Chancellor announces changes to health course funding

In his autumn statement to Parliament on 25 November 2015, Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne announced proposals to change future NHS funding.

The measures he outlined (subject to consultation) include changes to the financial support that eligible students on NHS-funded courses receive.

See the FAQs below for further information as we understand it.

What is the change?

Initial detail suggests that the funding system for health students (which currently means students receiving means tested bursaries and having their tuition fees paid) will be replaced by student loans.

Which courses are affected?

It is very early to say, but our understanding is that all pre-registration nursing, midwifery, allied health
professions (eg physiotherapy, radiography and dietetics), operating department practice, dental hygiene and dental therapy courses will be affected by the changes.

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**When will these changes to the financial support arrangements begin?**

Early indications are that the changes will come into effect from September 2017. Therefore, if you are applying for training starting in September 2016, you will be entitled to receive financial support in line with the current arrangements.

**How will the changes affect current nursing, midwifery, allied health profession, operating department practice, dental hygiene and dental therapy students?**

Our understanding is that current students will continue to receive full funding throughout their course.

**How will the changes affect applicants who already hold a degree and are applying for a graduate entry pre-registration programme?**

Currently, you'll usually get student finance only if you're doing your first higher education qualification - even if your previous course was self-funded.

The Department of Health intends to make an exception for students studying nursing, midwifery and the allied health professions as a second degree so that these students can access student loans. A consultation is planned and this will be covered as part of it.

The gov.uk website has the detail.

**Is funding for undergraduate medical and dental education affected?**

It is not clear from the Chancellor's statement whether or not his announcement will impact on undergraduate medical and dental education. We are working to find out the detail on this.

**Further information**


See the NHS Business Services Authority (NHS BSA) website [3] for information about NHS Student Bursaries as they stand at present.

For the latest information about the proposed changed, visit the NHS BSA news page [4].

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