Applicants to nursing courses in England up 16% as NHS employs record number of nurses and midwives

A record number of nurses and midwives are employed in the NHS, as the Nursing and Midwifery's Council reports its largest ever annual increase of registered nursing and midwifery professionals.

Around 18,370 more nurses, midwives and nursing associates are now on the Nursing and Midwifery Council's permanent register to work in the UK compared to a year ago, bringing the total number to 716,607 by 31 March 2020. The number of people trained in the UK leaving the register has also fallen to a five-year low.

The number of nursing and midwifery applicants to English universities has also risen for the second year running as the Government works towards delivering 50,000 more nurses by the end of Parliament.

The latest UCAS stats show that applicant numbers for nursing and midwifery courses are up 16% year-on-year, reaching 47,320 by the end of June.

This is the second year in a row that applicant numbers have risen. In 2019 there was a 6.4% increase in people accepted onto nursing and midwifery courses in England compared to 2018.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

> *I'm delighted to see record numbers of nurses and midwives now working in our NHS as we work towards delivering 50,000*

more nurses in this parliament.

As we continue our battle with this deadly disease, our world leading healthcare system has never been more important. We will continue to give it the support it needs today, as well as protecting it for generations to come.

Nurses have saved countless lives during the pandemic, and the NHS simply couldn't function without them.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

This pandemic demonstrated just how talented and valued our brilliant nurses and midwives are, and it is fantastic to see an explosion of applications for nursing and midwifery courses.

As well as a hugely rewarding career in one of the world's best healthcare systems, degree students will benefit from at least £5,000 a year from the Government in free additional support during their studies.

With over 12,000 more fully qualified nurses working in our NHS compared to last year, we are well on our way to delivering 50,000 more by the end of this Parliament.

The number of new applicants between January and June was 68% higher than the same period last year (11,360 in 2020, compared to 6,750 in 2019).

Nearly two thirds of nursing and midwifery applicants living in England are mature students aged 21 or over, a 24% increase on last year.

New applicants or those without an offer can still seek a place at university via the clearing process which runs from the 6th July to 20th October.

Student nurses and midwives starting courses from September will benefit from new guaranteed, additional support of at least £5,000 a year to help with their living costs, which they won’t have to pay back.