

England aims to end reliance on foreign doctors after Brexit

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England is to train more doctors so that it can end its reliance on foreign recruits for the state-funded National Health Service after it leaves the European Union, the government announced Tuesday.

"Currently a quarter of our [doctors](#) come from overseas," Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt said at the ruling Conservative Party's annual conference in Birmingham.

"They do a fantastic job and the NHS would fall over without them. When it comes to those that are EU nationals, we've been clear we want them to be able to stay post-Brexit," he said.

"But looking forward, is it right to carry on importing doctors from [poorer countries](#) that need them, whilst we turn away bright home graduates desperate to study medicine?"

From September 2018, England will train up to 1,500 more doctors every year, increasing the number of medical school places by up to a quarter, he said.

There is currently a 6,000 cap on numbers of medical students.

"By the end of the next parliament we will make the NHS self-sufficient in doctors."

He said training a doctor costs more than £200,000 (\$255,000, 230,000

euros). Doctors would be asked to work for the NHS for four years in return.

NHS hospitals currently spend £3.3 billion a year on agency staff.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd also at the conference launched a consultation on how to reduce net migration from outside the EU.

The government is committed to getting annual net migration below 100,000; it stood at 327,000 in the year ending March 2016 of which 190,000 were from outside the EU.

Her consultation includes looking at whether student immigration rules should be tailored to the quality of the course and the university.

It will also consider whether to tighten the rules on recruitment and job advertising to make sure immigrants are not coming to jobs that could be done by British workers.

Brexit minister David Davis meanwhile spoke about the possibility of companies being forced to prove they have tried to hire a British citizen before being granted a work permit to employ a foreigner.

Davis said he did not envisage a cap on the numbers of high-skilled immigrants post-Brexit, but that for low-skilled migration a work permit system might apply.

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