

Statement on the Government triggering of Article 50

Responding to the government triggering Article 50, the Cavendish Coalition has set out what it believes needs to happen to safeguard the supply of social care and health care workers required to deliver high quality and sustainable social care, NHS, and independent health services.

Right to remain for European Economic Area nationals working in social care and health care

- *There are more than 161,000 people from the European Economic Area (EEA) working in social care and health care in England:*
- *The talented and diverse group of people we employ and represent are essential to our ability to provide the best care to the communities, patients and residents that we are proud to serve.*
- *To provide certainty for individuals and employers, the Coalition calls on the Government to quickly confirm the right to permanent residence of all people from the EEA working in social care and health care across the UK.*
- *To avoid expensive and lengthy administrative burdens on employers and individuals – the method for obtaining the right to remain in the UK needs to be simple for individuals to navigate, employers to use and government infrastructure to oversee.*

Unique factors relating to the social care and health workforce:

- *Health and social care services are present in every community, in every part of the UK.*
- *Continuity of care: The nature of our services requires our workforce to build relationships with the people they are supporting or to whom they provide clinical services.*
- *The size of the social care workforce and large demand for social care workers.*
- *The length of time it takes to train individuals in clinical roles.*

The future

Social care and health care employers are working to increase the domestic supply of workers. The support of the government for such initiatives is very welcome.

Leaving the EU provides the UK with an opportunity to re-set and review our approach to labour migration and the systems and processes which underpin it. We welcome the Prime Minister's commitment to make the UK a magnet for global talent.

This is an opportunity for the UK to establish new systems for managing labour migration which properly recognise those circumstances where our sector may need to complement domestic supply with international workers to maintain patient safety and provide continuity of care.

Increasing supply will take time. High quality and sustainable social care and health services will continue to depend on workers from outside of the UK. This will be the case both during the period of negotiations on the UK's withdrawal from the EU and in the years after the UK leaves.

At this stage, the Coalition is already clear that extending the current work visa system for people from outside the EEA to include people from the EEA would not support continued delivery of high quality social care and health care services. The current immigration system for non-EEA nationals proves very difficult to recruit individuals from outside of the EEA.

Any new system would need to take account of the value and contribution the health and social care sector provides to the UK economy and its population, with public service value used as a key assessment of 'skill' as opposed to salary. This will enable recognition of the range of roles we might need to recruit to including world class medical researchers, care workers and domiciliary workers, paramedics and nurses, dentists and pharmacists.

The Coalition is committed to working with partners to ensure that a future immigration system supports the delivery of high quality social care and health care services.

Potential transitional arrangements for people from the EEA between 'cut off' and a new immigration system

- Any transitional arrangements for workers from the EEA need to be able to respond to the current needs of the sector. Given the years it takes to train clinical staff and the large demand for social care workers, it is not possible for additional domestic recruitment and training to fill workforce gaps in the short to medium term.*
- We would welcome working with government to help inform a transitional system which allows sustainability of services to the population whilst complementing domestic efforts. For example, any transitional system needs clarity and certainty so that people entering the UK are clear on their status. Certainty supports stability and sustainability for employers and businesses.*
- Sufficient advance notice of any "cut-off date" and the move to a new immigration system is essential for practical reasons - candidates and employers need to make informed decisions about ongoing recruitment and allow time for the sector specific protocols and regulations that must be followed before successful candidates can start work, such as those for professional registration or performer lists, to be completed.*