing of health and social care must be Brexit priority, say 34 health and care organisations

The Cavendish Coalition has responded to the triggering of Article 50 by calling on the Government to safeguard the UK's ability to recruit and retain staff with the skills needed to deliver high quality health and social care to local communities.

The coalition, a group of 34 social care and health organisations working to ensure the system is properly staffed after the UK leaves the EU, has set out what the Government needs to focus on during EU withdrawal negotiations to maintain safe, high quality health and social care services.

We have today written to the Secretaries of State for the Home Department, Exiting the European Union and Health making clear our offer to work with the Government to help inform a future immigration system where public service value is used as a key assessment of 'skill' as opposed to salary, and which guarantees the status of EU staff already working in health and care.

We are also calling for a straightforward and responsive transitional system for people from the EEA during the period between any 'cut off' date after which EU nationals coming to live and work in the EU will not be guaranteed leave to remain and having a new and operational immigration system.

Cavendish Coalition co-convenor Danny Mortimer said:

"It is absolutely critical that the Government takes all possible measures to safeguard the supply of health and social care workers needed to continue delivering safe, high quality care.

"We are ready and available to support the Government in a way which allows it to plan a future immigration system which assesses skill levels based on public service value, as opposed to salary. This will be central to the PM's commitment to make the UK a magnet for global talent.

"It is also vital that any transitional system provides clarity and certainty so that people entering the UK are clear on their status - as certainty supports stability and sustainability in health and social care.

"Such a system must be flexible enough to allow social care and health to recruit from Europe when staffing needs cannot be met through additional domestic recruitment and training."

Contact details:

For further information, call NHS Confederation, Head of Communications, Dan Keel, on 020 7799 8637.

Cavendish Coalition members

The Cavendish Coalition is made up of 34 health and social care organisations all committed to the purpose of the group, these are:

- Association of Dental Groups, David Worskett, Chair
- Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, Margaret Willcox, President Elect
- Association of Independent Healthcare Organisations, Fiona Booth, Chief Executive
- Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, Professor Dame Sue Bailey DBE FRCPsych, Chair
- Association for Real Change, Lisa Lenton, England Director
- Association of UK University Hospitals, Peter Homa CBE, Chair
- British Dental Association, Peter Ward, Chief Executive
- British Medical Association, Dr Mark Porter, Council Chair
- Care England, Professor Martin Green OBE, Chief Executive
- Care Forum Wales, Mario Kreft, Chair
- Care and Support Alliance, Vicky McDermott, Chair
- Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, Karen Middleton CBE, Chief Executive
- Mental Health Network, Rebecca Cotton, Director of Mental Health Policy
- National Association of Primary Care, Dr Nav Chana, Chairman
- National Care Association, Nadra Ahmed OBE, Chairman
- New NHS Alliance, Merron Simpson, Chief Executive
- NHS Clinical Commissioners, Julie Wood, Chief Executive
- NHS Confederation, Niall Dickson, Chief Executive
- NHS Employers, Daniel Mortimer, Chief Executive
- NHS European Office, Elisabetta Zanon, Director
- NHS Partners Network, David Hare, Chief Executive
- NHS Providers, Chris Hopson, Chief Executive
- Northern Ireland Confederation for Health and Social Care, Heather Moorhead, Director
- Pharmacy Voice, Elizabeth Wade, Director of Policy
- Registered Nursing Home Association, Frank Ursell, Chief Executive
- Royal College of Nursing, Janet Davies, Chief Executive & General Secretary
- Shelford Group, Sir Michael Deegan, Chair
- Skills for Care, Sharon Allen, Chief Executive
- National Care Forum, Vic Rayner, Executive Director
- The Royal College of Midwives, Professor Cathy Warwick CBE, Chief Executive
- The Welsh NHS Confederation, Vanessa Young, Director
- UNISON, Christina McAnea, Head of Health
- United Kingdom Homecare Association, Bridget Warr CBE, Chief Executive
- Voluntary Organisations Disability Group, Professor Rhidian Hughes, Chief Executive