

February 2019

Dear Constituent

NHS staff shortages, post Brexit

Thank you for contacting me about foreign nationals working in the NHS.

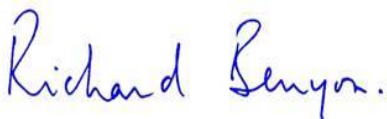
I pay tribute to the tireless work that our doctors and nurses perform, not least of all the role of those doctors and nurses who have come from overseas to provide us all with our world-leading National Health Service.

I completely understand concerns regarding the impact of our withdrawal from the European Union on foreign nationals working in the NHS. That is why I welcome the Government's repeated commitment that all EU nationals working in the UK will be able to remain in the country with the same rights as they enjoy today.

EU citizens are an important part of the economic, cultural and social fabric of our country and their rights needed to be secured. A new settled status scheme under UK law will be introduced for EU citizens and their family members, covered by the Withdrawal Agreement. This will ensure that EU nationals can continue to perform their vital roles across a range of sectors, in particular the health and care sector.

The latest NHS workforce statistics show that, far from the referendum result encouraging EU nationals working in the NHS to leave our country, there are over 4,300 more EU nationals working in the NHS than there were in June 2016. I would also note that the proportion of our NHS workforce made up by EU nationals has risen to 5.6 per cent, up from 3.1 per cent in 2010.

Yours sincerely



Richard Benyon