

Richard Meddings
National Health Service England
22 London Road
London
SE1 6JW

26 January 2021

Dear Richard,

Congratulations on your recent appointment as Chair of NHS England. On behalf of [the Recruitment & Employment Confederation](#) (REC), I wish you every success in your new role, at a particularly critical time for the UK's public health. Our organisation looks forward to working with you and your team on issues relating to the UK's health and social care system.

By way of introduction, the REC is the voice of the recruitment industry. We are here to drive standards and empower recruitment businesses to build better futures for jobseekers. Across the UK, our industry places someone into a new permanent role every 21 seconds, and just under one million people into temporary assignments every day, helping those who need or choose to work in a more flexible way.

Our 3,300-membership includes 450 health and social care specialist agencies, including the ten biggest staff suppliers to the NHS. Our healthcare members provide clinical and non-clinical professionals to the NHS and local authorities, as well as to the private sector, supplying valuable permanent, flexible and temporary workers across all bands and services.

We provide jobs data that is used as a lead indicator for the labour market by organisations such as the Bank of England, and we first raised the prospect of labour and skills shortages following the last lockdown in April 2021. One of our top priorities for 2022 is tackling these continued shortages, currently severely affecting the healthcare sector. We have also enclosed an analysis of a members survey assessing and examining the scale of the labour and skills shortage issues across the UK's health and social care sectors. We would be happy to provide further data evidence to support the team at any time.

As experts in recruitment, we understand the labour market and want to work with you and your team to ensure we have an effective, longer-term workforce plan in place that delivers for patients, their families and NHS workers alike - while also representing good value for money to the taxpayer. In particular, I understand the effective use of the temporary workforce is one of NHS England's priorities for 2022/23. To build a truly sustainable plan, it is important to consider the experiences of all parties in the supply chain and why they are there in the first place. At a roundtable last year with NHS Employers, we explored the value that came from a partnership approach between NHS Trusts and agency partners - we also explored what didn't work. We want to build better

partnerships that can support the reduction in NHS waiting lists and can help meet key targets for patient care and safety. We would be keen to provide our inputs at the earliest stage of review, therefore, to work with you to build a better plan for the future.

Natalie (Natalie.wright@rec.uk.com) in my office will be happy to arrange a meeting at a mutually convenient time. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Kate Shoemith
Deputy Chief Executive