

**P-06-1226 Remove barriers to entry to Social Work and encourage parity of esteem between Social Care and Health, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 05.04.22**

At this time, we do not want to jump to conclusions because some of the specifics have yet to be revealed. Also, the notion of trainee social workers having to accumulate up to £50,000 in student debt to practice is hardly parity of esteem with NHS bursaries. We believe there is much work to be done before social and health care students can be said to receive parity of esteem and make the profession of social worker more appealing to combat vacancy gaps and an ageing workforce.

However, this change is a welcome and positive step in the right direction. The changes in regulations to allow MA students to access student finance and a bursary will remove barriers into the profession, open up the course to those from less affluent backgrounds, and provide an option of financial relief for students and their families. Hopefully these regulations will be amended soon and these changes will apply in the upcoming 22/23 cohort, which would be brilliant news. As students who have been lobbying for these changes, we wanted nothing more than to be the last cohort to struggle in these circumstances. We are both relieved and grateful.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the petitions committee for their time, support and guidance in this endeavour.

Feel free to contact us in the future,

All the best,

MASW Bursary Campaign 2020