

## **Latest workforce figures reflect NHS improvements**

**22 March 2005 for immediate use**

Welcoming the latest workforce figures today, NHS Employers says it will continue the drive to help make the NHS the best employer in the country.

Figures released by the Department of Health today show a significant increase in numbers of staff across all clinical groups.

NHS Employers director, Steve Barnett, said:

'I am delighted that more and more people are choosing to work for the NHS. Employers have made many changes in the last few years to improve the working lives of staff and to make the NHS a more attractive place to work. Staff now have access to childcare support and flexible working and new pay deals mean they will be more fairly rewarded for the jobs they do with more opportunities to develop new responsibilities and roles. These changes are starting to have a real impact on workforce numbers.

People join the NHS because they want to make a difference to other people's lives.

As the organisation responsible for NHS workforce issues, we will work to make the NHS the best employer in the country. We will also continue to help improve the working lives of staff which will have a direct impact on patient care. If NHS staff are happy, well-trained, rewarded appropriately and motivated, then patients will benefit'.

Since November last year, NHS Employers has been responsible for NHS workforce issues such as pay negotiations, health and safety, domestic and international recruitment and retention and equal opportunities. Next month it will also be taking over responsibility for the NHS Careers service.

Steve adds:

'We will continue to promote the NHS as an excellent employer and support measures to attract and retain staff across the whole range of careers in the service. There are over 70 different professions in the NHS, both clinical and non clinical. It's not just about becoming a nurse or doctor. Managerial and support staff are also a vital part of the NHS team enabling clinical staff to concentrate their efforts on caring for patients'.