Innovation and Skills: Medicine: Education

Written Answer

Sarah Wollaston Conservative, Totnes

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps his Department is taking to encourage students from the lowest socio-economic groups to apply to study medicine.

Jo Johnson Minister of State (Universities and Science)

Latest data from UCAS shows that the application rate to higher education for 18 years olds from disadvantaged backgrounds is at a record level. All institutions wishing to charge fees above the basic level must agree an Access Agreement with the independent Director of Fair Access (DFA) on their measures to widen access to higher education. This Government has extended the term of office for the current Director.

In his latest guidance to Institutions on how to produce access agreements the DFA has asked all Institutions with medical schools to consider the guidance on improving access to medical courses for those from lower socio-economic groups, developed by the Medical Schools Council and published in December 2014. The guidance from the medical schools council was developed in response to the Government call for more to be done to widen participation to medicine.

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