

HOT TOPIC: GENERAL PRACTICE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

Over 90% of all patient contact occurs within primary care (Deloitte 2012, p.4) and national policy is directing an emphasis on moving care closer to home to improve patient experiences and reduce cost to the overall system. The NHS Five Year Forward View (2014) indicates that the foundation of the NHS should remain as list-based primary care (where GPs are contracted to service patient lists where the patients are registered) via a range of service models, with a stronger role in prevention and condition management. This is demonstrated by Transforming Primary Care, which introduced a named accountable GP for every patient aged 75 or over, and initiated the Proactive Care Programme to avoid unplanned admission of the most vulnerable patients (Department of Health, 2014).

As care shifts to the community and the demand on the workforce across all sectors of health and social care changes, the development of the primary care workforce is fundamental to support and enable new models of care. Health Education England's (HEE) Strategic Framework suggests that new ways of working and new roles are required to create a workforce which is responsive to evolving change, fit to act flexibly across health economies, and not bound by traditional sector lines.

The HEE Mandate 2014-15 (DH, 2014) reflected the strong focus required on developing the primary care workforce to support a whole system approach to complex condition management and prevention.

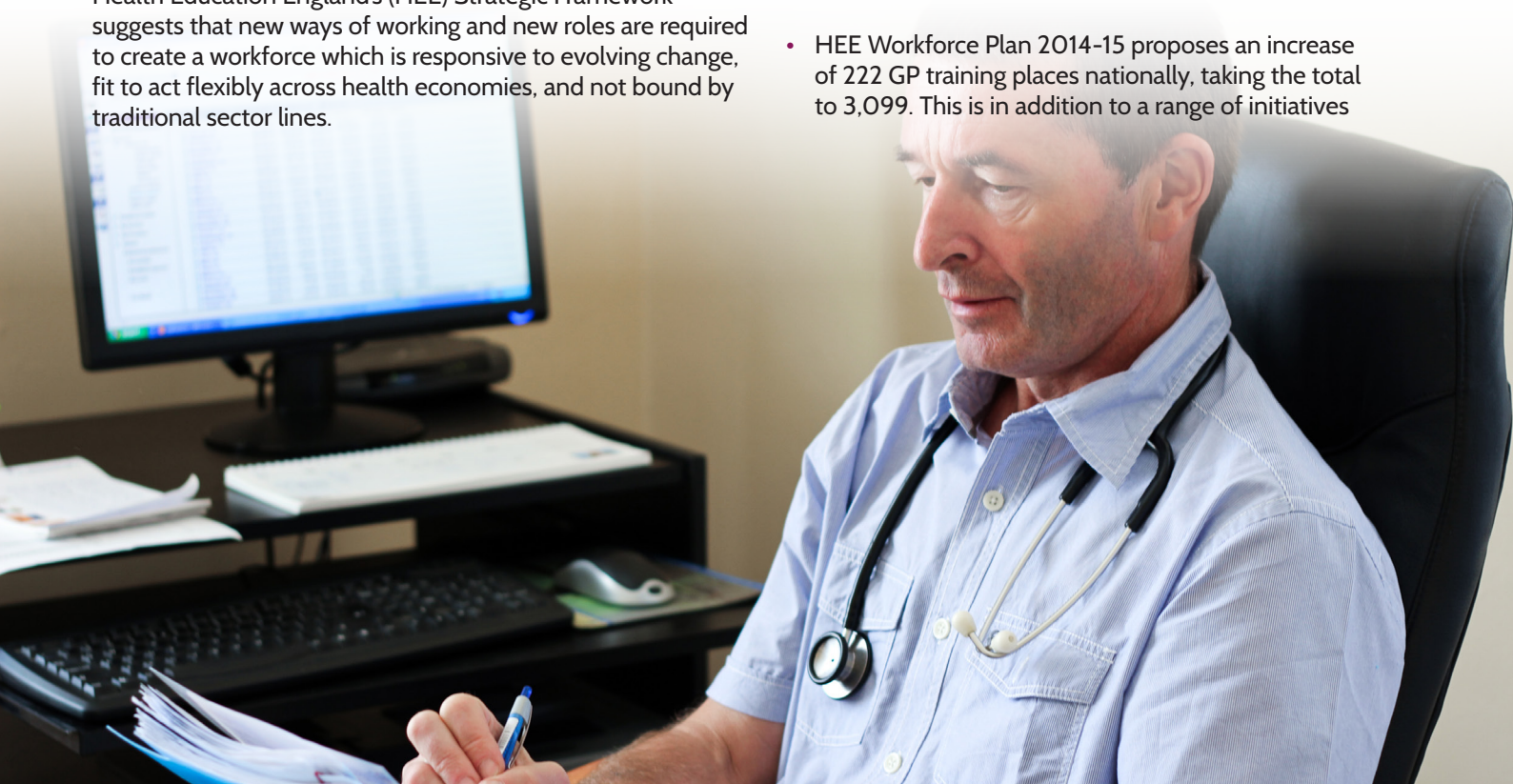
To support this, HEE is mandated to:

- Ensure the workforce will be trained and developed to enable them to work across different care settings and in multi-disciplinary teams
- Ensure that 50% of medical trainees completing foundation level training enter GP training programmes by 2016
- Develop tariffs for primary care medical education and training with stakeholders including the Department of Health
- Develop the Care Certificate for Health Care Assistants and Social Care Support Workers

National initiatives

National commissioning for future supply of the workforce includes:

- HEE Workforce Plan 2014-15 proposes an increase of 222 GP training places nationally, taking the total to 3,099. This is in addition to a range of initiatives



progressing the target of ensuring that by 2016, 50% of trainees completing Foundation level training choose to enter GP training programmes by 2016.

- Similarly for nursing, HEE is commissioning an additional 500 pre-registration places in 2014/15, taking the total nationally to 13,228. This is being factored alongside the need to manage attrition rates and deliver anticipated service transformation plans.
- In addition, a national £1m campaign to support Return to Nursing was launched in October 2014, providing resource to both returners and practices committed to employment on completion.

Our work in the North West

Transformation of the workforce is an essential component of Health Education England's vision. In the North West this means "Developing a workforce responsive to changes in care, now and in the future". HENW is investing in the general practice workforce to:

- Ensure sufficient supply
- Develop the existing workforce
- Support education in practice
- To support this remit the Workforce Transformation team are developing a number of programmes, including the General Practice Workforce Data Collection.

The 2014 General Practice Workforce data collection provided data for 24% of the Greater Manchester workforce, 35% of the Merseyside workforce and 55% of the Lancashire general practice workforce. This data was used to inform local investment in workforce development for the general practice workforce in the North West. HENW continues to work with general practices and CCGs across the North West to further this work.

The development of a workforce planning framework for primary care continues to be a key national priority led through the [Workforce Information Architecture programme](#), with a local programme being driven and aligned by HENW.

Key Outcomes

In the North West, from the information gathered by the collection in 2014, HENW has been able to make informed investment in the General Practice workforce. This includes:

- A CPD cash allocation of £800,000 to CCGs across the North West for non-medical staff development in general practice
- 30 ring-fenced places across the North West for Primary Care applications in Assistant Practitioner and Advanced Practitioner programmes, with allocated funding
- Expanded commissioned places across the North West in the Community Specialist Practitioner (General Practice Nursing) programme to 30, with allocated funding

- Commissioning a Core Foundation Programme in Practice Nursing from six universities across the North West
- Three events across the North West to promote understanding of these different roles and ways to apply for funding

Next steps

The first 2015 data collection is taking place via www.gpdata.wrapr.org.uk and the deadline for completion is 17th April. There will be a second data collection during September/October to support the national collection timeframes.

Useful links and resources

For details of the full findings from the data collection, please refer to the HENW Workforce Plan.

- [Primary Care: Today and Tomorrow - Improving general practice by working. Deloitte, May 2012](#)
- [The NHS Five Year Forward View, NHS England, 2014](#)
- [Transforming Primary Care: Safe, proactive, personalised care for those who need it most, Department of Health & NHS England, 2014](#)
- [A mandate from the Government to Health Education England: April 2014 to March 2015, Department of Health, 2014](#)
- [Investing in people for health and healthcare. Workforce plan for England: Proposed Education and Training Commissions for 2015/16, Health Education England, 2014](#)

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