# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Government of Kerala MOU for the placement of health professionals from India to Wales.** |
| **DATE** | **2 March 2024** |
| **BY** | **Minister for Health and Social Services** |

The Welsh Government continues to invest significantly in training the future workforce of NHS Wales with the 2023-24 funding being the highest ever. I previously updated members that I would be maintaining the same level of funding as 2023/24, with a £283 million investment in the training of healthcare professionals in Wales in 2024/25. This will enable us to increase the number of training places compared to the number of places that were filled in 2023/24.

We recognise the significant challenges facing our services and workforce now, and this is why, alongside maintaining the significant level of funding for healthcare professional education and training into 2024/25, I have retained £5 million within the health budget for nationally run programmes to support ethical international recruitment.

These programmes will be aligned to Welsh Government and NHS Wales priorities and will focus on targeted recruitment, for instance in hard to recruit to areas or specialties, or to support more effective ways of working. I envisage that this targeted recruitment will, in turn, lead to a reduction in the use of agency staff, delivering both an improved patient experience and reduction in agency spend. These programmes are currently being developed.

Members will be aware of the work to date that has taken place in collaboration with the Government of Kerala, India, and the work underway in all our NHS organisations to ensure healthcare professionals coming to work in Wales have a warm welcome and are supported as they become fully established in our workforce.

I am pleased to inform Members that, on behalf of the Welsh Government, I have signed a Memorandum of Understanding alongside Pinarayi Vijayan, the Chief Minister of Kerala.

The MOU agreement is an important development in further strengthening relations between Wales and the Government of Kerala to support additional and ongoing ethical recruitment from India to Wales, and importantly on the basis of mutual benefit. I have agreed to recruit up to 250 nurses, doctors and other healthcare professionals during 2024/25 through implementation of the new MOU framework.

I will continue to update Members as work on international recruitment progresses.