



Craig Whittaker MP

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Brexit and NHS Staffing

Thank you for contacting me about the effects of leaving the EU on the NHS.

I would like to pay tribute to the 62,000 EU nationals who work in the NHS, and commend the care and compassion they provide.

I believe we must do all we can to support the NHS, and I have the utmost confidence in my ministerial colleagues in their efforts to ensure that the UK not only concludes an excellent deal with our European partners, but also maintains this country's reputation as a fantastic place to live and work.

I understand that in the year following the EU referendum, the number of EU nationals working in the NHS actually increased by 5.6 per cent.

I note that, unfortunately, there was a small fall in the number of nurses and health visitors from the EU during this time, however, a variety of factors could account for this, notably the introduction of a new English language test for NHS staff from the EU, and falling unemployment in countries such as Spain and Poland, which had previously contributed many nurses to the NHS.

The Government has been embarking on one of the largest recruitment drives in the history of the NHS. Today, there are over 14,000 more nurses and over 11,000 more doctors in NHS wards than in 2010, as well as a further 50,000 nurses in training. Furthermore, the Government recently announced an extra 1,500 training places for doctors, and over 5,000 more trainee nurses, a 25 per cent increase. I believe that these efforts will significantly support NHS staffing, and safeguard the NHS for the future.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP