

Proposal to regulate to stop movement of staff between care settings

The Government held a consultation on stopping staff movement between different care settings and between health and care settings to minimise the risk of infection of COVID-19. The Government adult social care winter plan committed to new regulations to enforce limitations on staff movement between care homes, and between care homes and other health and care settings, focused on care home providers.

This was an online consultation.

UKHCA response

UKHCA is the national professional association for organisations that provide social care, including nursing care, to people in their own homes. Our mission is to promote high quality, sustainable care services so that people can continue to live at home and in their local community. The vast majority of our members in England provide services that are regulated by the Care Quality Commission.

UKHCA represents almost 2,000 providers in England, covering a range from the very smallest to the largest. We consider that our views are likely to be the most representative of the sector.

While we understand the intention of the policy, we consider the proposal to limit movement of staff between health and social care settings is mistaken, likely to be unworkable or policed effectively. Additionally, we are concerned about the potentially disruptive consequences for homecare provision at a time when the number of vacancies, sickness levels and rate of turnover of staff is at its highest.

There will be a significant number of careworkers who work in both homecare and in care homes. These new provisions will compel those workers to choose which employer to work for and as a consequence will lose payment from their second employer. UKHCA is concerned that where a careworker with dual employment works the majority of their normal working week in a care home, homecare workers will migrate to care homes. We consider that where this is the case the care home should compensate the employee for the hours careworkers lose by not working in homecare. Homecare providers should not be expected to continue paying homecare workers for hours a careworker is unable to work because they are prevented from working for two employers. We consider the aspect of compensating careworkers for lost hours from a second employer should be addressed in the Code of Practice.

UKHCA will be very happy to discuss this with you further on this matter if you would find this helpful.

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