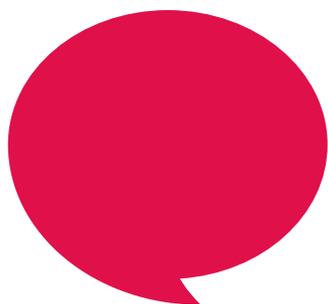




Royal College  
of Nursing



# Introduction



The Government's decision to replace nursing students' bursaries with loans is extremely disappointing.

We urgently need the skills that graduate nurses bring if we are to meet the country's health and care needs. We must give students proper support or risk deterring them from joining the profession and putting the future of health care at risk.

In this booklet, nurses, midwives and nursing students have shared their concerns with the RCN about what this decision means for the future nursing.

**Sylvia Duval**  
**Chair of the Student Committee**



# Responses

## Rachel, Liverpool

Student nurses are expected to work 24 hours, meaning 12 and a half hour shifts day time, or night time. Our bursary doesn't reflect this but we work all hours all the same, we are grateful for our bursaries as it supports those that are not able to work part time around night shifts, children at home and time with our friends and families. We understand it cost the NHS a lot to provide bursaries and pay for our tuition. But if you take away bursaries, you are going to see a fall in student nurses, we don't spend three hard years of emotional, tiring and physically draining for the money, or future pay. We train as children's nurses, learning disability nurses, mental health nurses and adult nurses because we have a deep desire to care. We care for our patients when we are hungry, tired, because we want to make sure our patients are getting better. Take away bursaries and these rare student nurses who genuinely care, you will lose a valuable workforce. Patients will suffer as staffing levels fall, staff sickness increases. I understand you need to cut costs, but cut bursaries and you will cut your future nursing workforce, we do not earn a lot so will have further debts looming over our tired heads.

## Kato, Croydon

I think it is mad to consider saddling a future nurse with a debt of 25,000 when his/ her potential earnings are unlikely to be much higher than 25,000 pa. When recruitment/ retention of nurses is so challenging it is crazy to add another hurdle!!

## Chelsea, Hull

I will now be unable to apply for my nursing as without the bursary I will not be able to support myself whilst I study.

## Joyce, Warrington

I have already written to my MP expressing my displeasure at the plan to scrap the bursary and asked him to take on board the effect this could have on the future recruitment of student nurses. I have also expressed that after nearly 35 years of nursing I feel that this plan is yet another, in a recent string of insults, toward the profession. We MUST NOT allow this to happen. It hard enough financially being a student but having to pay to work is criminal. Whilst I support the RCN in its judgement when it comes to negotiating on behalf of nurses. I want them to say enough is now enough. No other students are expected to pay for working, and when they do qualify be the bottom of degree profession pay scales. Students are a valuable asset to our clinical arenas not only are they to become the nurses of tomorrow but they make sure that the nurses of today stay well informed and up to date in order to mentor them through their training. Whilst I've not had a bursary I was pre bursary and was paid for the work I undertook during my training and whilst it wasn't a lot it was sure as he'll better than a bank loan and years of debt. In car you are in any doubt of the strength of feeling I have for this I would support a plan for strike action should this plan go ahead. I have told my MP that also.

## Jennie, London

Without the bursary I wouldn't be able to study. If I had to pay my fees and lose the bursary I would have to have saved over 40 grand to do the post grad qualification because I wouldn't be entitled to the loan. 40,000 to retrain is too much.



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## Michelle, Somerset

I wouldn't under the current rules qualify for the funding George Osbourne is planning on changing our funding to, I am a mature student with a previous degree. One of the reasons I delayed starting my adult nursing degree was because of financial concerns; the bursary is my lifeline and has enabled me to just about keep out of debt most months whilst I have been studying. I, like other student nurses spend half my time in placements, and without the continuing flexibility and goodwill of my employer (I have no choice but to work on top of placements and university work as the bursary is not enough) I would not have been able to remain on this course. I shudder to think about the levels of debt new nurses will be starting their careers with in the future if these plans go ahead. Ten years after my first degree and I still haven't paid my first loan back... and I was earning more than I will when I get a nursing job at the end of this! The argument about freeing up more places is just a diversion - there aren't enough places for the students we have now; so how are trusts and mentors going to cope if there are more of us - what support are they going to get to allow this plan to work? I suspect none... and the quality of student nurse training will suffer as a result and patient safety will be at risk.



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## Katie, Manchester

I would have not been able to afford to start this course if it wasn't for the bursary. I am a mature student with a previous degree and previous debt from student loans like many of my nursing cohort who have all said the same. I would have not been able to afford to travel the 100 mile return journey to placement four times a week (costing £50) to work 40 hours then work a part time job too.



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## Morag, Leeds

I am currently halfway through my 2 year post-graduate course, beginning my training was a huge commitment, mentally, physically and financially. Without the financial support of my husband and the bursary I would simply be unable to complete the course, as a previous social policy student, I know that student nurses are unlike other students. We spend half our time on unpaid clinical placements in hospitals and the community, and have a longer academic year than other students. In the last year I have managed to complete 3 bank shifts at a hospice as a healthcare assistant, I planned on fitting in 1 shift a week, but the workload academically and in terms of placements hasn't allowed for me to do this, therefore financially it has been a real struggle for me. With the average age of a student nurse is 29 and many, unlike myself have children, mortgages and other financial commitments I imagine many will be put off the training by the prospect of a lifetime of debt and post-graduate students such as myself will probably not be eligible for a loan. Since I have the debt of a previous degree if this change was in force when I was considering nurse training, I simply would not have applied because of the prospect of so much debt. We shouldn't be living in a world where entering one of the most rewarding professions is governed by your financial situation. I love nursing and I'm committed to a lifetime of working within the NHS providing high quality patient care, this move on the government's part could be extremely damaging to a profession that we should all be proud of.



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## Meesha, Canterbury

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I travel 2 hours to placement every day, which costs £50 a week, without the NHS Bursary my training wouldn't be possible. I am only a first year student nurse, but I have learnt so much in just 3 months of training. I was terrified but so excited when I attended my first medical emergencies. Holding the hand of the patient who woke up from a seizure, without a clue where they were. Being there for them when they are at their most vulnerable. Saying I'm here and doing anything you can to help. My motivation is helping patients in any way I can, leaving my shift knowing I have impacted their day or their lives even. Smiling and talking to my patients when they are getting fed up, with the length of their treatment. My biggest challenge is the thought of losing my first patient. I know I'm going to face it one day, but the unknown is the worst feeling. I am a student nurse because I aim to make a positive imprint on patients or even relatives lives. Knowing I have given my all to help. I am to retire in the future knowing I have made a positive impact to nursing. I have so many ideas, all I know is when I'm qualified, I want to travel with my career. It is my dream to help less advantage people all over the world. This is why I nurse.



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## Lucy, Leicester

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I started my nurse education with savings for accommodation and ect after a long previous career, high university halls costs drained my savings and without the student bursary I would have needed to quit in my first year. I am currently starting my third year and love every minute of my training. Surely a bursary cut will add to the current nurse shortage. I will still leave university with a large amount of debt but thanks to the bursary I have managed to continue my dream of working as a nurse.



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## Ann, Mid-Wales

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I am the Mum of a recently graduated nurse and have seen, first hand, the exceptionally high level of work required to qualify. My daughter achieved a 1st Class Honours degree from the University of Birmingham. During her degree course, she was expected to attend lectures, submit essays and sit exams like any other student. However, she was, unlike the majority of students at Universities, also expected to put in many, many weeks of nursing training on the wards of the Queen Elizabeth and Royal Orthopaedic Hospitals. This was an obvious part of her Nursing education and she benefitted from it hugely and thoroughly enjoyed her ward work. However, I as her Mum, will never forget her calling me on FaceTime earlier this year after a gruelling twelve hour shift. She was physically and emotionally exhausted and in panic stations about a chapter of her dissertation which was due in in just two days. The poor girl was distraught and had no idea how she was going to get the work done on time. The year of a Nursing student is longer than most academic years in order to fit in the practical ward work so there is no opportunity for a nursing student to take on a holiday job. Believe me they need all the time they can get to relax. Even then there is usually some piece of academic work to research or write. I strongly feel that the Nursing Bursary should not be scrapped. These students are not paid for their valuable ward work. It would be wrong to take away the little financial benefit that their degree course offers. Unless they are paid a proper amount for the hours they work (37.5 per week whilst on placement) there is no justification for cutting their bursary.



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## Mandy, Suffolk

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I am a single parent with 2 children and I graduated October 2015. I wanted a career that could take me places and that my children could look up to and be proud of me for. Without the bursary I would not have embarked on the journey of nursing due to the debt I would have been left with, but with it being available I did. It was my primary income and not having it I would not have been able to pay the rent, feed my children, pay for transport to attend university or clinical placement or generally live the life as a university student. With it, I have graduated and am in a secure, meaningful and inspiring job where I can spend my working days providing people with the important care that they need at some of the most vulnerable times of their lives.



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## Peter, Liverpool

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After returning from the war in Iraq in 2003, I decided to undertake my nurse training in 2003, I lived by myself doing a full time three year nursing course to become a qualified staff nurse; limiting my time to gain extra income to pay household expenditure. After completing my nursing course gaining a nursing qualification in 2006; even with the help of a NHS bursary I was still had a debt of just under £10,000 and after spending almost a year unemployed gaining employment I got a qualified staff nurse post in 2007 though my debt had increased. As a member of the army medical services reserves I had to wait till I had done my nursing preceptorship before I could go on an operational tour of duty to Afghanistan in 2009 as a staff nurse to pay off my debt. If I not had the NHS bursary my debt would have been significantly higher and had I not been a member of the army medical services reserves I would still be in debt to this day in 2015.



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## Katie, Manchester

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I am currently an hca with 7 years' experience on acute surgical wards. I intend on doing my nursing degree however I have a mortgage and bills to pay so without the bursary I would not be able to. The NHS is recruiting overseas nurses and there are thousands of people just like me who know the Job inside out and already do a lot of nursing duties, why employ overseas nurses and make it more difficult for our own hcas to become nurses.



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## Amy, Doncaster

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I am a mature student with existing student debt from my 1st degree. Without the bursary I will not be able to afford to study Nursing.



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## Rachel, Essex

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I am currently doing a PGDIP in adult nursing having been an HCA in the community for five years. I am very disappointed at the proposed change in the student bursary as £547/month for doing a 45 hour week is not enough to live on but a huge help and it will discourage people from training to be a nurse who have lots of potential as they can't afford it.



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## Paris, Limavady

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I won't be able to apply for nursing now as I already have a degree and have taken advantage of my student finance. The only reason why I did my original degree was to keep me in education until I got into nursing. Now that opportunity of my chosen career has been taken from me.

## Christine, Scunthorpe

I spent 12 years in the Royal Air Force and have since had children therefore my decision to become a nurse has not been one I could have undertaken earlier in my life. Due to my family situation (young children and husband being in the RAF) I have to put my nursing dream on hold. In the meantime I am studying for another degree to keep me sane and because I enjoy academia. Also having a degree already would give me an advantage in knowing what to expect at degree level study for nursing. With this I already have approximately £30000 of debt which didn't scare me too much as I knew I would be able to pay it back. I am 33 years old and would be 40 by the time I am able to qualify as a nurse. Having a potential £70000 debt really scares me, I will never be able to pay that back and I believe mature students will be put off for the same reasons. Nursing is not like ANY other degree, with having to work unpaid placements being effectively part of the full staff due to the nursing shortages there is already enough stress put upon nursing students. Nursing is already on the critical list for wanted professions and recruitment from abroad is very high so why are they withdrawing money from people who would be great nurses but society will never be able to benefit from them. It's all very well removing the cap on the amount of people who can study nursing but that doesn't mean the Universities have the capability to provide for them all in the case of lecturers, facilities, support and accommodation for those that live on campus.

## Katharine, Bristol

I think it is appalling that you are withdrawing the bursary. The students I work with work 12 hour shifts to care, unpaid for your loved ones in their time of need. They are supposed to be supernumerary but with trained nurse numbers and austerity putting a strain the NHS their contribution is invaluable and often not supernumerary. Where are they supposed to find the time to work part time to supplement their living costs? I am guessing you think it's ok for this to be when they should be studying and writing endless essays, reflections and exam preparation to make them a better, evidence based practitioner! So for people like myself who work in the NHS and have teenagers looking at nurse training, I worry sick we will not be able to afford it. With my wages as a nurse (even a nurse such as me who has been in the NHS for 25yrs) I won't be able to supplement them after the mortgage and bills are paid. This potentially rules this degree course out for them. They would make caring, compassionate and enthusiastic nurses, it's a disgrace that they could not be supported in any financial apart from crippling loans. So if they choose to get a loan and take on the training, is the wages offered to these nurses going to reflect the need to pay off these loans My answer would be not to bother, work in marks and spencer or john Lewis- you get paid more without the loans or huge stresses you endure by working in health care, where a mistake doesn't mean the loss of money but potentially the loss of life. This is ridiculous time to do this to future nurses at a time of nursing shortages and recruitment crisis that involves employing our amazing foreign nurses with many who continue to battle day in day out with getting to grips with our NHS, country and written and spoken language (I mean no harm by this but this is what a number of our Spanish nurses have voiced). How long will they stay, I doubt forever with our weather and the NHS struggling as it is. We need more nurses and I mean good nurses who want to nurse, not just those that can afford it. Please I beg of you, reconsider this decision. It's a bad one! It's unsafe and unfair!

### Megan, Norwich

I really want to be a nurse. I can't do it without the bursary as I will be living at home in a household which earns less than 7,000 a year? There is already a strain on nurses, why have you made it even harder for people to train?

### Michelle, Leeds

If the bursary changes had happened a few years ago I would not be a nurse right now. As it was I had 2 kids and needed to remortgage my house and work extra hours on top as I needed to pay for childcare and pay the bills. I feel I've given more than enough back to society in terms of my skills and caring and the amount of income tax I pay. I was a carer on minimum wage before my nurse training. It was a worthwhile investment. This government has no interest in investing in people and making this country a better place. They want to run everything into the ground. I think it is a deliberate attempt to devalue the NHS and sell it off cheap to private, rich investors who have supported the Conservative party. They disgust me.

### Rebecca, London

I moved to London aged 18yrs in 1996 to study nursing. I could not afford to study at degree level at King's College University because financially I could not have survived on the grant/loans. Instead I opted to study for the diploma in children's nursing at Thames Valley University. I was paid the bursary and even though I still worked as a HCA most weekends and holidays I left university in 1999 in debt which took me several years to pay back on my graduate wage. Nursing was always what I wanted to do but if I was 18yrs old today and there was no bursary on offer I would be opting for a different career. I still studied for my degree part time and have a first class honours in children's nursing. I am currently studying for a masters in strategic leadership in health care.

### Emma-Jane, London

I am a mature student with two children - one was a surprise and came along during my training. I feel immensely privileged I am able to retrain at 40 after a career in education that allowed me to happily pay tax and NI for 12 years, and I look forward to working from 43 to retirement in the NHS, an institution of which we should all feel deeply proud. I am fortunate enough to have continued to receive my bursary while on maternity leave. Now I am back at college and placement full time I receive £477 pcm bursary and my fees are paid by the NHS. My partner earns a little above the threshold that means we don't qualify for help with childcare costs. The nature of college blocks and placements means I have to have full time childcare for my younger daughter - nurseries are not flexible enough to allow us to vary the days when I'm on placement, so I often have to pay for days when I'm not working, and some days I don't work every day in the week but do work weekends. My partner often works late, so we have an au pair too so someone can put the kids to bed when I'm working long days or nights. Nursery fees run to £1200 pcm full time, meaning £14,000 a year; my partner's earnings are not £14,000 over the threshold by any means, so we are struggling to cover nursery fees of £14k pa on top of £14k pa mortgage repayments and £150pcm travel each per month. Our outgoings before food and bills are therefore £32,000 per annum. If I were to have to pay £9000 per year course fees on top, it would simply be impossible. The university sector has done so much over the years in terms of widening participation, and that is jettisoned, wholesale, in the requiring of students to pay £9k pa fees. Students without wealthy parents or partners or significant savings will no longer be able to justify training in the health professions, since there is no capacity, especially if one has a family, to work part time around the course. Sad times.



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## Melanie, Peterborough

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I am an admissions tutor and senior lecturer at a university, my students are reeling at the changes and the new group are already considering cutting their losses now before the implementation in 2017. At a recruitment event yesterday, over half of the potential candidates had grave concerns about how they would afford to undertake the course as it is full time in the proper sense. Nursing is not like a history or law degree, the students work 37 hours per week. Weekends, nights, days, bank holidays. They just simply can't get a job to work around the course as it is unpredictable. I despair for the future of home grown nurses. Recruitment companies must be rubbing their hands together for all the money they are going to make when hospitals are unable to recruit because graduates are few and far between.



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## Sarah, Havant

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As a mature post graduate diploma nursing student I would not have been able to commence my nursing course if these changes were already in place. I worked long and hard with dedication and commitment to earn my place on my course. I was selected based on my skills, experience and what I could bring to the profession, from hundreds of applications. The university stated that they were confident that they had made the right decisions when selecting student as future nurses. My concern is that nurses like myself will now be unable to train. This saddens and concerns me. I worry that in the future when I am older and in need of NHS care will the right people be there to provide me and my family with the nursing care we need and deserve.



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## Sarah, London

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I couldn't even afford to live in halls because my bursary and student finance were too low. It is not just going to make it worse for other students because how can anyone afford to do anything as a student nurse because 50% is spent in UNPAID placements in hospitals.



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## Charlotte, Cardiff

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I am a mature student and having worked full time since I left school ten years ago it was a hard decision to do my training despite it being all I've ever wanted to do. If it wasn't for the bursary I don't know how I would survive, it doesn't even cover my rent but as a first year student in my first term I haven't had time to find work because the course has been so demanding. If I knew I would be left with 50k plus debt after qualifying I don't think I would have applied. I wouldn't even mind paying the tuition fees for the course but expecting student nurses to pay for the privilege of working full time for free is unrealistic. It will affect so many peoples decision to apply in the future and the UK will lose many what would have been fantastic nurses.



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## Nicola, London

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I have worked in health care for 15 years before deciding to become a nurse. I work part time at a children's hospice to top up my bursary. I can't work when on placement because I have two children who would never see me and I need to concentrate on placement hours which are long enough. Without a bursary I would not be able to become a registered nurse. Nursing students, in my opinion, provide essential care to patients.



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## Eleanor, Manchester

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I could never have afforded to start a nursing degree without my bursary. I already have a considerable debt from a previous degree, and although I've always known I wanted to be a nurse I didn't have the life experience or maturity to start the course after I finished college. I knew I would be in a better situation personally and academically if I was able to do another degree first, so I opted to do this. Most student nurses I know work over 50 or 60 hours a week, as when on placement we work 37.5 hours per week and then have paid jobs as well. The bursary is meant to compensate for this but in reality isn't enough to pay the rent for most people. Nevertheless we carry on studying and working, and I've heard few complain. If our bursaries were withdrawn, it would effectively mean we were paying to work when on placement, or our labour was absolutely free. We are meant to be supernumerary but in practice and as part of our learning we perform clinical work and put in a lot of hours working on wards and with patients. It is categorically wrong that we should have to lend money to work 37.5 hour weeks for our course and then have to go out to work to live on top of that that. The government have claimed that cutting the bursary is due to the caps on nurse training, however this is short-sighted, unintelligible logic. People with previous degrees (and arguably more life experience) will be put off applying in the first place. Those who are not put off will be saddled with huge debts and the reality of paying to work full-time weeks when on placement in practice, and also having likely having to work on top of this just to make ends meet. A nursing degree is not like any other degree, the hours are double that of other courses. Placements are compulsory, where students work and learn simultaneously and the hours are 24/7/365 - by which I mean 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Wards don't close and student nurses don't get long "holidays" like other students. I've spent my past two summers working on wards whilst my friends and family have been on holiday and at festivals. I have not been able to book a holiday to join them as

this work is essential to my nursing degree. Frankly, the bursary is a pittance - I receive £365 per month. I continue doing the course because all I've ever wanted was to be a nurse. If I had to pay by taking out a loan to do this much work and having so little rights unlike an employed worker, I would never have undertaken the course. It's tough enough as it, I don't see how prospective students will be able to manage.



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## Emma, London

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As a current undergraduate studying nursing I feel sorry for nurses starting their training when changes to funding come into effect. Even if mature students like myself are able to get a second student loan, they will be saddled with a huge amount of debt and starting on a salary of less than half of their debt. I can see how it would make living day to day easier as a student because we will have more funding available while training, but it is short sighted and means nurses will begin their careers with huge debts when they are already facing an increased fee to pay to the NMC just to practice, and enhancements are threatened when nurses often work unsociable hours. There are shortages of mentors in practice anyway, how will this be addressed with increased student numbers? How will universities cope with extra demand to teach? There are large cohorts of nursing students already, how will this work? Student nurses also work for far less than minimum wage, full time, for a half of their training. We need a decent amount to live on from the bursary, instead of being railroaded into paying to work for free. Don't penalise student nurses for a poor economy, we are the backbone of the NHS and we deserve recognition and not debt.



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## Rebecca, Sheffield

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Without my bursary I wouldn't have been able to afford to travel to my placement, it cost me over £30 a week and whilst I got this money back at the end of placement without this money from my bursary I wouldn't have been able to attend placement.

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### Martha, Swindon

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I wouldn't survive as a single parent without this bursary! Sometimes we are expected to work over 45 hours a week to meet our requirements. Without the NHS bursary and childcare allowance this would be virtually impossible for most of my colleagues and I.

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### Kate, Newcastle upon Tyne

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I entered the nursing degree with an existing student debt so would have been unable to fund my studies without the bursary and would have had to look for an alternative career. I love training and am devastated others will be unable to afford the profession. Student nurses work full time on placement and can be a massive asset to a busy team as well as learning to have to pay to week full time and be shattered would be a very difficult thing indeed.

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### Alexandra, Southampton

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I was a healthcare assistant for about a year after leaving school. I loved the job and wanted to develop my career as a nurse. I decided I was going to leave my full time paid job to apply for university. My student loan is £575 every term (roughly every 3/4 months) and bursary is £212 monthly, so a drastic cut from a full time paid job. My university course will involve me working full time for over half of it, and filled with theory and exams for the other half. I only get 7 weeks holiday each year which is the same as having a full time job so have no time and am unable to get a part time work contract anyway! It is unfair to take bursaries away from students as it is a completely different degree to most, and totally unrealistic and will put many people off aspiring to be a nurse as it will be unrealistic. I am lucky the change won't affect me but it will affect many like me.

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### Katie, Bristol

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Without this bursary I honestly don't think I would have been able to move away from home and become a student nurse. The bursary is so important as it is much harder for student nurses to have part time jobs while at uni as large proportions of term time are spent getting practical experience through placements. The bursary also provides a way of covering the cost of getting to these placements. It was also a relief to know that when I qualified I wouldn't be left with a loan to repay, especially as nursing is not a high paying profession.

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### Sophie, Gloucestershire

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If the bursaries are cut I would not be able to do my adult nursing degree as I have completed the foundation degree to be able to do the adult nursing degree I have already borrowed student finance to fund the foundation degree a total of 20000 pounds I have already had. Therefore I would not be able to do the honours degree as I would not get money from student finance as I have already had money from them. This also cuts out people who have already done a degree if they cannot afford to fund themselves.

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### David, Guildford

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I am a first year student nurse. I know that this decision will not affect me. However, as I student nurse I can already feel the financial problems even though I get bursary. I am scared how it is going to be once I start my first placement. 16 unpaid hard working weeks? That is 4 months of paying all the expenses including accommodation, food, bills... I think it would be unfair for the coming generations who want to study nursing. They will have to work long hours, be committed to their work and once they qualify, they will get the annual salary of not even 20k per year. It is just not fair!



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## Donna, Gloucester

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I have just completed the nursing degree course at University of the West of England based at the Gloucester campus this is my story. Three years ago I had reached the top of my field as a health care assistant and had over ten years' experience in health care at acute hospitals, nursing homes and community based care. It seemed a natural progression to want to complete a degree and become a registered nurse. At 29 having lived away from home for ten years I was happily settled with a home, partner and responsibilities. I have a step son who has mental health problems that has required my partner (his Father) to care for him and health issues himself meaning he has not always be able to work full time. My parents live off of one wage and could not help financially. As a mature student I would not have considered starting the course without having a bursary in place to be able to help me and my family cover living costs and meet our financial responsibilities. My bursary covered some not all of my rent and no more. It did not pay for nights out, tickets to festivals, or back packing holidays so often associated with students. It did not even leave enough to cover food or bills. I am consistently in the red on my bank account, still have debt as I had to take out a student loan (which I might add is capped so that student nurses cannot currently claim the maximum amount) and have worked two jobs in the last three years to stay financially afloat. We have gone to the food bank three times during my course and heated our house with two electric heaters instead of gas central heating. I LOVE being a nurse and I would go through all of that again if I had too but I would NOT wish those hard times on anyone least of all those who are studying to be the people that will look after you and your families at their bedside in the darkest hours. I appreciate many students take out loans, seek help from parents or spouses and take jobs to fund their studies and living costs; however many of these students on non-medical or health related degree courses will not be on courses that for six months of the year

see them working a minimum 37.5 hour unpaid week on top of academic work and extra months of study in order to meet course requirements. A loan would only be sufficient if it covered the course fees and left enough to be able to live off marginally above the poverty line as during placement weeks there is little if any time to be able to work to earn money. I will soon be working as a newly qualified nurse for the NHS so is it not an investment they have made in both my career and the future of our health service by funding a student to work in area of the health service that is seriously under staffed?



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## Tanya, Epsom

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I have always wanted to become a nurse so much so I would still join regardless of the debt. As I was 18 when I started and had no other commitments or people dependant on me. However I know many that are older they have previous loans or have children and a house to run I've worked side by side with these people and they are amazing nurses and its saddens me to think that if we were 3-4 years into the future their urge and passion to join such a great carrier would be blocked by these cuts they wouldn't get the support necessary and the thought of the debt hovering over not just them but on the whole family...nursing would not be an option for them. I live at home with my parents I don't have to pay rent I've got it pretty easy I shouldn't really have to worry about money and yet I find myself having to juggle 2 part time jobs around university and placement just so I can afford books my train fares and a little bit of a social life. Nursing is a tough degree and we need extra support not for the little support we have to be cruelly taken away.



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## Michelle, Manchester

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I am 37 years old with three dependants and already have debts from a previous degree, the bursary has enabled me to do my nursing degree, without it I don't know how I would have survived financially. My family has struggled financially for the four years it has taken me to become a nurse, one year access course and three year nursing degree, because the time commitments has made it impossible to work a part time job, as most students do, look after my children, work full time on clinical placements and complete my assignments for university. I find it completely unjustified that student nurses should have to get into debt of up to £35k in order to start a career, that has a starting salary of £2.09 an hour more than what the minimum wage will be in 2020.



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## Ellen, Isle of Wight

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I have embarked on the journey to become an Occupational Therapist, one of the vital and currently understaffed allied health professions that will be affected by the bursary cuts. My journey has already spanned 3 years and involved incremental steps to obtain relevant experience and build up my academic profile in order to fulfil the entry requirements I need in order to be accepted onto a university OT course. I am now within a year of having fulfilled these requirements but, sadly, if these cuts go into effect, I may not be able to continue my current course of action due to the financial strain this will certainly put on my already low income family. The NHS needs far more OTs than it currently has and I desperately want to become one so that I can make a valuable contribution to the lives of those I would be able to help as an OT. If funding is cut, I am unlikely to be able to attend university due to the financial strain this would place on my family, during the course and in the future. I will lose my dream and the time and effort I have already poured into reaching that dream will have been a loss. I feel angry and heartbroken by the prospect.



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## Emily, Bristol

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If I knew that I would have to manage the massive debt that would come in replacement of the NHS student bursary, I undoubtedly would not be training to be a nurse right now. The fact that our tuition is covered by the NHS makes this demanding course manageable and makes us work harder to achieve this qualification in order to gain the adequate knowledge and experience to become a nurse and part of the NHS workforce. If we knew that we were graduating with a massive debt, this achievement would be completely undermined. The NHS bursary makes amends for the unacceptably low salary that nurses receive after graduation. Removing it would only attract inexperienced and inappropriate candidates (18 year olds straight out of school without any financial acumen) and would mean them working 37.5 hours plus a week during placement, with no wage at all.



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## Danielle, Bristol

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I'm a mature student living in London. Before beginning my training, I had a decent full time job but being a nurse was something I had always wanted to do. The bursary makes living in London a little bit easier, especially when the daily commute to placement at one point last year cost £6.10 (single). The placement and academic demands of the course make it hard to work part-time, we aren't like 'normal' students, the only all-nighters I've done are night shifts. The bursary covers the hours we spend in clinical, without it I'm not sure I'd be able even think about becoming a nurse let alone actually do it.



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## Hayley, Southampton

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Without the bursary I would not be able to become a nurse. Nursing is a vocation and studying to be a nurse is a unique type of study and not like studying to be a lawyer or a politician! Our job from day one is caring and we spend 50% of our time in full time caring roles looking after patients and dedicating ourselves to their needs and the needs of families. Without the bursary I would need to work full time to support my family while training to do a job that is not only needed but that I will be good at and that can make a real difference to the people of this country and this is not possible with the requirements of the course. What a shame that this has been decided without any real thought about what support we as student nurses need in order to continue training and what is needed to continue encouraging more people like myself to do the job they were created for.



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## James, Swindon

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I wouldn't have enrolled on the adult nursing course if there was no bursary support available. On my previous placement I was expected to work 5 days a week with my mentor. I work every Saturday for 10 hours to complement my income as the student bursary cannot cover my rent and bills. That is the reality....I was working 6 days every week during my placement for 10 weeks. It was the only way I could manage. It was healthy for me. I had to terminate my mobile contract and think about other cost saving measures since I joined nursing. In our cohort, 120 students enrolled onto the course and more than 40 dropped out of the course. These students were probably getting bursary.....may be not.....but they couldn't cope...what if you take away the bursary...the recruitment of nursing students will be affected significantly and the long-term care of patients. The impact will be visible in a few years. My wife was to join the course once I had graduated. But now adjustments have to be made. She might not enrol after all as we have two little ones.



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## Carrie, Warrington

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I am a mature student with a husband and young child. It has been a massive decision to make a career change at age 33, but I felt that after 12 years working in social care I had much more to offer. I decided to commence my nurse training in order to extend my knowledge and expertise to continue to care for people in my community and help people through difficult and challenging periods in their lives. Without the bursary I could not have made this change to my career, as I would not have been able to manage the resulting debt. The wage I will receive as a qualified nurse is relatively low compared to other graduates in other fields, incurring a large student loan in addition to this would have put me off commencing the degree. While training I will provide the NHS with 700 hours per year of labour for no additional pay, while on placement I work a 37.5 hour week on top of studying, writing assignments and working to earn additional money to provide for my family. I am loving my training and am looking forward to be a qualified nurse, I believe introducing loans will put off other mature students in a similar situation to myself and this would be a massive loss to the NHS.



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## Lorena, Lincoln

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I am full time carer to a complex needs child. When he goes into supported living in a couple of years I plan to train as a learning disability nurse to help families such as myself using my experience to really understand and focus on their needs where I can. I cannot train earlier as childcare for special needs and complex health needs children is totally non-existent. This is a career change so will be my second stint in higher education. The bursary allowed me to do this without the scare of doubling my current student debt. In addition, due to the nature of student nurse placements, I will not be able to work part time and most courses are 45 week years compared to non-healthcare related degrees which are usually around 30. I feel we are being penalised. I understand it opens the flood gates for universities to offer more places but why are they trying to fix something that isn't broken? Money saving strategies should come from the top of the tree, not the very real and committed frontline of student nurses.



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## Daniel, York

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I was a Health Care Assistant who got to do my nurse training. During my nurse training I received a bursary while working 35 hours a week as a student nurse. I also worked 12 hours a week as a health care assistant to keep my wage up. As a mature student with financial commitments if it wasn't for the bursary I would never have been able to afford to do my nurse training. I am now a Charge Nurse managing an acute medical ward.



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## Dawn, Barnsley

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I am a mature student and without the bursary there would have been no way I could have embarked on my journey to become a nurse. Doing 37.5 hours work placement along with the huge academic workload would make it physically and mentally impossible for me to work a part time job also. I am finding it difficult now and that's with financial peace of mind but without the bursary I feel I would be impossible for people like myself. I fear that in the future mature people and people with small children will not attempt a nursing degree because of the additional financial implications losing the bursary will cause. I feel the government have used the back doors to sink the NHS as this will have a devastating effect on an already low staffing issue forcing healthcare into the private sector. More awareness of this and their tactics need to be made public. If I can help further in any way just contact me. Good Luck Dawn



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## Dannielle, Musselburgh

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I am a 19 year old student studying nursing. I live with family and have a part time job and I still have to pick up extra shifts at my work in order to get through the month. Not all nursing students have the luxury of living at home with parents, some have children and other commitments such as bills etc., whilst on placement we do 37.5 hour weeks and are only legally allowed to work another few hours at other jobs weekly. The, what can be, stressful nursing environment is a lot to handle without worrying if you can afford to put food on the table which for many, the bursary is used for. As I said I struggle to get through the month without children or bills so I can't even begin to imagine the effect on these cuts on those who do!



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## Emily, Aberdeen

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I am a third year student nurse and commenced my training after leaving school. There is no doubt about it, that without my bursary I would have seriously had to have considered studying close to home where I could commute. I feel this would have hindered my experience and opportunity in terms of the placements I would receive. Placements make up 50 per cent of my course and therefore immensely impact the training and experience I receive. On past placements I have worked an average 37.5 hours per week that contribute to the overall 4600 required hours as part of the course. Throughout my third year I, and other student nurses alike, will undergo placements of 37.5 hour weeks between January and August. Whereas, students of other degrees will finish their academic year in May. This is not a complaint but merely proof that student nurses have longer academic years. During summer when most students can work and save, we as student nurses are on unpaid placements that leave us with very little time or energy for part time paid work in between. I fear that future students are not going to consider a course that requires 50 per cent unpaid placement, while racking up 3-4 years of loan debt with next to no time for part time paid work. It feels very discouraging.



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## Laura, Barnsley

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I am a mature student at Leeds University. I could not have got to my final year without a bursary. My last placement was a 70 mile trip daily and some of the weekly travel is still on a credit card. I love what I am doing but if I had to pay to work nights and deal with the more unpleasant tasks. I don't think I would have started this. This makes me sad because I feel privileged to be able to enter this profession next year. The government says ending bursaries will mean more places at university but two problems being one who will apply for them? And two in an NHS that is short staffed who is going to mentor them all?



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## Allistair, Cardiff

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Without the bursary, I wouldn't be where I am now. I entered nursing as a mature student with a family to support. Without the bursary, I would not have been able to consider nursing as a career. The debt would have been too much for my young family to cope with. I now work in Neonatal Intensive Care, providing support and care for the smallest and some of the most vulnerable patients in the NHS. I love my job, and am eager to support negotiations that would allow others to do as I did.



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## Caroline, London

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I came to nursing as a mature student already with a degree and master's degree as well as a student loan and a young family. I would never have been able to complete my nursing studies if it wasn't for the bursary or even start the course as my existing student loan would have prevented me from getting another loan. In addition to the bursary I did receive I also had to work 4 part time jobs just to provide for my family existing on four hours of sleep a night. I was lucky enough to be able to complete my studies and have brought a wealth of experience and knowledge to my profession and practice having had more life experiences and previous degrees on entering nursing. The removal of bursaries and replacement with loans will undoubtedly see a dramatic fall in post graduate nursing students who will simply not be able to afford or access support for another qualification. We are seeing the beginning of the end of our great nursing work force.



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## Ruby, London

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I am studying access to nursing, I also have 2 young children and a cut in bursary will make it almost impossible for me to study a degree in nursing.



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## Sean, Bristol

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As a 32 year old man, I would not have been able to start this course with the knowledge of having a £40,000 debt at the end of it. There is a reason why this profession attracts mature students, it's because it requires some maturity! Not to put down my younger peers who are doing a fantastic job, but it is obvious they are struggling more, and are the ones that are dropping out. You may be able to open up more positions this way, but how many will you be able to retain, and what will be the quality of the nurses looking after your elderly parents, and yourselves one day too? There needs to be more incentive to complete this highly demanding and much needed qualification.



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## Paige, South West London

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Would you expect an apprentice to work for no money? No of course not, so why should student nurses work full time for free? The universities/ NMC limit the amount of extra paid work student nurses can do to ensure safety, so how do you expect student nurses to pay for themselves and their families, if they have to pay for their tuition fee and work for the NHS for free! Yes student nurses are meant to be supervisory but I can guarantee all student nurses have been counted in the workload due to staff shortages. I would have not been able to train as a nurse without the student bursary as my Dad was supporting my sister, mum and myself by himself as we were all at university at the same time. The majority of nursing students are mature with families and no bursary would mean students wouldn't be able to support themselves or their families.



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## Meg, Glasgow

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I chose to spread my wings and move away from home to study. I wanted an exciting new city to explore whilst studying at one of the top universities for my degree. I took a year out to work full time as a phlebotomist in the NHS before going to university not only for the experience but to put away a few pennies for a rainy day. My bursary paid for my years' rent, and my savings for food and travel. Now my bursary is scrapped I don't see myself being able to afford to live away from home, and had I known I would never have moved. My future in nursing isn't clear, as an English applicant to a Scottish university if I have to pay fees and rent and bills I won't be able to financially achieve my dream and may result in dropping out. As a first year student who is just completing their first placement I am distraught that my future in nursing may not be achievable and I may have to move home and go back to working as a phlebotomist to try again in a few years' time. Who knew my rainy day would come three months into starting my degree. Student nurses are expected to get a loan from the government, to work for the government free of charge during our training in order to qualify and work for the government in order to pay off our loan back to the government. It's simply appalling. The government is destroying the NHS before our very eyes.

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## Htike, Carlisle

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I was a HCA and got paid a national minimum wage for years. I loved my job but I couldn't go on like this forever. I decided to educate myself to live a better life with a decent earning. I didn't have any spare money to save with a minimum wage. How would I be able to get a qualification? NHS bursaries make my dream come true. I can go to Uni without worrying about course fees. I can go to placements with NHS bursaries' PPE without worrying about travel expenses. I can pay my bills with the help of reduced students' loan without worrying about I will end up with a huge debt when I am qualified. How am I going to manage all this without NHS bursaries? If it is stopped, it would kill the dreams of people like me.

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## Paige, Somerset

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I was the youngest student in my university completing nursing, as I lived with my parents I got a very small % of the bursary, even though my sister and Mum were all at university at the same time. This meant my Dad was supporting us all. Without the bursary my family would not have been able to afford my university course, the universities have strict limits on your paid working hours due to the placements and demands of the course. Newly qualified nurses would be going into a stressful underpaid profession with thousands of pounds of debt, where's the incentive in that? The vast majority of nursing students are mature with families to support. This will cause the majority of people applying for nursing decrease and increase the UK nursing shortage, what's the logic in that?

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## Emily, Grimsby

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Working 40 - 50 hour weeks on placement and 16 hours spent working part time just to be able to pay for my accommodation and travel to placement? Working extremely hard on the ward and often being treat as a member of staff to get dealt the blow from government that bursaries are going to be scrapped? I invite you the government to work a 13 hour shift, often more if you're busy still providing patient care, and then see if you can cope with the demands of being a student nurse.

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## Michelle

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The hours are long and hard, the academic load is high, money is tight and my social life is shot, damn my non-social life is shot; if I am not on placement, at uni or studying, I am asleep. To have to worry about tuition fees also would be enough to put someone off making an already struggling profession even more undesirable to potential student

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## Aimee, Swindon

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If you do an apprentice course you get paid! That is what the NHS bursary is like, we have to do longer terms, half our course is clinical placements, taking a loan to pay fees and other costs as trying to work whilst doing the nursing degree is very hard work, I have no choice but to work my NHS bursary covers half my childcare costs and so I work to make the difference up, and claim tax credits! If not I would require £9000 tuition loan, £12,000 for childcare cost and then even more for living costs, travel etc. and that is just one year!

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## Kay, Blaenau Gwent

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I am retired nurse I started nurse training in 1967 a very different time, low pay, living in nurses' homes and long hours on the ward. How lucky we were compared to these students. I feel really sorry for the profession I don't know how they will manage financially. As a lot of nurses are mature students and the thought of starting a career with such debt will impact on their decision to embark on this difficult, emotional, challenging academic pathway. I have a relative who is thinking of a nursing career and I have advised them to look at training in the armed services as they will be valued and paid while training. It would have been better if nursing had gone down the apprenticeship path.

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## Leanne, Clydebank

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Without my bursary I wouldn't have been able to fulfil my dream of becoming a registered nurse. Even with the Bursary I, and many other student nurses, still struggled financially. Due to the high demands of a nursing degree I wasn't able to seek employment. Even with my bursary I still relied heavily on my parents to support me financially throughout my training. Also, much of my bursary went towards travel expenses (to university and practical placements) as I was entitled to funding for travel expenses. I achieved a BSc Adult Nursing with distinction. I wouldn't have achieved this with ensure I bought many books on the reading list given to student nurses at the start of each semester. These book can vary from £15-£50. I can categorically say that I would never have become a nurse without the bursary. I couldn't have coped with the added stress with the financial pressures. Nor would I wanted to. Why would anyone want to work 37.5 hours a week, hard labour, weekends and night shifts with nothing in return. I certainly would have be reluctant to pursue a career in nursing.

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## Karen, Doncaster

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As a mature student I was able to do my nurse training without putting my family into financial ruin. I gave up a part time work to do the course in 2006. Without the bursary I wouldn't have been able to undertake the course. Withdrawing the bursary will put off many a mature student who are supporting their families. The government has no idea the press students are under many who already work to top up bursaries. I don't envisage how this well help the nursing crisis that we are in.

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## Sarah, Llantwit Major

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I would never have been able to start my degree I am a March 2014 Cohort. As a student nurse still training I would not have been able to start. We are angels who want or do this job because we care and want to help service users. It is not a high paid job. We do it because we want to help, make a difference, aid and help that service user to become well and in cases give them a dignified death, and it's an honour to be there or after someone dies. It is the job I want and future nurses want. Taking it away makes it so much harder, harder than it already is with family, a home to run, essays, revision, 37.5 hours a week in placement, Uni lectures. Big mistake!!!!

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## Nicola, Leighton Buzzard

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Nurses do not have massive future earnings. Everyone who works as hard and is trained to such a standard deserves to be able to afford a property. Massive debt will impact on nurses' lives for many years post qualification. Nursing should not be elitist. It will be if the bursary is stopped and course fees introduced. RCN please stand up to the government and stop the changes.

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## Jade, London

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I currently work a seventy hour week to pay rent. It's totally exhausting but far from novel. Without a bursary, I would never have considered nursing. I would have continued my work as an HCA knowing that the work I do is valued and that I can at least eat on the basic wages it provides. To work without wages takes massive commitment. I never entered nursing to make money, I did it because it's a calling that I feel I can't refuse. To remove student bursaries means that I would be working entirely for free. How can I be expected to work three or four twelve hour shifts, then go home to my job that pays, if I was facing £24,000 in student debt (to say nothing of the student debt I already have) at the end of it? It just wouldn't have been a practical decision. Although I fail to be surprised by the Tory government's cuts to healthcare and education, I can't help but feel this decision is short sighted and morally wrong. It risks patient care by placing massive financial strain on student nurses, who will be forced to work even longer hours to make ends meet. It also undermines the valuable contribution that they make to the NHS, who are too often forced to use student nurses to make up staffing numbers. And finally, it deters people from joining a profession that is much needed by our society, at a time when we have a shortage of nurses. I would like to ask Mr Cameron and his cabinet why he continues to destroy our healthcare system with his ridiculous austerity measures, whilst paying members of the house lords a flat rate of £300 a day just for showing up (<http://www.parliament.uk/about/mps-and-lords/about-lords/lords-allowances/>) I would like to ask him how it is possible that his health minster claimed £165,505.90 in the last tax year (<http://www.parliamentary-standards.org.uk/Results.aspx>), yet it is student nurses (to say nothing of junior doctors) who are subjected to financial cuts. I would like to ask him how he sleeps at night.

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## Zoe, Maidstone

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I would have seriously considered not beginning my studies if I would be lumbered with all this debt, and that is WITHOUT realizing the enormity of the course before I started. We work our backsides off on placement to complete hours and care for REAL PEOPLE with REAL PROBLEMS as well as complete all our academic work and get "paid" pittance. I understand we are studying a degree, but we are also studying for a professional registration. Police Officers are paid whilst they train, why are nurses paid literally PENCE? Universities want people with "experience" meaning a proportion of the students are mature, they have real bills, real families to pay for and look after. I am lucky, I have no family to care for but the majority of my classmates have children, and their families have had to make significant cut backs and savings in order to complete the course NOW, let alone with loans. Graduating with all that debt will only put more pressure on the future nurses. After experiencing the course so far, I would not want to do this course if I was to leave with HUGE debts. No way. The future of the NHS looks very bleak after this news. Congratulations on ruining the service.

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## Sandra, Hitchin

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I entered nursing as a mature student with a young family a long time ago now in 2002! I qualified and have worked in acute medicine ever since and absolutely love my career. I would never have entered nursing without my bursary. I am married and my husband is self-employed and not a high earner, with no sick pay or holidays, so I relied on professional child care, friends and family to help out throughout my student years. My small bursary helped immensely. If I had been faced with debt to study, I wouldn't have even considered the course. I feel that the abolition of bursary will alienate mature students, such as myself, who have a lot to offer with added life experience.



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## Lowri, Ceredigion

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Student nurses are equivalent to apprentices, we are learning the trade, however we are expected not only work full time, but to study a degree on top. What are student nurses supposed to survive on? I get £200 a month (I'm lucky, some only get £82) which is a help but it's hardly covering cost of living. Three years ago student nurses used to earn nearly equivalent to a minimum wage, this provided them with time to concentrate on studying. However, cuts have been made and student nurses are now working every hour. Cutting the bursary all together will impact on their learning and degree. Student nurses will work hours on top of their full time placement, giving them less time to do their academic work. Students learning and overall degree classification will be affected!



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## Abbie, London

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I am studying paediatric nursing. I made the decision to move to London in order to train with the best trusts for paediatric nursing in the UK. The bursary pays for the majority of my rent, so without it, I would not be able to train in the city that I love and in trusts that are specialist in the branch of nursing I adore. The debt I would have accumulated without the bursary would have meant I would have thought twice about studying nursing. Luckily, as nursing is the only thing I ever want to do, I still would have done it, and taken on the debt. Unfortunately, that is why you feel you can take the bursary away, as we do love our career so much that nothing can deter us. Beating down on those who will carry on regardless is STILL WRONG. And disgustingly unfair.



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## Claire, Cleveland

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I am currently a mature student Nurse, after leaving a well-paid job and joining the Nursing Degree course to pursue my dream career. FINALLY after years of gaining care and general life experience to enhance my background before joining. I've still had to put part of my life on hold, and wait an extra 3 years until I can get a house with my partner, despite HAVING the bursary. God knows what future mature students are going to do WITHOUT the bursary at all. In a sense though, I'm actually quite lucky that I've had the option of staying at home with parents until I qualify. I don't have kids, and I'm not married, so I have no ties just yet. Unfortunately that's not the case for those people wanting to train as a Nurse who have a home to run, a family to feed and a life to also attempt to live. My guess is that these people will, devastatingly, have to give up on their dream career as a Nurse. That's something that I personally just couldn't stomach, especially now I know just how much I adore the role and all the respect and pride that goes with it. I for one believe that mature students with previous experience in care and general life experience, are true gold to Nursing courses and it would be tragic if people with that background would be put off in future.



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## Chloe, Caterham

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Without the student bursary I will have to work whilst on placement in order to be able to afford to live. This could mean some weeks I will be working 72 hours a week when on placement whilst trying to study. The standard of care I will be able to provide will be lower due to the fact that I will be too tired to even function.



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## Alena, Bridgend

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I was one of the last to receive the non means tested bursary after starting my course in 2011. I have 3 children and gave up my full time job to pursue my dream job as a children's nurse. I would not have been able to do this without the bursary. The course was very intense with clinical shifts making up 50% of the course including 12.5 hour day and night shifts. I had no control over the shifts I was given as I had to follow the same shift pattern as my mentor, I had childcare bills to pay as with any other job but could not claim the cost of this back because tax credits do not help towards childcare costs when you are a student. As a full time student the only benefit you can get is a discount on council tax. The course is not the same as other degree courses, I had to work during half terms and bank holidays attracting more childcare costs. The government just do not realise how hard student nurses work. They have to work full time (37.5 hours) a week, get up at 5.30am, and complete coursework and assignments. The course is very much considered adult learning and students spend a lot of their time around shifts researching clinical guidelines, best practice for patient care, different illnesses and conditions, medications and side effects etc. The list just goes on and on and there isn't any time to earn extra money around this course without ultimately affecting patient care. Unfortunately there is an image that nursing is a glamorous career and the government have worked hard to eliminate the "too posh to wash" culture, however by eliminating the bursary they are only really making it available to people who have financial support from family/parents and putting the training out of reach to the people who make excellent nurses (parents/Health Care Support Assistants). Why would a HCSA give up their £14-16k job to do the course for nothing but be expected to do the same work, the same shifts with more responsibility. I had to give up my full time job to pursue this career and lose my £800 a month income to get a £558 a month bursary. I cannot believe they have cut the bursary and

think they have made a huge mistake but this will not be evident for a few years until patient care starts to decline. I currently work for Cardiff and Vale NHS and love my job and strive to provide the best care I can to the children I look after but I wouldn't be where I am without the bursary I received.



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## Andriea, Northampton

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I feel this is yet another blow to the NHS and just another hit to the public sector. I have just started my degree not for money or glory or status but because I want to be a nurse, I have two children 3 and 6, I live in rented house with my partner who works and studies at home. Unlike many courses mine runs all year and I will get only 7 weeks off, I wouldn't be able to work and study due to childcare costs and placements. There are many students in my position or even worse as they already have debt from previous courses. This change is inconsiderate and selfish of the government as you are taking advantage of people who genuinely care I honestly feel that the government pick on the public sector because we choose our careers for so much more than financial gain but we are people and we have lives, families, commitments and responsibility. What you are proposing would alienate so many people from becoming health sector workers, it will be people that can pay rather than people who have a care giving background. Yes I would still want to be a nurse if the bursary was scrapped but I doubt I could afford it and would be tempted by a course that wouldn't be as demanding or full on but it would be sad.

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### Chris, Leicester

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As a mature student that changed careers to join the NHS as a health care assistant several years ago, I would never have been able to take the next step needed to fulfil my ambition of becoming a nurse without an NHS bursary. The financial toll is already a struggle and the knowledge of plunging myself into 35k of debt (or more as I'm doing 4 years as a dual reg) would have been enough for me to not take my position at university. We don't only need recruitment, we need quality recruitment. Many fantastic would be nurses will be put off at a huge debt and paying back a vast amount of their pay (which has been below inflation rises for far too long) will be too much. Please help the next generation of student nurses.

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### Julie, Aberdeen

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Without my nursing bursary I and many other of my colleagues won't have been able to complete and become registered nurses we are today. Nursing would have been financially out of question for me and I won't have been able to do the job I love and enjoy so much today. By replacing bursaries with loans, it will lead to people being put off going into university and pursuing career in nursing in fear of debts. Nursing degree isn't just a degree, a lot of it consists of hours and hours of academic work as well as half of your degree is spent on clinical placement which for a lot of students is 30-37.5 hrs per week which is also topped up with essays to complete whilst on placement which doesn't give much room for additional hours to work. Please don't make nursing degree an option for the privileged and force people into debts. If these changes go ahead people will stop applying to study nursing which will create a staffing issue which in turn may compromise patient care.

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### Nancy, London

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I am extremely lucky in the fact that my parents are able to support and aid me financially, however, my bursary is necessary for me to be able to live in London as it would be impossible for me to afford my rent, bills, travel expenses and food on my student loan alone. I need my bursary to help me get through this course. I am unable to undertake a part time job due to the demands of the course as we are expected to work the same shifts as a full time nurse at various points of the year and most employers cannot accommodate this. It is difficult to survive in London financially in my current situation with the bursary, it would be impossible without.

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### Eleanor, London/Manchester

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Without my bursary I wouldn't be able to pay my rent. At the moment I use both my maintenance loan and my bursary payments to pay my rent, however both together doesn't actually cover my rent, I'm short by a lot of money per year (close to £1000 I think). Never mind living costs. My parents give me a small sum of money each month to live off and so do my grandparents. I have to work minimum 1 shift sometimes more on the waitressing agency I am signed up to a week, even during placement and end up doing occasionally 70 hour weeks when on placement otherwise I wouldn't be able to afford to live. To cover my short comings when it comes to rent, and extras my parents looked into taking out a bank loan, out of sheer generosity my grandparents gave the money to me on a loan basis for the last 2 years of my degree, when I qualify I will pay them back, slowly. If it wasn't for my bursary I wouldn't have been able to afford to move to London for my degree, and realistically I probably wouldn't have been able to move away from home at all. I would have rethought doing my degree if I had the debt future students would, I think I would have become an HCA and built my skills over the years to becoming a senior HCA. I struggle as it is with money, never mind without my bursary.

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## Sarah, Newhaven

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I studied yr 1 child nursing at London south bank uni, commuting. I am not the norm young 18/19 yr old student. I am a mature student, who finally followed her dream after working at Sussex uni v.c. Reception. I am 40 yrs old. And thanks to my hard work completing my access course, which is the same as 3 A levels in one year and working part time, I completed yr 1 in lsbu, transferred to yr 2 and 3 in Brighton, I would have never been able to follow my dream if I thought I would have to pay for my degree. I think it will close the window to those who really care x

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## Claire, Stourbridge

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In this world where more and more young people my age (late 20s) are struggling to move out of their parents homes due to low income and high cost of living the student bursary I had meant that I got through uni without the burden of debt for me and my family who couldn't have supported me to get through. I have only just managed to buy my own property with a lot of help but not having to pay massive loans off has put in a better situation. I also wouldn't have been able to go to uni without my bursary supporting me an extra income job at uni would have been impossible the course is stressful and hard and I was in uni full time, plus working placements with real shifts nights and evenings unlike my friends doing non-medical degrees who would be in uni for maybe 10 hours a week. There are so so many reasons that student nurses need and deserve to be paid for the hard work they put in. As a mentor I also see how much my students need to not worry about having to get a part time job as well as placements and uni. I think we are going to see a massive change in student numbers now.

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## Julie, Kettering

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I gave up a previous career and well paid job to become a midwife as a result I have had to sell my house and move to afford to train. This change was because I wanted to do something worthwhile for society and give back to the NHS and country, I will never reach the same pay scale as the job I did previously but I feel that it will be worth it. The student bursary pays for my fuel to placement and uni, my parking and books, without this I could not afford to study, I also could not afford to have any future debt to pay off and therefore if this had gone in earlier I would never have trained and the NHS would have lost out on a most loyal future midwife.

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## Rebecca, Lincolnshire

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I am a single parent and my bursary is my only supply of income. Not having a bursary will mean a huge drop in student numbers as a cohort of 250 of mostly parents and probably fifteen percent being single parents you are discriminating against those like myself. My bursary I worked hard for and my children didn't have the best of everything but we got by. For a country with rising childcare costs, petrol prices, rent, groceries and anything you seem to need you have destroyed our future nursing teams to be those of only one class or those so stressed as they are riddled with debt. So as a student nurse of two children with no partner I think I speak for all future nurses when I say think about the country and what this will do before you make the change by privatising the NHS which is what you are trying to do consider the elderly young children vulnerable and disabled before lining your own pockets with your stupidly large salary for ruining our country.



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## Jodie, Birmingham

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As a first year mature student I believe these changes will not increase the amount students embarking on a nursing career. For the following points: 50% of student nurses training is work placement. In order to train to become a registered nurse, they have to be considered supernumerary. Therefore, how could this possibly cut the cost of staffing? Furthermore, if there are more students nurses, surely there would need to be more qualified nurses to mentor them? Having more students in practice is not in the best interest of the patient, if the average nurse is caring for 8 patients? This will risk patient safety and not produce good quality nurses. Generally, people not expect to work for free and being a student nurse is working hard and long hours. It is emotionally and mentally challenging, though very rewarding. It is a financial struggle with or within the added burden of such significant long term debt. Universities currently have to up 50% dropout rate, blaming finance is one of the causes. The dropout rate will be much higher with this change. Nursing is low paid to begin with, therefore I do not feel cutting the bursary will not incentivise future applicants with the current changes. Overall this is an unfair and an unworkable change, which will devastate the future of the NHS. I would not have started this course, had I known I would have been left with such debts.



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## Annette, Milton Keynes

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I'm a married mother of 2 I have a mortgage, bills, debt (due to surviving on the course). Saying trying to get through this course is hard is an understatement. Working 37.5 hours a week on placement, paying for travel to placement and the 60 mile round trip to university on the NHS bursary (£456 a month) is extremely difficult. But I knew this and that's the choice I made. As I had always wanted to be a nurse it was my dream. Even though a nurse's wage is a pittance for the work load and responsibilities they have, many still want to be nurses. That's because we don't do this for the money. No one would. We do this because we want to care we want to show compassion and I personally want to support the NHS for the future. As I said I'm not doing this for the money. But if I knew I would be living as a newly qualified nurse on £11 an hour and £50,000 worth of debt the thought frightens me. I would have stayed as a Health care assistant or a role along those lines. HCAs will soon receive £9 plus an hour (when new minimum wage comes in). I'm not saying they don't deserve it because they do. They do a wonderful hard job. And the NHS would not survive without them. That goes for all staff. But where is the incentive now? Why would people want to go to university for three years work their bums off have all the stress, blood sweat and tears (there are many) to leave with £50,000 worth of debt and be on £11 a hour. Once you take off your student loan payment will be even less. The NHS is already at breaking point in recruitment. This will destroy it. A terrible terrible decision. We all know Mr Hunt's true plan is to destroy the NHS, I'm heartbroken that we are standing by and letting him. Bevan is known forever as the NHS creator, Hunt will be forever known as the destroyer.

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## Chloe, Glasgow

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I'm in my third year at Glasgow Caledonian University. During my studies, I have had to take on two part time jobs to make ends meet. My bursary just covers my rent and car insurance. If I did not have my bursary, I'm not sure I would have been able to undertake the course. Without my bursary, I wouldn't be able to afford to live whilst out on placement working 37.5 hours a week, alongside studying for other modules. I'm disheartened by the government scrapping the bursary.

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## Jan, Helensburgh

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I would never have been able to study to be a nurse if I had had to take out a loan as my family could never have supported me to study. I am now retired after over 40 years as a nurse, midwife and then health visitor. This simply would not have been possible had I not been supported financially by the govt. shame on you all who made this decision, you will find that it will result in a massive shortage of nurses in the future as the end pay for a nurse is a lot less than most graduate jobs.

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## Naomi, Edinburgh

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I believe this change is going to have a hugely negative impact on the future of nursing. One of the incentives has always been that student nurses get a bursary to help with living costs, which balances out all of the unpaid clinical hours we do for the NHS. I believe it would have made a huge difference for me if this was in place when I started my training. I think it will stop or deter people applying in the future. With all the pressures a student nurse has, which the government fails to seem to understand, I think it is a disgrace that they will now have to pay to do unpaid work for the NHS and start their nursing career with a large debt in their pockets! Bring back the bursary!!

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## Dorothy, Bristol

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Student nursing courses are amongst the toughest to complete at university. They do weeks of placement every year and are expected to travel up to two hours travelling time daily to meet this demand. They cannot afford a second accommodation near to their placement. Not only should the nursery be kept it should be increased and they should all get it to and not means tested. I know of many student nurses who cannot make ends meet and whose parents really can't afford to make up what government says they should. It is so unfair.

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## Asimah, Burton On Trent

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I was considering finally to study nursing after my young family have grown up a bit by 2017 however I now won't be able to and it's a huge blow for me and a big disappointment. The government won't be able to ensure recruitment increases this way and just like most other mature students I can't afford to do it now. I hope something will change this decision.

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## Lydia, Shrewsbury

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I would have been put off applying for a place on a nursing course if the bursary was not in place, mainly due to the travel involved in placements which can be great. Without the bursary students won't be able to claim back travel expenses which would cause a massive strain on finances for everyone on the course. Especially with it being a very full time course people struggle to keep part time work at the same time unlike on other full time courses where you are not expected to work 37.5 hour weeks both in university and when on placement.



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## Hannah, Cheshire

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I have been teaching student nurses for 25 years and I'm appalled by these changes. Students spend half their time giving care mostly in the NHS and in future the government expects them to pay for this privilege. This unpaid shift work means they can't sustain a part time job, they work a long academic year (currently about 45 weeks) so can't work in their holidays. They have lots of expenses in their course that other students don't have, not least travel to placements. An increasing number of our students are mature people making a career change who have a huge amount to offer the profession; many are graduates. Very few of these will be able to afford to fund a nursing degree in the future. Nursing students are often the first in their families to go to university and I suspect the figures for 'widening participation' in universities will plummet without our nursing students. The NHS is making increasing demands on the profession to substitute the work of doctors so really needs more highly trained graduate nurses. We have an ageing population so demands for care are going to increase and we as a society need to demonstrate that we value highly skilled caring-otherwise we will face more scandals like mid Staffs in the future. To be blunt, if you want a skilled compassionate nursing workforce you have to be prepared to invest in it. UK nursing is an ageing workforce with many of us due to retire soon so the government is storing up future recruitment crises. Investment in post registration education has also crashed and I fear for the future of my profession in this country.



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## Penny, Warrington

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I am a mature student and will be 41 when I qualify. I have two primary school age children and a husband. If I had to take out a loan to cover tuition fees instead of having a small bursary and a 'free' degree I would not have started training. No way would I want to saddle myself with at least £27k of debt with an income of just over £21k. I simply would be able to afford to study and train to be a nurse. I'm already struggling on the £240/month bursary (I don't qualify for help with childcare). I have no spare hours in the day for a paid job. By ditching the bursary you're going to lose the mature students that bring a huge amount of life experience and a different perspective on life than a fresh out of college eighteen year old. I decided to go into nursing after my son had a transplant this gives me insight into parental worries when a child is ill. The profession would lose those people that have been in the shoes of the patients and their families.



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## Kirsty, Hull

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Why should I self-fund through maintenance loan to commit to placement work then to pay that back as soon as I qualify. That is free labour that you are gaining from me and many like me. Whilst on placement a wage needs to be considered to allow students to earn what they are worth which is more than nothing. We are restricted with the amount of work we can do on top of the degree with the European working time directive and the lack of hours outside of university. So earning possibilities are slim to none. We commit to 45 weeks a year at university. We complete placements knowing that we get out bursaries. We support our fellow nursing colleagues to help each other. But there is not incentive to commit to placements when you are self-funding. Free labour because realistically you will be more hands on due to staffing levels. Put a wage in for student nurses on placement.



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### Emily, Crawley

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I had already been to university to study a different subject. Nursing wouldn't have been an option for me if I'd have had a loan as the repayments would force my wage below the amount I require to live.



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### Naomi, South Norwood

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Am in my 2nd year children's nursing. Without the NHS bursary I would never have been able to start my nursing course as I had already used 2 years of my student loan on studying a foundation degree previous years. If I wanted to study my nursing course I would had to pay my first year of the course from own pocket which was impossible. Therefore I was and am grateful for the NHS bursary. I regret and hope the bursary will not be scrapped!



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### Lorna, Scotland

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I am married with four children one of which has just qualified as a nurse! I am 47 my husband works nights, I have a child who is autistic, I have worked hard to get into my place at university but live 12 and a half miles away from it, I have to travel every day to my placements (which I love) but my bursary barely covers the cost I cannot afford to get into more debt!!! I am trying to better myself and give my children a good example by studying hard for what you want, but if I have to make the choice to stay and finish my degree or get into thousands of pounds in debt I know which one I will be forced to choose!! Heartbreaking!!



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### Ashley, London

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If I had to take out student loans to pay my fees and living costs while I trained as a nurse (approx £50k) there is no way I would have signed up. As much as I love the NHS, why should I have to pay to work full time in a hospital for half my course? Yes I would certainly learn invaluable skills, but we are already doing more than we should as students on placement and propping up understaffed and unsafe wards, we currently get £6000 a year approx to support with rent and living costs, and are unable to work extra jobs mostly because when we aren't on full time placement we are at uni 4-5 days per week and also have to undertake lots of independent study - many of my friends doing other degrees would only have 8 hours of classroom time per week (not wanting to undermine their efforts) and so could work alongside study. When I qualify I will earn £21k per year, and although I could earn more if I worked for the private sector I choose to support OUR health service and will take a lower salary as a result. I took a 20K pay cut to be a nurse because I honestly believe that caring for others is the most rewarding and inspiring role in the world and I feel lucky to have been given this opportunity - but sadly there are so many people out there who would make fantastic nurse and yet will be excluded because of money, it's already hard enough to live on £6k a year in LONDON especially, but to qualify and then have a £50k debt when our generation has already been priced out of being able to buy our own homes is heart-breaking, doesn't really sound fair. Shame on the conservative government.



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## Hannah, Leicester

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I am currently a third year adult nursing student at DMU. I have struggled my way through the course including an action plan in my first year from working too many hours on top of placement. Something I have had no choice in doing and something that has caused me to struggle with the past 2 and a half years. Even with the bursary I have to earn £200 a month on top just to pay rent never mind bills and general living. Like many other students I live in my overdraft, I work 3 long days on most placements and 2 sometimes 3 additional days either banking on wards or in my part time job. I take annual leave to work a full week, on top of this I am currently trying to do my dissertation and study for exams. Without the bursary (a very minimal bursary) I would not have managed to get this far into the course!



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## Chantelle, Stratford upon Avon

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I would never have been able to train as a nurse if I had to pay tuition fees. I am still struggling to pay off £10000 of debt I had for living loans when I studied, let alone anything more. I feel it is wrong beyond words when nurses' studies include 50% of shift work in the NHS. We should be rewarded for our hard work, not punished! A lot of good, hard working nurses will be put off by this change and at a time when we are at a shortage of nurses anyway, this couldn't be a worse decision.



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## Victoria, Exeter

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I am currently working my way through GCSE English and Maths in order to complete an access course and then further my education to undertake a degree in adult nursing. I have two young children and currently work. Without the bursary I will be unable to continue my goal of becoming a nurse. This path is so long and every barrier there is seems to get in the way, this is now an added pressure. We are crying out for nurses but it seems that the government don't want to help their own Country which makes me so disheartened when I'm trying so hard to make a better future for myself and my family.



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## Gabriella, London

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I am an extremely hard working student nurse. I don't call in sick. I don't take long breaks. I don't think any task beneath me. I don't get paid for the work I do while I'm on placement. In order to qualify as a nurse, a student must work thousands of hours unpaid doing the same job that qualified nurses get paid to do. Our unpaid placement hours should be taken into account before we are expected to pay for a degree that will ultimately lead to an underpaid career. I am aware that my fees will and are being paid for and I am very lucky. I think other future nursing students should have the same opportunities I have been given.



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## Katherine, Aberdeen

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I would not have been able to become a staff nurse without a bursary. The bursary paid my rent, it paid my monthly bus pass so I could travel to placement and university.



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## Leanne, Lancaster

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I am in third year now of what has been a very challenging course, emotional, financial and physically. Many who started with me have dropped out because they can't afford to support themselves and their families with the minimal bursary we had! The other week I was on placement Monday - Friday doing 40 hours a week, and in order to afford rent alone, I have to work an additional 16 hours every week of the year. Therefore I do 56 hours of physical work a week, plus academic work which is 2/3 assignments. When I started the course I was advised getting a job alongside is not recommended due to the high demand of the course, they were right! But yet I continue to put my body mentally and physically under stress to ensure I can stay in this course to undertake a career I love. By cutting the bursary you have forced future student to work more hours, but where will they get these hours from? Students are going to end up getting ill, in huge debt and giving up on a career that is selfless, helping people at their most vulnerable. This course is a FULL-TIME course and on paper 45 weeks long each year, but considering all assignments fall through annual leave, we don't really get the minimal amount of supposed leave and if we can obtain a job that would take us on an unpredictable schedule then we use it to work to afford food. 50% of them weeks are doing 40 hours of unpaid work and numerous hours of academic, plus more hours of paid work. Of which we can work all sorts of shift patterns, including nights. In order to do this course you have to prioritise your life, meaning family and social life take a back seat along with sleep which is now even more going to. Students are going to be forced to work nights alongside to afford the course demands. But of course the human body cannot take this much stress on its body and intern one by one student nurses will drop out! But not only that there is a shortage of nurse already, no one will join the course when they know they can't afford it, both meaning a further decrease

in nurses and unfortunately a decrease in efficient patient care! 2 weeks ago I was celebrating a job offer on my dream ward, and waiting to qualify where I can start to make a difference. Now I fear for my future, fear that this one uneducated action will destroy the nursing career, and make those already registered suffer even more staff shortages, and more will end up taking sick leave due to stress and early retirement. 3/4 of my cohort are mature adults with children already struggling to get by, now those similar would not even consider the course, as how can they afford it, why on earth would they put their family through financial debt when they have an option. This is a career people should aspire to be, not make those who would naturally be good nurses flee because they are not from a wealthy background. How are we as nurses supposed to SHAPE THE FUTURE now?!



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## Kirstie, Scotland

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I am currently a 3rd year child health student nurse. I am also a single mother to an 8 year old boy. I decided to retrain as a mature student. However if my bursary is taken away I will have no choice but to leave the course and seek employment to allow me to manage financially. The decision to remove the bursary will have huge implications on the recruitment of future nurses as it will simply make these types of courses inaccessible to many people!



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## Katie, Edinburgh

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I am a second year student nurse. I am currently on a 6 week placement at an adolescent mental health unit. I work from 8-4 every day and my commute is 45 minutes. I come home exhausted after this, both emotionally and physically, and I then have to get stuck into my university assignments I have due, as well as revise for my exams in December. Where do I fit in a part time job in all of this? There is an easy answer to that, I don't! There are not enough hours in the day to make it possible for me to be able to hold down a permanent part time job. I am either full time in university or full time on placement, and it is simply not possible to incorporate a job into my hectic schedule. I am paying an extortionate amount for my rent each month in Edinburgh, £421.21 + bills to be exact (this is the cheapest flat me and 3 other student nurses could find). I receive £506 each month from the NHS bursary. That leaves me with less than 90 pounds a month, to buy food, pay my gas and electricity bills as well as pay petrol for my car to commute to placement forward and back each day. To take the bursary away would mean I could not physically afford to go to university and study nursing. There is simply no time for a job and employers are often hesitant to employ student nurses while they are at university due to the fact that they simply have too many other commitments that must come first e.g. placement. I know many of my friends who also study nursing would be in the exact same position as me if we did not have our bursary. We work the same hours as registered staff nurses including nightshifts and weekend shifts yet now we could potentially have to PAY the government to do so?! This is simply ludicrous. Student nurses are hardworking and devoted to what they do, they care for REAL people and their REAL families in very REAL situations. There are many days I have come home from placement, completely exhausted and emotionally drained, with other contributors to my stress, including financial worries. I am from Northern Ireland, and due to the expenses of flights I do not get to see my

family very often, aside from Christmas and Easter and perhaps the odd weekend. This is very difficult for me as a 19 year old, and I know if I did not have the bursary I would be able to go home a lot less than this. However I am dedicated and I love what I do, but cuts to bursaries, something which student nurses 110% deserve, cheapens what we do, and makes me feel as though our work is not appreciated by the government, and they don't think we deserve any money. Well I would like George Osborne to spend the day shadowing a student nurse on a busy day on a ward and then perhaps he would change his ideas! I have often been on a shift on placement where the ward is so short staffed they struggle to cope with the workload, and students make a massive difference in helping the staff nurses out and easing the pressure. Students are the future, stop discouraging them Mr Osborne!



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## Nicola, Kent

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My daughter is currently studying for A levels and is looking at nursing courses for Sept 2017. Funding is important due to the shorter holidays we have noticed older friends have so limited opportunities to earn money. I trained as a teacher 20 years ago and even then noticed my holidays were shorter due to teaching practice but still long enough to find employment in Christmas and Easter holidays to help keep debt down. It seems surprising at a time when more nurses are needed that the government seeks to penalize new entrants instead of encouraging them.



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## Elizabeth, Croydon

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I am looking to start uni in sept 2016 and will have to get a part time job to survive. This is my 2nd degree and don't want to be saddled with debt at the age of 32 when I qualify.



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## Sarah, Northern Ireland

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I am a sister in a very busy unit. I have been nursing now for 10 years and this would not have been possible if it wasn't for my bursary. Student nurses should not have to borrow money and pay it back when they are working in our hospitals and care homes and providing a public service for free during training. The nature of the nursing degree means students are basically working full time hours (for free) as well as all the academic work that this incorporates. This leaves absolutely no time for student nurses to earn money while studying. Most of these students have families and responsibilities. How can anyone think scrapping the student nurses bursary is a good idea is baffling!! This will surely lead to a decline in the number of people joining this wonderful vocation. Our government need to seriously reconsider this!



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## Ciara, Brighton

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I would have never started this course if I knew I would have a huge debt at the end of it. Due to the nature of the course we have no time for a part time job so the bursary is all the money we have. For most students it does not even cover their rent alone so they spend the whole year in their overdraft. It is ridiculous to think that any nursing student would survive the 3 years without their fees paid for and their bursary. Not only this, but the pay after graduation is so low that we won't be able to afford to pay it back anyway!



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## Chelsea, Brighton

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It has really upset me, and I most certainly would not have started the course. This government have already taken away many peoples disability allowances that are most certainly still disabled, one close to home that has had severe rheumatoid arthritis since the age of 16. They have now just labelled them as not being disabled after 35 years without an assessment or anything, it's absolutely disgusting what they're doing to people for just a bit more money. Instead of doing this, why don't we make big companies like "Topshop" "Next" and "Amazon" pay tax just like everyone else... the owner's bank accounts for the businesses are mostly abroad meaning they AVOID TAX. All this government are doing is thinking about the short term affects, what are they going to do in 5 years' time when the amount of nurses is decreasing rapidly and the NHS will be even more under staffed because to be nurses cannot afford to get in that much debt for such a small wage once registered. Then the spending on the NHS will be a lot less. That'll make them happy. The average annual salary of a normal graduate is £4000 higher than the average of a nurse's salary, so... Are nurses' wages going to go up? Of course they won't!!!



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## Kerry, Manchester

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Having the student bursary has made it possible for me to follow my dream on the path to becoming a nurse. If I was made to pay my tuition fee with a load I think I'd have to settle for working as a HCA. I just would not be able to afford to become a nurse and travel to all the placements, and university etc. Also with the bursary I know that all my hard work on those placement doing 13 hour shifts, is being appreciated not only by the patients, but by the government! Let see the government work 13 hour shifts 3 days a week without a penny!

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## Claire, Denham

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Why not provide people with an annual bursary that does not need to be paid back if they pass that academic year? Fail, leave or be asked to leave the course and they would be required to pay the bursary back. This would reduce the amount spent by the NHS for which it receives no recompense. Then, when someone completes the course and qualifies they should be contracted to the NHS for a set number of working hours. Again failure on their part to achieve this would mean paying back some or all of the bursary. This would prevent people being trained using NHS funds and then leaving to work in the more lucrative private sector or working abroad without repaying the NHS the costs it had incurred to train them. Obviously the formula for determining the amount to be paid back for any cessation of studies would need to be carefully thought out. I got a Business Degree 20+ years ago and will be in my early fifties when I qualify but will still have a third of my working life ahead of me. However if I had to pay for my training it would not be financially viable for me to undertake the course. As it is earning nothing for three years will have a definite impact on my average earnings between now and when I retire. Don't scrap the bursaries, just use the money wisely!

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## Louisa, Eastbourne

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I will be unable to continue studying my nursing degree if this change is carried out. I have 2 children and just manage to survive in the pitiful bursary I am awarded. I am showing my children that if you want don't enough and are willing to work hard enough for it you can achieve your dream. I would have to go back onto a low salary, accepting benefits and allow my children to think I'd failed if this happens. Good, experienced students would be unable to study and I believe this will result in a shortage of nurses and widen the class divide as only well off people would be able to go on to earn higher salary and progress through higher roles within the NHS. Absolutely evil. Completed twisted logic and prejudiced against lower earning families!!

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## Mollie, Manchester

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I have always wanted to be a children's nurse for as long as I can remember. In my last year of college we found out the coal mine where my dad worked was closing down. Due to this it has made money really tight and things we use to be able to do we no longer could. So if it wasn't for the course fees being paid for and the £1000 pound bursary I would not have been able to attend university to help me get the career I have dreamed of. The £1000 pound has allowed me to live away from home and pay for bills my parents are unable to pay for. So I will always be thankful for the opportunities and career options the money has provided me. If it was not for this money I would not have attended University and I would have always been unhappy with my job.

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## Alice, Leeds

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I am a Chemistry graduate who wants to do a masters in nursing. Without the bursary, there is no way I am going back to university to rack up even more debt. I have already been working a few years to supplement the bursary with my savings, as working whilst studying is hardly an option. This change means I will not be going back to university, which will not be aiding the lack of nurses.

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## Bethany, Cheshire

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As someone who has previously done a degree, and therefore I am lumbered with a large debt, I simply would not, and could not have gone into my nursing training if it wasn't for the bursary. You may say I shouldn't have done a different degree first, however I was pressured in 6th form to go to university and do an 'academic' degree, with no knowledge of how to go into nursing training. However in that time I matured and became the person I am today, which is a proud and caring student nurse who wants more people to come into this vocation and not be deterred by loans. We don't have enough nurses as it is!



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## Lindsay, North Lincolnshire

When I did my nursing I was lucky enough to get a bursary, if that hadn't of been available I don't think I could have looked at it as a career. A large amount of time as a student is spent getting hands on experience while being supervised and learning how to be a nurse. For students to come out of university with thousands of pounds worth of debt working in a job that will earn only half of not even less a year than the debt that's been run up through studying. Nursing as a profession is under enough pressure and getting rid of the bursary is going to have a massive impact on the people who now consider doing there nurse training. Through doing my course I have gone on to become a specialist community nurse, I have a job I love. Scraping the bursaries are going to take the opportunities I had away from people who have a passion to care.



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## Simon, London

My daughter is considering pulling out of her UCAS application – she just will not be able to afford it. Oxbridge politicians had 27 weeks holidays – nurses 7.



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## Natalie, Stockport

I am currently a mature nursing student with I have 4 young children. Although I have wanted to become a nurse for over 10yrs becoming a nurse was not an easy decision to make, mainly because I have taken on an £8,000 loan to pay for childcare cost while I train. On balance we felt that this cost was an investment in our family's future and therefore I went ahead. However if that loan debt had been £24,000 for fees plus £8,000 for childcare totalling £32,000 worth of debt I would most certainly not have opted for a nursing career. Not because I would have been less passionate, less motivated or less focused on a career path that would mean caring for children and their families at the hardest of times but because I simply could not justify such a debt when in a few years' time my own children will need to be funded through their university degree. When I qualify I will not work in the private sector or leave for another country, I have a family which means I will work for the NHS for the entirety of my career. Without the nursing bursary people like me who are dedicated to caring in the NHS will be lost. We have been on the other side as patients, parents and children of those we love, we have incite and empathy which cannot be taught, we can improve and fight for better care and services. The NHS needs nurses, ending nursing bursaries will deprive the NHS of nurses it so greatly needs.



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## Chloe, Stafford

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I'm currently studying adult nursing and I am devastated at the news they are cutting the bursary and that the course will no longer be funded. Although the changes won't affect myself, it ultimately will. I believe that there will be a drop in the number of people applying to do the course, leading to a decrease in the number of nurses in the future. It is said that nursing is a vocational career and historically nurses didn't get paid or they did but with other things rather than money. However, pressures on nurses and accountability has increased and as there are many different paths you can take to still work in areas nurses do, care for patients and gain qualifications, why would you want to pay for a degree? Another factor I believe will put people off doing a nursing degree is we have to do 2300 theory hours and 2300 placement hours to qualify, this means you would be paying £9000 a year, half of the year work, working nights and unsociable hours, instead of payment you are in affect paying to work. We are not a 'normal' degree course, we have a total of around 6 weeks annual leave a year unlike the 'normal degrees' who may have this amount just for Christmas, they then can afford to work and save money, whereas we cannot. Also, there is such an intensity with the amount of hours we do. Bursary is what helps people out to live a just liveable life, I know I wouldn't be able to afford to live without it, as I have no time to work to get paid the amount my bursary covers and on top of that juggle placement and the number of assignments we are set. In my honest opinion I believe that we have been picked on due to our caring and compassionate morals, there would be no way we are nurses could voice any opinions by striking like others do when something like this occurs, as I myself and others could not leave patients possibly in pain, in their own bodily fluids, or ultimately in a position of harm. Overall, the strategies put in place to get more nurses will have no effect as I believe there will be a drop in a number of students applying. I hope there is going to be reconsideration of this devastating change that will completely

change the nursing future for the worse. It's such a shame this has happened and if this were to of happened when I was considering nursing, I know myself I would not sign up for it.



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## Karen, Chesterfield

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I would not have become a nurse if it relied on having a student loan as I already had a decent job prior to nursing with no debt whatsoever. I would not have saddled myself with debt to change my career.



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## Rhian, Wales

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I have just finished my mental health nursing degree and am very disappointed with the bursary decision. I could not imagine how difficult it would be to get through the three years without it. It was hard enough with it. Your placements can't work around a part time job as you work weekends, nights etc. My fear is that persons wanting to join the profession will be unable to afford the three years.... leading to less nurses! My bursary used to pay my rent :(



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## Fiona, Doncaster

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I have received a bursary for my odp course and I wouldn't have been able to do it without it. I have my bursary, student loan and work long hours most weekends just to make ends meet. It's hard enough work as it is and if my bursary wasn't there it would be even harder. Plus then paying off numerous loans once qualified with the NHS starting pay..... another kick in the teeth.....



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## Kat, Shrewsbury

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<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/113491> I started this petition on Tuesday. In only 3 days, 100,000 had signed. I have been inundated with messages from nurses, student nurses and midwives. We are NOT happy, and feel this is a step too far in the blatant disrespect this government has for our profession. 127,000 people, now, don't agree with the government's proposal. There has been no clarification on seconded students, mileage, how places will be affected in practice, how many universities they have consulted with to assess just how many extra places each university can accommodate, and no mention of the fact it was their own decision to reduce training places: the current shortage is no-one's fault but their own. I appreciate the RCN's efforts, but feel what is actually needed is a ballot. Maybe the government will listen to nurses and students when they act. They have relied on our goodwill for too long. As a student nurse, I work 70 hour weeks. I love my job. I am seconded, and know that if it were not for this or the bursary being in place, there is no question that I would have stayed in my role as a band 4 HCA. Not for the "free degree". But because I resent having to work for free, and I can say, there has not been a shift in my training where I have felt super numerate. The staffing shortage is affecting us as much as anyone: our training is already compromised because of it, we are filling all the plugs in the system this government has created, and not even a thank you... No! Instead it's a reaction that has made an already demoralised work force become totally disillusioned. Mr Osbourne: I sincerely hope you never have to see first-hand how wonderful our NHS is. Should you ever become ill enough to see how caring we are, how compassionate, how amazing every single member is, you would feel disgusted at how you have treated us.



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## Aimee, Kent

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My bursary was enough to pay for my car tax, insurance and petrol each month. This allowed me to travel to my placements. I was a mature student with a previous degree and previous student debt. Due to the amount of work involved in a pre reg professional qualification it is difficult to work part time. I had a part time job which sometimes meant I worked 37.5 hours mon-fri, plus 2 hours travel a day to placement and home, then work 15-24 hours at the weekend to earn enough money to pay rent and feed myself. I also had assignments and revision on top of this. These courses take an immense amount of commitment! It was a difficult 3 years but my story isn't unusual. It was replicated across my cohort, some students having families to support as well!



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## Lesley, Macclesfield

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I have supported my daughter to do adult nursing as it is a calling not a career. She is in hospital 40 hours a week on placement why should she pay to help the NHS run. No other degree asks or expects you to work for free in the chosen field.



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## Alison, Edinburgh

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I am a 46 year-old mother of two children. Without a bursary, I would not have contemplated embarking on my nursing degree. Expect mature student numbers to fall steeply when this change is implemented. Many will have been earning and be willing to take a drop in income to do what they love, but to ask them to take on a loan when they have others to support will be a step too far.

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## Katie, Chester

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I don't have enough money to pay petrol or to get to or from my university or placement area without bursary! Let alone cover other costs in my life

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## Angharad, Ilkley

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From my experience a huge number of fellow student nurses, including myself are 'mature' students. Many of us have families to support and are undertaking the course later in life in comparison to many other degree courses. I feel as though changing the bursary to a loan will discourage many people from pursuing nursing. I believe that although many pursue nursing as a career because they want to make a difference; it also has to be financially conducive. I would find the amount of debt I would be in at the end of my studies would probably have affected my decision to undertake the course. Unfortunately a newly qualified nurses' wage in my opinion would not warrant the debt I would be left with at the end. I think this decision made is foolish and will heavily reduce the amount of future applicants wanting to become a nurse.

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## Clair, Wales

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I am a first year student nurse. I have 2 children a local authority house. Not many out goings and a 1lt car. I car share with 3 other student nurses and try my best to keep all costs to minimum. I am still working as a health care when I can but I am still struggling even with the bursary. I have been on placement the last 2 weeks and only managed to work one shift in between. I really have no idea how I would be able to pay my rent let alone food if I did not have my bursary payments. I am already accumulating debt and I'm only 3 months into my degree.

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## Nicole, Sheffield

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Every lecture and seminar I have attended this previous week at Sheffield Hallam university I have listened and discussed with fellow students and staff about the terrible consequences that will occur if the nursing student bursary disappears. A nursing degree is three years long and over them three years we spend half of that time in practice working alongside other health professions with the public tending to their needs with no payment except a bursary which is measured by our parents' wage. In my first year I had to travel an hour and a half to placement which makes 12 hour shifts into 15 hours, I knew I could be travelling when I chose this course however I would have the bursary to support me with costs. However if it was my cohort the bursary was getting axed from I would not be on this course along with my other colleagues in university. If I wasn't on this course that means the families and individuals who I have met being diagnosed with cancer, having major surgery and those who have lost loved ones wouldn't have had my shoulder to cry on or talk to in their time of need. There is no denying it an axe of the bursary shall result to no nurses, with an ageing population in the UK, and a rise of 1 million people with diagnosed dementia in the UK by 2025 WHO WILL CARE FOR THEM. This will be OUR parents and grandparents that shall have no one with the right education and compassion for them. I honestly am disgusted in even the thought of the bursary being axed and am ashamed how this government can think it's acceptable.

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## Vicky, York

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I would not have been able or chosen to study to be a mental health nurse without the bursary for the following reasons... I am a single mum and need support for childcare costs, I have debts from a previous degree, I am a mature student (33), I would not take on further debts which would be impossible to pay back, and would not be fair on my little girl.



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## Charity, Littlehampton

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I am a mother of 5 and having to pay for my fees will have a huge impact especially when I start placement I won't be able to keep with my bills for I won't have a paid job and my kids will be affected hugely they won't be able to go for school trips and other vocational trips and holidays as well. I'm still studying my foundation degree in nursing with the aim of proceeding to the nursing degree in 2018.



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## Ronaldo, London

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The bursary gives me a very helpful hand helping ends meet, such as transport, housing and university costs such as food, as living cost in an expensive city as London grows month to month. There are so short breaks in the academic year making very hard to gain extra work hours. Working more would be very detrimental to learning. I am very passionate about preparing my carrier as a Nurse, but it is sad that our government is stepping backwards in order to save the NHS. Failing the people that has the NHS at heart. I am proud student Nurse and without the bursary would be very difficult for me to continue the course.



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## Rebecca, Liverpool

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Being a mental health nurse means everything to me and is something I really love doing. I am also a service user and had to take a year out of my course after needing more treatment. If I had to pay for the course this would mean repeating the year and adding more debt which would cause stress and worry about paying back my fees in the future



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## Ashley, Manchester

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No one goes into nursing for the money but I certainly couldn't have gone back and done my degree as a mature student without my bursary. I work 37.5 Hours a week when I am on placement which is half of the year. While completing placement I also work shifts at my own job as my bursary only covers my rent, not any of my other living cost/bills. I also have academic work to complete while I am placement. Please don't read this and think I am complaining, far from it. I do all of this because I want to be a nurse! Yes I see what the government is proposing, that it will increase nursing staffing levels as more places will be available at universities. When I applied to universities for a place on a nursing degree I went through interviews, group interviews, English and maths tests and as I am now in my second year I feel I earned my place! I passed all my preliminary stages at university interviews which I worked hard for as well as completing my academic work to ensure I had the grades to meet my offers. Yes we may receive funding so there are limited places but I know that all my peers at university fought for their place on this degree over thousands of applicants. I would rather have a nurse look after me with that determination that has been specifically selected due to their suitability for the profession. Nursing is not a profession where all aspects can be taught in a classroom. No one can teach me how to be caring, kind and compassionate, How to hold someone's hand when they are dying and how to use my humour to give someone comfort. The government specifically George Osborne needs to increase the funding for student nurses so there are more places available, not cut it!



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### Lisa, Edinburgh

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I physically can't afford to live without my bursary. As a full time student nurse I get £500 a month plus working to try and survive. Busses, rent, food, books and equipment. My course is 50/50 split between tactical and theory. As student nurses we are used as extra staff when wards are short staffed which causes stress and it's essentially free labour. We save the health services money.



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### Gisela, Norwich

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I would never have been able to complete my nursing degree without the bursary. I have a part time job, and even with this, the bursary, and the student loan, I barely make ends meet. If I didn't have the bursary I would have had to work even more hours, and would never have been able to complete the degree. A lot of the student nurses with me on the course are in the same position.



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### Temí, Croydon

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The bursary motivated me in a great way to move ahead and get skilled in the healthcare sector whereby I am passionate in enabling wellbeing. I doubt I would have gone in for nursing training without the bursary. I would not have bothered as I already hold a degree in another field. I am also a matured student with children to feed. I definitely do not need a loan burden. Nursing requires concentration and devotion which almost rules out part time working that can help me pay for the training independently.



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### Chloe, Tameside

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I'm an access to HE nursing student and I'm too angry to state how I actually feel. I think it is disgusting when everyone works so hard for the greater good. I work full time and volunteer also whilst doing this course as do many others. It is unfair and not like any other degree when you do it mostly for your own benefits and outcomes. I'm sickened



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### Karen, Kendal

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I have undertaken both nursing training and an undergraduate degree course and they are completely different. During my degree I was able to hold down a permanent part time job while studying in order to pay my rent/bills etc. However, during my nursing training I was either in university or working on placements which meant that finding time to do other paid work was extremely difficult and frequently led to me working night shifts and weekends on top of full time placements, often working back to back shifts. Student nurses work extremely hard and contribute greatly to the efficient running of wards and departments. They work a full shift pattern including early, late and night shifts. They work for the bursary, it is not an unearned 'bonus' and to remove it is iniquitous. Also the earning potential of nurses is significantly less than that of the majority of other graduates, meaning that paying back student loans will take longer and have a huge impact on take-home earnings adding further financial burden to an already poorly paid workforce. I am currently paying back tuition fees and student loans so have first-hand experience of this. The reduction in my income has made it necessary for me to work extra shifts in order to cover my mortgage payments.



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## Jemma, Newcastle upon Tyne

I am in my second year of nursing and would find it incredibly difficult, financially without the bursary. I understand that these changes would make us the same as other students but what needs to be understood is that our degree part is the equivalent to normal degrees and our placement hours are extra. We are lucky to get 6 weeks holidays throughout the whole year as opposed to what normal students get, we are in university most days 9-5, or on placement full time (including weekends, nights and 13 hour shifts) on top of this we have our assignments so have to spend every spare bit of time in the library. This often has to come before time with our families and friends, because we have to pass each piece of work in order to progress. Evidence shows that many students who do degrees are left with no job at the end however, the world needs nurses, us students, are making a lifelong commitment as soon as we fill in that UCAS application. The beauty of nursing is that it attracts many different people of all ages, however, those who have given up a very good job to put themselves in a financial struggle to do nursing would often not be prepared to go into debt for that which would have a huge detrimental effect on the country's healthcare. Cutbacks need to be made to save the NHS however not by turning people away from nursing!



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## Natalie, Sheffield

Without it I wouldn't have been able to start the course, for me it still isn't enough for sustainable living as I get 420 a month and student housing and bills come to 400 a month, this is without food. My mum gives me help when she can but as a single parent she can't afford to look after my sister as well as me. I think there will be a huge loss of people taking part of the course which will further impact on the nursing shortage.



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## Kay, Devon

I feel scared for nursing. The NHS bursary was at times the only prompt I had to lift my head off the pillow and go to placement. For three years my life involved paid work at a hospice at the weekend, and an unpaid placement for the other 5 days. There were times when I would question "why work so hard, I'm not even being paid", but actually that NHS bursary reminded me that the NHS needed us. The students. The invisible work force. It allowed me to pay for my car, just to get to placement. It allowed me to relax about financing it, especially as I decided not to get the loan! Why is the government making nurse training so much harder than it needs to be? Without the bursary I think if I trained without the bursary, when I asked "what's the point" I would have left. The government should leave nurse training to the nurses.

## Heather, Scotland

I would have never been able to complete my course without the bursary. Not because of the thought of having debt at the end, however that certainly would have been something to give thought to because we already have to pay costly NMC fees and union fees just to do our jobs, something few other degree professions have to do! But the reason I couldn't have completed my course without the bursary is because even working on top of the placement and university hours, I struggled to make ends meet every month, I accrued debt even with a bursary. I don't know any students that didn't come down with stress related conditions at least once during their course. I certainly did multiple times. And I certainly don't know how students with families managed the extra financial and time pressures. Sometimes it feels like a big fight to achieve your goals and the government have just made that fight 10 times harder. Not only does their decision show a lack of compassion for the work that student nurses do, but it also shows a lack of foresight. What do the government plan to do about patient safety when student nurses and therefore qualified nurses numbers drop drastically as a result of their decision? I am just a newly qualified nurse but I am sickened by this decision and hope the government plan on holding their hands up and admitting to their mistake when things do start to go wrong in the NHS

## Ben, Bradford

I am now a third year student nurse. I would not have gone to university at all if it wasn't for the bursary system. I am now in my final year, on track to finish the degree with a first class, I have used my own time to set up death cafes in my local area, arranged a conference for other professionals to attend and am planning more things for this final year. None possible if I didn't have the bursary.

## Shannon, Keighley

The bursary has allowed me to go to uni. Without it I wouldn't have had the opportunity as many student nurses like me. I started uni following college and had never worked in care beforehand. I had no wage and no money from family to support me during my time at uni. I am dependant on the bursary. The bursary means I can travel to uni and travel to placements to get the vital experience, knowledge and understanding I need to be a nurse. Getting rid of the bursary scheme will mean a decrease in student nurses due to them being unable to survive financially. Without the bursary I would have never become a student nurse.

## Kelly, Bradford

I'm a mature student aged 38 and currently in my final year of nursing. I am also a single mum of two boys. At the time of applying for this course I was working part time as a HCA. It's worked out that the bursary was just short of the monthly wage that I was getting. This meant that going for the nursing degree was just about manageable. I understood that we received a bursary because the course is very demanding, we'd have less holidays than other students, and that we wouldn't have time to work. The lecturers also advised us not to work due to the fact that it would take time away from studying. I know for sure that I have not had any free time to work on top of studying. My fear is that someone out there in the same situation as I was, will not now follow their dream as they just won't be able to manage. Or they will go for it but drop out due to the pressures. Also who wants to come out of the other end with huge debts? I really hope that the decision to stop the bursary is overturned as I fear there will be many disheartened/frustrated HCAs, as well as people with a dream, that just won't be able to take the next step into nursing. Which would be such a shame and a loss to the NHS.



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## Sarah, London

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Children's nursing is my second degree and one I wouldn't have entered into without the financial support. Had I not been able to enter into this degree my life would not hold the value it now does.



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## Michaela, Gargrave

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I am a mature student nurse, currently in my second year. I almost cried when I heard the plans to scrap the bursary, for many reasons, it made me realise just how undervalued the NHS has become and how as a country we take this amazing service for granted. But it also made me think how many amazing potential nurses will not be able to train for a job they desperately want. Life as a student nurse is not like the life of any other student we don't go partying we don't start lectures at noon and we don't have student holidays! What we do is, work hard, study hard and witness every part of life in its rawest form, we cry when our patient die, we smile when they get better, we understand their frustrations when they abuse us we undergo a 3 year roller-coaster of emotions and meltdowns over placement hours V's assignment writing V's home life and we do it all in the professional manner that is expected of us! All of this makes it impossible to maintain a job at the same time, the only thing that makes it possible is the small bursary and the knowledge that we will not be £1000's in debt when we finally become Staff Nurses and the learning starts all over again. I feel sorry for all those who will now not be able to fulfil their dreams and I feel fearful of working in the future amidst a serious shortage of nurses.



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## Sam, Preston

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As a mature student on a postgraduate pre-registration nursing degree, finance was one of the factors that I needed to consider before accepting my place. The fact that I knew I would have to find a job, and work on placement, whilst studying at level 7 made me very anxious. But, so far, the bursary has been a lifesaver for me, as it meets my monthly rent. Leaving the salary from my job to pay for food, clothes and the like. Without the NHS bursary, it would almost be impossible for me to sustain a moderate quality of life whilst studying. This would have had an effect on my MSc degree. As it had an effect on my BSc when I struggled to make ends meet.



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## Louise, Hastings

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Without the bursary I would not have managed to survive financially. It gave me the opportunity to train as a nurse. I already have a degree and therefore had previous loans. Scrapping the bursary probably means that in the future people like myself would be excluded as we could not enrol as we would not qualify for another student loan? Apart from that, people with low incomes, such as single parents or people with have no savings to support themselves whilst training are excluded. This means only the rich or those without former academic qualifications can apply which is limiting. I am a third year student now and have struggled financially (with the bursary) but by my thinking of the long term goal and having the support of the bursary I have managed to keep going somehow. It isn't easy at all, placements can be hard work and are usually 32 hours a week. Then you have to study and work on assignments on top of this. If you have a family, your time becomes very precious. Therefore, working (paid work) is not always achievable. If you do work, you soon find out how exhausting it all becomes, especially by the third year.



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## Johannah, London

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Like many, I did not come into nursing in the heavily romanticised way. I had no drastic, weepy urge to help people; I had no altruistic desire to work long shifts and nights or be on my feet all day, tired and full of adrenaline. I fell into nursing. Purely because I had a skill set that matched an advert for a bursary in nursing and for me - it was a way out of a lifestyle without proper focus. It was never a job I sought out. I'm not unique, extraordinary or angelic. But I have become very good at what I do. When you dig beyond buzzwords and interview-speak, very few of the student nurses I encounter truthfully describe nursing as a deeply emotional calling. It may become one, but for many it doesn't start out that way. For many, they are just looking for security and direction - something that the bursary previously offered. 'Meaning', for me, is simply a remarkable by-product of any job that involves being useful within the darkest hours of the lives of others. For my level of responsibility and my place in society as a qualified nurse I know I am undervalued - but I know prospective students are heading for far worse. Nurses desperately need to shake off this hideously damaging misconception that we are unintellectual, subordinate angels that nod, smile and take anything that is thrown at us. We need to save the bursary because the point is - recruitment and retention within nursing is already an utterly terrifying problem. There are no two ways about it. People die because of problems like this.



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## Daniel, South East London

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I would not have taken the course if it were another £20k+ worth of debt to incur. To cut the bursary is ludicrous, student nurses are thrown into the NHS deep end as soon as their first placement a month into their studies, leaving less time for work that pays. If anything, the NHS bursary should be raised, to meet the ridiculous living standards of the UK at present.



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## Caroline, Heckmondwike

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I have worked in various administrative roles in the NHS since I finished university 8 years ago. I have wanted to become a midwife for a long time and feel like it is my true vocation. The certainty for me has strengthened even more after being the birth partner for my friend and after having my own children. I want to be there to help and support women through pregnancy, labour and postnatal care, and I know I would be good at it. I made this decision 4 years ago but it is not as simple for me as just starting a degree. I have two children I need to pay for childcare for and my wage is essential to our household income. I already have a degree in English, 3 A levels (not in science) and 10 GCSEs. The last two years I have applied to get onto the health professions foundation year which leads into a midwifery degree as it was funded by a bursary and at the time was the only option for me to not be in work and earning. I was unsuccessful as places were at a very high demand. They now no longer offer this course for Sept 2016 start. I have found an evening course at college to gain Health Professions access so that I can work during the day, which starts Sept 2016. This is a long way from where I work and live but I'm determined to do what it takes to get onto midwifery. I had the interview for this the day the news was confirmed about NHS bursaries. I have set up work experience placements in the hospital that I have done and have more set up for next year. I am devastated that stopping the bursaries could block my path to finally go to University in 2017. I already have a student loan and so at the moment I'm unable to get another one. I'm not sure how a loan would even cover tuition fees, £700 p/m childcare, petrol to and from uni and placements, and my family's monthly grocery bill! The debt I would be left in combined with my first degree would be astronomical! I know it would be impossible for me to work alongside a midwifery degree with all the hours of study, placements in the hospital and my own family commitments. I am however going to continue with my path for college and hope and pray for the best in 2017. I hope something changes and some kind of funding is put in place.



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## Lorraine, Aberdeen

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Student nurses are not meant to be counted in the ward numbers, but they are! They are expected to work as hard as the Nurse Assistants and Staff Nurses, they are expected to take an enormous amount of responsibility, are 'go fors', work weekends and night shift. Now it seems, this will all be for free. Another way for the Government to 'employ' cheap labour! Why not introduce Apprentice schemes for nurses, then they can go on and achieve Nursing Degrees at their own cost? Why poach from overseas, when we have a plethora of youngsters keen to be nurses? We are chronically short of nurses, those who can retire are retiring in their droves as nursing is so hard and so poorly paid. (I fully plan to retire soon, at the age of 55). This haemorrhage of skilled nurses leaves wards with poor skill mixes. That is why nurse agencies are flourishing, and will continue to do so. This Government is sinking and disabling the NHS.



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## Katherine, London

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I'm a second year Children's nursing student, I love what I do, and I am proud to do it. However, I'm not in the financial situation to pay for my own tuition fees or support myself through university without the NHS bursary. I know there are various loans available to help however I have no desire to live in some significant debt, upwards of £40,000. At a time when more British nurses are needed to put potential nurses off of the course is idiotic. There is always a need for nurses, do not underestimate what this change can do.



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## Georgina, Bristol

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I am now a newly qualified children's nurse and during my final placement as a student I needed to move to Gloucester for a duration of nearly 4 months. Throughout this time, with the cost of rent and travel to and from home, it ended up costing me £1710. Without the bursary payment, there is no way I would be able to afford to complete this final placement. This is only how much my final placement cost, throughout my training I had 5 placements, each requiring the use of public travel for a number of months (placements lasted between 2-4 months). The cut of the bursary will really stop future nurses from starting their training as it is unsafe for them to work full time jobs, as well as working full time hours during their placements.



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## Nastalia, KT6 6PS

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It seems difficult enough to attract people into nursing; what with the low wages, unsocial hours, and a difficult and challenging job, the last straw for me would be to have a debt at the end of it all. Nurses struggle to make ends meet as it is. I trained 30 years ago but I certainly would never consider doing so again. Whilst the job was immensely rewarding, at the end of the day I would consider the longer term consequences of trying to bring up a family in such difficult and low paid circumstances.



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## Brogan, Bristol

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I wouldn't have been able to afford to live, I wouldn't have been able to afford travel to placements. I wouldn't have been able to be a student nurse. That means less nurses qualifying, less nurses to care for people. Please think.



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## Jessica, Portsmouth

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I've always strived to be a nurse for the NHS to give something back to people. I qualify next year which would have been impossible without the bursary system. As I'm sure you know nursing students have two long placements per year working 37hrs a week. Each month I get £300. My rent is £400 without bills. For me I'd have nowhere to live if I did not work on top of my placements. I'm currently working a seven day week. Getting rid of this system is making it even harder for student nurses, where the NHS is stretched to the limit and poorly staffed. This will not encourage more nurses.



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## Carys, Cheltenham

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I am currently completing my degree in Children's Nursing. I would not even have been able to begin this course if I had not had the NHS bursary as support. I have not been able to work much due to the demands of the course and placements, and have a mortgage and bills to pay, as well as commuting almost 90 miles regularly to university and placement. I am single so have nobody else to rely on for money towards these things, and even with the small bursary, and very small allowance from SFE I have struggled to survive so far. If you take away this bursary, you will be preventing others from doing this course, and putting more pressure on an already strained nursing workforce.



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## Carinna, Chelmsford

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Without the NHS bursary I would never have been able to undertake my midwifery degree. I am a final year student midwife, with a mortgage and gave up full time work to undertake my training.



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## Eva, Bristol

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I am 38 years old, with a mortgage, 2 children and (thankfully) a husband who has shouldered most of our bills whilst I have completed my Adult Nurse training. Without the bursary there is no way I would have been able to embark on becoming a nurse. I received £270 per month, and this money contributed to my travelling to and from placements, buying academic material (books), and day to day living costs. My fellow students without a partner to support them relied upon their bursaries to pay housing costs, petrol and basics such as food. During placements we work at least 37.5 hours per week and although supernumerary, we are part of the nursing team, caring for patients with supervision. We work nights, weekends and lates, and do not receive any additional pay. During this time we also have academic assignments to complete, and practical learning outcomes to meet so that we can register with the NMC. Put simply, there are not enough hours in the day to also undertake paid work. Cutting the bursary is short sighted and dangerous. Many of the students on my course were mature, with a young family and simply couldn't have managed without it. I predict a sharp decline in applicants for nursing, and where does this leave the NHS in a few years' time, as older nurses begin to retire? There will be no nurses in the NHS to care for patients, and those who remain will become disillusioned and burnt out. I start my first nursing job in January and despite being passionate about nursing (having been a nursing assistant for many years), I am wondering if I have wasted the last few years, entering an organisation which seems to be a sitting duck for yet more cuts.



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## Georgina, Bristol

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I would not have been able to train to become a children's nurse without receiving a NHS funded bursary due to financial difficulties.



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## Emily, Bristol

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The suggested bursary changes are simply out of touch with the actual realities of a student nurse. We are expected and are very willing to take on the hard task of our training, traveling for placements, as well as trying to earn money for living on top of our 45+ hour weeks because we are dedicated and passionate about what we do. The entire of my NHS bursary goes towards rent for my accommodation, however this does not actually cover all of my rent, and I'm left over £100 short each month. To which I have the responsibility of working alongside my full time course. However, this is a struggle which I and many others are happy to take on. If the NHS bursary was to be changed, you will be adding on a massive and catastrophic burden to already extremely hard working individuals. The current bursary is a helping hand which is completely invaluable to student nurses all over the country. To remove this, you will not only be subjecting many students to greater and in some cases impossible hardships to carry on with their nursing training. With a course so intense that dropout rates are already higher than most other university courses, it seems absolutely irresponsible to make this change. Especially due to the high demand and shortage of nurses currently within the country. Let us carry on doing the best we can with an already difficult situation, do not take this opportunity away from many other potential and passionate nurses due to social-economical stances.



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## Amy, Castleford

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When undertaking the adult nursing NHS course, it currently results in students receiving a reduced loan from student finance, for myself this works out at 86 pounds a month. The NHS bursary may only give me 1000 a year, but this greatly impacts my monthly income to 168, enabling me to be minus 70 pounds per month in commuting to university (which I have to do as I cannot afford the 5900+ pounds per rent in Leeds for 9 months) as opposed to minus 140 pounds. Without the bursary, many of my fellow students would not be able to afford to get to university, let alone the countless placement sites.



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## Ffion, Cardiff

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If my nursing degree wasn't funded by a bursary I would not have been able to afford to train as a children's nurse. I wouldn't be able to fund myself financially either pre or post qualification and nor would my parents. My 3 year degree was financially difficult enough WITH my bursary and student loan due to expenses for placement and being in placement full time unpaid meant I couldn't take on much paid work to support myself financially. This change is insubstantial and will have devastating impact on the number of nurses in the future. We already know we need more qualified nurses so we should be making it easier to train not harder. The NHS will break under the strain if this goes through. #jeremyout

## Joanne, Newcastle upon Tyne

I am 34 years old and I am a single mother of two. I am coming to the end of my second year mental health nursing. Although this change will not affect me directly, I know how hard living off a bursary is, however I manage just. Without this I fear mature student like me will be put off applying, I know I wouldn't. Mature students bring so much to the nursing role, you can't teach life experience. My dream has always been to nurse and luckily I started at the right time, how many hopes and dreams and fantastic nurses will now never be!

## Brooke, Bradford

Without the NHS bursary, I would not have been able to even contemplate pursuing a career in nursing. With two children to support, a house to maintain and general living expenses, it would have been impossible to manage without this financial support. I would not have set out on this career change if it meant that I would be in much more debt from the loans company.

## Sarah, Nottingham

I am 25 years old, I previously studied for a degree in graphic design. Through personal experiences and a growing passion, I've been drawn into the health care career I never knew I wanted. I know I am going to work so hard and I have so much passion for mental health that I KNOW I am going to be the best mental health nurse I can be. If it weren't for the bursary there is no chance I would have been able to do this. I already have debts from my previous degree, why punish me for wanting to join such a caring profession? When I go out on placement, the bursary acts as a small payment for the hard work I am putting into my training. When you take that away, you're essentially telling students they should pay to work.

## Chloe, Newbury

It took me 2 years working as a healthcare assistant to finally pluck up the courage to take the plunge and enter into a full time degree. Why? Because I knew entering into a degree would leave myself and my family in an extremely difficult financial position. My mum is a single parent and relied on the contribution from my full time income to make ends meet. Despite this, my family still urged me to achieve my goals. The bursary I receive is based on a single parent's income, and I receive just enough to live on while in lecture, however travelling to placement means an added expense. My last placement was 20 miles away, that's a 40 mile round trip 5 days a week. If I did not receive a bursary, I would never be able to afford this amount of travel. Student nurses spend 50% of their time in placement, working a full time week. Additionally, we have a far longer academic year than other university courses. My decision to enter into a degree was hard enough, knowing that I was entitled to a bursary; I would never have entered into a nursing degree had I not been entitled to financial support. Becoming a nurse has lit a fire inside of me that I never knew existed, and to think there are individuals in this country, young and old, that will never have the privilege to experience such a rewarding, emotionally charged career that they were destined for, purely because of a decision made by people that have no experience or insight into a student nurses journey. Speak to any student nurse and ask them how they're doing financially, and their answer will never be "very well thank you", so why make it even worse for us? It takes a strong-willed, courageous individual to become a nurse; not many people will work 3 14.5 hour shifts a week for free, and still find time to complete the 5000 word essay due. If you want fully, safely staffed wards, do not expect there to be nurses filling those roles in the future. It's time we stood up for ourselves and got the recognition we deserve. The recognition that we are intelligent, qualified professionals that help save lives.



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## David, Cardiff

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Without the NHS student bursary I would be one of the many potential nurses who would be unable to afford to come to university and study nursing. It helps pay for my rent and bills and without it I would simply be unable to afford to come to university at all. By cutting the student bursary and tuition fee grants the government would be asking me to pay money for the privilege of working a 37.5 hour week when on placement as well as having to cover my living costs on top of that.



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## Debbie, Altrincham

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Nursing is a hard and demanding job, no perks, stress, give give give, increasing demands from all sectors - right from the word go - give student nurses a break! It is like no other degree - they work hard and you want them to pay to do this! The Conservative party does not deserve to be in charge of the NHS as it clearly undervalues its staff. Would you expect any other student to work in this environment, study, be deprived of long uni holidays, enter a career where clinical hands on progression remains unrewarded, where pay rises are a non-event etc. etc.? NO. In addition to this many students have to travel across great distances to attend placements under their own steam with no travel advantages. This decision is thoughtless and will discourage wonderful potential nurses from taking up this profession because of the financial strain you are imposing on them. Shame on you!



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## Jennifer, Nottingham

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I am a single mother of a 5 year old daughter, I started training when she was 2. I would never have started nursing school with the knowledge I would leave thousands of pounds in debt. It would never be an option to live with so much financial instability. I have missed birthdays, her first day of school, Christmas plays and ballet recitals, she has been told she cannot go to so many friends' parties because I have to work. Over the last 3 years, I have been asked countless times where she will be staying that night or who will pick her up from school, my childcare fees have been astronomical over the last 3 years which would amount to another huge debt. She has been dealt with so much so I can train for my dream job. This week I have 'worked' 40 hours on clinical placement I have held the hand of a dying man, wept with his wife and then went to the next person with a smile on my face. I have sat with a 25 year old lady who will not live to see Christmas and spent countless hours providing care to a lady with c-diff who was doubly incontinent. In my honest option it is not a bursary it is a wage I have earned, I have earned it through every second of everyday I spend on the ward with a smile and a tear. I and thousands of other hard working nursing students should not be considered free labour to save money for the government.



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## Magdalena, Coatbridge

As an 18 year old, straight out of Sixth Form College with a mixture of A Level subjects, I began my nursing degree in September 2013. I thought that I would be alright as I had a part time job, with a global retail company since I have turned 16. I have moved from Manchester to Glasgow, having the bursary and money from my retail job meant I was not in a too bad off. I had to pay £450 for my student accommodation rent but also eat, buy clothes and be able to socialise and make friends. Come January 2014, I have started my first placement - that's when my boss of the retail store needed me to work more hours due to the January sales, however I was unable to do so. At my placement I have been working long 12 hours shift also including weekends. Therefore, I have lost my job. After that I have struggled to find work as most potential employers were aware that I will not be able to work many hours if any, when on placements, which meant that they will have to accommodate me around everyone else - Which in fact, is time consuming and it's just easier to employ someone else. Therefore, I had to rely on my parents to support me, while I have lived in Glasgow. I felt a massive strain on me with having the bursary, never mind without it. I cannot even imagine how the Student Nurses who would be in my position would have coped, what if their parents would not be able to support them? Most people, including myself come in to nursing because they care and have compassion but also want to make a difference to someone's life. However we need to be able to have a life outside the clinical environment, so we don't burn out, before we even had the chance to call ourselves Staff Nurse.



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## Taylor, Nottingham

To be honest, even with the bursary, budgeting is a day to day struggle. The amount I get as maintenance loans does not even cover my rent let alone anything else. Please don't take this the wrong way, because if it weren't for the bursaries there is no way in hell I would ever have been able to afford to come to university. The idea that I do not have to pay back my tuition fees is a true life saver and means I have so much less stress after qualification. I am the first person in my family to come to university and we are not exactly in a great financial position. I think poor Mr. Hunt is under the disillusion that everybody has mommy dearest and daddy dearest giving their precious babies financial hand-outs which is simply not the case for most nurses. It pains me that there will be people in the future that have as much of a passion to do this career as I do who will simply not have the choice to.



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## Ruth, Nottingham

Without the bursary, there would have been absolutely no way I would have started doing a uni course, the bursary AND a loan only just cover my bills as it is, with me having to try and work as well as juggle everything else that uni throws at us. I know from being a health care on the wards that students are valued as a team member, and their presence makes it a slightly easier shift, so why shouldn't they get paid for it? The country needs nurses, and the people on my course as well as 99% of the nurses I have met are lovely people, who don't do this "for the money" but it sure helps! It isn't like the bursary is a massive amount to each person, and it already means tested so not everyone gets it, and some get less than others. Scrapping the bursary is going to cause a lot of potential nurses to not go to university, and means that the people who do are the ones who can afford it, meaning potentially some of the best nurses are going to slip through the net and not get to where they should be because a loan is not a feasible option for them.



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## Katie, Edinburgh

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My younger brother, Rory, was diagnosed with Hypo-plastic Left Heart Syndrome (HLHS), or in simpler terms, he was born with half a heart. This had a devastating impact on my family. Back and forth to hospitals it was understandably stressful and upsetting. Rory spent 6 weeks in Birmingham Childrens Hospital at the age of 5 years old, after his third open heart surgery. Whilst over to visit, at the age of 8, I met some of the most inspirational nurses. They were always kind and cheery, and made Rory feel as safe and comfortable as he possibly could. I spent days on the ward wearing the nurses' pinnys (that were far too big for me!) and I was so in awe of these seemingly magical women who could make Rory feel better nearly as soon as they walked into the room. Rory is my best friend and I so wanted him to have that effect on him as well. The nurses also took care of me, giving me and Rory ice lollies, giving us toys we could play with together and this has really emphasised the importance of caring for the wider family of a patient. 11 years on I am now a second year student nurse, striving to hopefully be one of these 'magical women' that clearly had a profound effect on me at my young age. In my first year placement, on a respiratory ward a young patient told me about how they felt safe and protected whilst I was caring for them and requested that I carried out all of their personal care during their stay in the hospital. Although this may seem like a small thing to somebody else, to me, as a first year student nurse, this was such a proud achievement. I had made a patient feel safe and respected, just like the nurses made Rory feel safe and respected. The nurses that treated Rory are my inspiration to this day, and Rory is my motivator, who keeps me going throughout my training. Thank you to those amazing nurses for caring for my younger brother and inspiring me to be involved in the best profession in my eyes. Rory is a strong and happy young man, and it's all because how kind those nurses were to him and my family.



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## Sally, Belfast

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I am a third year student nurse, 50% of our degree is spent in clinical placement, during this time I work unsociable hours, night shifts long days, I rarely get to see my friends and find it hard to have a social life, time not spent in placement is usually spent studying. I work the same hours as a fully qualified nurse, and as I progress in my studies am increasingly caring for patients independently doing the job of another nurse. I work through the summer trying to complete assignments while on placements. Due to being constantly in and out of placement it makes holding down a part time job pretty hard no matter the fact I'm already working 37.5 hours per week and as a result am always tired. I pay for my travel to and from placements which can be anywhere and also for my parking every day. I am unable to claim both costs back and rarely get back any expenses no matter the amount I actually paid. We put in a lot of work and help the public, I think that removal of the nursery and introduction of loans will discourage potential nurses from starting the degree and make it that much harder for those who go ahead anyway. Without my bursary, I would have no chance of paying for my accommodation and grocery's and with little opportunity to earn money and the lack of sleep it would cause to get a part time job I know my studies would suffer as a result, impacting on the calibre of nursing students produced and the quality of care provided to the public.



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## Student nurse, Glasgow

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I believe that a significant number of student nurses chose nursing because of the bursary. Often students fresh from college have chosen nursing because they know at the end they will have a guaranteed job and no student debt to hold them back. They already know they have the right kind of personality to care for people and the bursary will help them to go to university especially if they are from a deprived back round. This makes the bursaries a vital incentive to attract talent to the nursing community, though the recent government plans to replace the grant with a loan will put many of these potential nurses off. The majority of mature students such as myself have given up full time work, often as a care assistant in order to better themselves and become a nurse, the bursary acts as an aid to replace some of the lost income. The bursary of £506 a month is still very small when compared to a normal pay check of £800- £1100 in a month depending on how much overtime is worked. Many student nurses have families to support and they struggle to cover the costs of childcare alone with the bursary and the money provided by university to help subsidise childcare. If the bursary was changed to a loan many of my fellow nursing students would not have been able to start the course. These mature student nurses are vital to the training of new nurses as their experience as a care assistant proves invaluable during training as they can assist any students who are fresh from college with no nursing back round. Student nurses do not have the luxury of working and studying like other students because when they are on placement they are already working full time hours for free, this makes having a part time job with a small contract hard to manage. Student nurses also don't have the long summer holidays that other students do, most will be out on placement while other students can work to earn money to help with next year's expenses, student nurses do not get this opportunity and so must instead rely on the aforementioned £506 a month to live off. The government seems

to think that by changing the bursary to a grant will save money and thus allow them to pay for more nurses to be trained. This is a good theory but in practice I know half of my cohort would not be here without the bursary. What good is making more places if the places you already have can't be filled? The only way to fill them would be to lower the entry requirements which could lead to a skills gap as the high quality nurses are replaced in an effort to get quantity instead of quality. This will lead to an increased risk to patient safety as the standard of nurses on our wards slumps and moral of the NHS plummets leading more of our talent to go overseas to seek work.



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## Alex, Nottingham

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My rent for this year is over £4k. That was the cheapest accommodation I could find. My student loan alongside my bursary is £3k. I am discouraged from working because I cannot commit due to having to do the required 4300 hours of theory and practise. My weekly food costs is £15, included toiletries and a social life, probably £30 a week altogether. If you do the maths, I don't have enough money. My dad is a senior officer in the RAF. My mum works part time on minimum wage. They have a mortgage to pay, two cars to run and they have another child who they need to support. My parents cannot afford to give me the £3k that the NHS bursary team seem to think that they will. Student nurses are struggling financially.

50% of our course involves us working as supernumerary NHS staff which we don't get paid for- I said that having my tuition fees paid for by the NHS was payment for placement work. Student nurses need all the support they can get. This course is financially draining and the government should be supporting us. You cannot say that there is a shortage of nurses and then refuse to assist with the training of them.

### **Sophie, Manchester**

I completed my degree in adult nursing in 2014. Due to a previous degree I was not eligible for a student loan. The bursary was the only financial help I was entitled to, and as I lived with my parents this was means tested. I could not have managed on my bursary alone, the maximum I think I received was approx. £130 a month in my first year, this subsequently decreased in second and third year. I love nursing but had to balance university with full time placements as well as supplementing my bursary by working part-time in a number of different ways: in a nursing home, as a community home carer and for NHS professionals staff bank. Receiving some bursary took some financial pressure off me though as it helped to fund travel costs and parking costs. Without the student bursary I don't think I would have been able to complete my nurse training. The vast majority of my nursing cohort struggled financially and similarly had to work to supplement the bursary. Unfortunately our profession is at risk of losing future nurses because they will not be able to manage financially. The NHS and its nurses are already under enough pressure, cutting the bursary will only increase this pressure in the future due to a lack of a new generation of nurses.

### **Rebecca, Banbury**

Without the bursary, I could not afford to study the degree. My husband works full time to support us and the bursary pays some of my childcare costs, which I need to use in order to manage on placement and in study. I also need to work part time to currently manage these costs. My husband would not let me take on huge debt for ultimately what is my wish to nurse and care, that's not what would be best for our family. It's hard enough already. Don't add £50k debt of extra hardship to it.

### **Gemma, Kingston**

It has always been my dream to be a nurse however I didn't think I would be able to afford to go to university to complete my training, finding out I could revive an NHS bursary to help with funding at university drove me to study and gave me that extra incentive to attend university. I am now a second year student nurse studying in London and even with the NHS bursary I hold two casual jobs to support myself and have to juggle working those roles whilst in placement working 37.5hour weeks and during weeks in lectures. Getting rid of the NHS bursary may create more places at university for nurses however that is pointless if students financially can't go on the course due to the abolishment of the bursary.

### **Jenny, Belfast**

I would not have been able to train as a MH nurse if there was no bursary. I am already in debt from a previous degree and I just would not have been able to afford more student loans. I think that this decision is sad - that the current government do not recognise the vocational side to nursing.



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## Zoe, London

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When I trained (2006-2009), I was either in University Mon-Fri, 9-5 or on placement doing full-time clinical hours. Despite having bursaries, to pay my rent and other bills I also worked on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and then all day Saturdays and Sundays (not during clinical placement). This I did whilst also completing essays or revising for exams. Our holidays were approx. ten days at Christmas and Easter, then 3-4 weeks during the summer in the first two years, with no summer break in the third year as you are on your final management placement. Thus leaving you little time to earn money in other ways. Plus you would also be badly needing a break anyway in these holidays or need the time to study! Without the bursaries I would not be a nurse. Six years on, I am a fully qualified Critical Care Junior Sister, and Respiratory Research Nurse. I can honestly say the only reason I do this job, put up with the poor working conditions of the NHS and push myself to my limits emotionally, physically and mentally is because I want to help people. The question is was paying for my fees too much, was I worth the Tax-Payers' expense? Because they are saying people like me aren't worth it



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## Karen, Medway

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As it is I am struggling to afford childcare, getting to placement and university. If I need to take a loan to pay for my studies I might have to quit the course. I would also expect to be paid for my time whilst I am on placement as we are not able to work as much as other students.



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## Sarah, Swindon

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I would not have been able to consider nursing as an option without the support of paid tuition and the bursary. I am a mature student and as such taking on debt which results in loss of income, is not as manageable as finances are already tight. I work extremely hard and unfortunately much of my time on placements is used plugging the gaps of staff shortages and capturing skills as and when I can. If we are expected to view this degree in terms of buyer/consumer, I expect more. More choice, better quality training, more time for study within clinical areas. I wanted to be valued more. Nurses are important they represent the largest work force in the NHS, we are trying to become better at what we do. Nurses do it for the love and not the money but we should not be made to work for debt and that is what is happening on the back of these proposals.



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## Angela, Manchester

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I'm a student parent, we already have debt that links to our mortgage and two children to support. We're like the unpaid workforce as student nurses we do our hours and we work hard. I've been on placements first-hand and heard several stories from peers where due to staff shortages students make up the majority of the workforce often sacrificing our supernumerary role. If students are to pay to take on this role then the government needs to address the current situation ensuring all students are supernumerary and are missing out on valuable opportunities otherwise if we are expected to make up the workforce as is now then students should be appropriately paid for it! At least the bursary was somewhat compensating for our hard work! I think the bursary changes will affect student parents hardest of all. I know I would have felt unable to take on a degree knowing that when qualified I'd have over £30,000 worth of student debt. The NHS will miss out on valuable nurses.



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## Bethany, Sheffield

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I have always wanted to become a nurse but always worried I wouldn't be able to go to university due to funding until I found out about the bursary. I am now a third year student children's nurse thanks to the financial help the bursary provided me throughout the course and placement. If it wasn't for the bursary I would not have been able to come to university as it would be difficult to work enough hours to fund my rent, living costs and placement travel costs. I think cutting the bursary is a bad idea as students may not be able to afford to study and the course makes it difficult to work when doing 40 hours a week of placement, university study and time for writing assignments.



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## Amy, Manchester

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I started nursing later after already completing a degree, there is no way I could have started my nurse training (and I say training rather than just degree as this course is so much more) without a bursary to help pay rent, buy food and support travel to various hospitals and care settings. If I had had to take a loan I wouldn't now be a nurse, simple as that. Being a student nurse means working long busy shifts, travelling and its costs without a salary and coming home to usual student essays, research and reading. Supporting nursing students is vital, not an option.



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## Kirsty, Greater Manchester

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I would not have been able to support my family financially and complete the course. It's already tight with the bursary and working a zero hours contract as and when I can



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## Jasmine, Brighton

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In a previous life I did a fashion degree. I was 18, immature and thought that was the career for me. I emerged from that degree confused, with £18000 worth of student loan debt and no career prospects (the recession had hit). After some soul searching and plenty of jobs I finally took the brave leap and applied for a degree in mental health nursing. So far, so good, my placements have been fantastic and I have met so many inspiring people. However, I cannot deny the bursary was a persuasive factor in deciding to take the plunge, it was, however not for the reasons many may think. I currently live in Brighton with my partner, where you are hard pushed to find accommodation for less than £750 a month (plus bills). The course often expects you to be on placement/at university 32 hours per week, with time also allocated for independent study and the multiple assignments we must work on. Therefore my bursary of £450 provides me with just enough to pay my rent and some of my bills. I also work weekends at a cafe so I am able to top up my bursary. Therefore, I can honestly say that had the bursary not been on offer, I may have thought twice about applying for this course. However, I do not think any of my mentors, lecturers or service users would question my integrity or passion for the job. I believe that it is clear that over £30000 worth of debt before the age of 30 is not particularly appealing to the most dedicated of nursing students! The Government's "excuse" for demolishing the bursary was to allow universities the opportunity to take on more students, therefore increasing the amount of home grown nurses. This will never work as there is not enough placements or mentors on offer as it is. It is reasons such as this that it is clear to me the government have no idea what this course entails. If they would like to learn more, they are more than welcome to call me for a chat!



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## Jordan, London

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I'm a 3rd year student nurse and also a student ambassador for my university. This means that I visit many schools and colleges encouraging young people to go to university. For many people I meet it is the fact that a bursary is available to nursing students that allows them to apply for nursing in the first place.



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## Linda, Derby

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I think that the tuition fees still should be funded, because nursing students attend 37.5 hours a week on placements, I do not think it is fair that nursing students go into debt and work for free, therefore there needs to be a compromise to keep nursing an attractive field of study, however I welcome the student loan idea as it is more money. But I am wondering, how will nursing be more attractive when people apply for student loans and have a 60k debt at the end of their education? What is the rationale here? And what are they doing with the savings? "The Department of Health currently spends £826m a year to help fund about 60,000 student nurses in England through their three-year degree courses. That £826m comes from the £5bn a year the department gives to Health Education England (HEE), the NHS education and training body, which distributes the money to student nurses." (Guardian from 21.11.15) That saving hopefully goes to pay rises for nurses, right? Because if MPs raise their salary a whopping 13 per cent I do not know why we need to budget and stand on the street to beg for a lousy 1 per cent pay rise. I think one of the 6 C's stood for courage and I would say we should have the courage to ask for 13 per cent pay rise especially if they plan saving all the money above for student nurse education. The savings need to go into the salaries, because starting off with an approx. 60k debt demands a good starting salary!! A really strange way to address nursing shortages.....



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## George, Edinburgh

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Without the bursary (at the higher rate for graduates and mature students) there is no way I could have managed to do my nursing course. I was renting a one bedroom flat and with the council tax exemption, living very frugally and minimal additional work, I got through my course. It was enough, but only just. In fact, I probably used a bit of my savings too. I already had a degree and an associated student debt. A fellow student was very stressed, running a car and working extra hours. Far from introducing student nurse debt, it should go the other way, with national insurance and pension contributions.



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## Sarah, Manchester

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I appreciate the bursary I get but I still have to have a part time job to make ends meet. I honestly don't know what I'd do if my bursary got taken away, there isn't hours in the week for me to work anymore on top of placement and uni work, and we are entitled to some semblance of a social life every now and then as well! I think it's ridiculous to expect people to pay to work for free, which is what we will be doing if these changes come into action. This isn't fair for future nurses and I think it will drastically affect the number of people that go into nursing, given that many have already done degrees in the past and may not be able to get funding now because of that. Low low move by our government.



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## Jackie, Manchester

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I am currently doing a masters in advanced practice. I was a single parent working in MacDonald's before I started my nurse education. Without the bursary system I could never have gone to university.

## Kerry, Lincoln

Without a bursary there is no way I would be able to complete this degree. I have wanted to be a nurse for all of my life and would have to give up on my dream of becoming a nurse. I am 37 with two children, completing a degree and placement hours takes its toll on finances and effects my whole family. To end up in tens of thousands of pounds of debt to go into an underpaid, overworked profession would just not be an option, no matter how much I aspire to be a nurse I cannot afford to put that sort of pressure on my family. It is hard enough as it is with the current bursary and loan.

## Hannah, Somerset

I feel that nursing pay is 100% not worth being in all that debt, the only way it would appeal to students now they have to take out a loan is if the nursing wages go up! The bursary just about covers travelling expenses to and from uni, and to and from placement there's no way I would have made it into my second year of my degree without the bursary, they expect you not to work alongside placement as well, how do the government actually expect us to live it's outrageous, if they're going to make students take a loan or at least accommodate it with a pay rise for nurses, why would a career of rubbish pay, huge debts, long hours and unappreciated by our own government be appealing to anyone! The worst choice for the NHS by far considering it's already in jeopardy!

## Tay, Scotland

I originally had my mind set on studying Psychology, which I partook in for two years before coming to the conclusion that it wasn't as rewarding or practical as I had wanted. I always wanted to be a doctor when I was younger (but I never got Chemistry at school) so I decided my aim was for nursing - it's always been my passion working with people. I decided that going to uni again straight away wasn't for me so I am taking a HNC course at college - a course which I am paying for through student loans as SAAS will not pay for less than what I've already done. I didn't mind as much as I knew this would only be for one year before I got to uni and had the bursary to help. Now I hear this has come in and I am quite angry and disappointed. I am a young girl so I don't have any responsibilities, but I have college two days and placement two days and for me to be able to survive financially, that one shift a week I do at my care assistant job would turn to three. Where is my time to study, switch off, eat or even wash? I would be physically and emotionally burnt out as many other people in my position would tell you! There's always a complaint that patients aren't getting seen or waiting times are too long or the NHS is in meltdown, and then blame the fact there's not enough nurses. Do the government think for one minute this is going to increase the intake of university nursing students? I already have debt from my last course, and now I'll be put in even more. It's alright if you're Mr David Cameron who doesn't need to worry about his money troubles because he's living the high life, but what about people, like myself, living above the poverty line and no more, struggling to have ends meet? I'm trying to get into nursing and do something good because I genuinely love people, however how am I meant to focus on my duty if all I worry about is the £30K debt I'll be landed with? I'm panicking already. It's high time they cut things that didn't need as much support or funding - I don't know, maybe the £46 of MY tax that went to foreign aid compared to just £15 for education? Just a thought.



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## Jessica, Woburn Sands

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I started training as a nurse aged 32. I already had a degree and had spent over 10 years building up a successful career in London, with an annual package worth over £40k. I had a nice home (albeit rented), a good disposable income and plans to buy a house and start a family with my then partner. But something was missing. I wanted to be in a profession in which I was directly helping people, I wanted to be a nurse. That dream trumped all of the others. I gave up my career, I left my home, I moved back in with my parents so I could follow my dream of becoming a nurse. I don't regret any of this for one moment. My peers may be buying houses, having babies and getting promotions but I am doing something I love, something I am good at and helping others in the process. The bursary and absence of tuition fees has made this possible. Without it I couldn't have done the training. I couldn't have made any more sacrifices, there was nothing else left to give up. The majority of student nurses are mature students. My story is just one of thousands. If the proposed bursary cut goes ahead the profession will not gain, as Mr Hunt suggests, thousands of nurses but lose out on tens of thousands of very good ones. It is closing the path off to mature students. It is closing the path off to students from poorer backgrounds. It becomes an elitist career. And it loses the fantastically varied demographic that is the current nursing workforce. Nursing is not like any other profession and it is not like any other degree. It is full time, full on and full commitment from day one. Wealthy 18 year olds may make good nurses but those of us with life experience can make damned brilliant nurses. But without the bursary we won't. We won't get to train, patients won't get to receive our care. Everyone loses. It's a senseless decision. It's a senseless decision unless the person making the decision has shares in private medical companies, can afford private medical care and his family is alright. But that just sounds far-fetched and not the sort of thing that would happen in a modern democratic society surely?



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## James, Stirling

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I became a nursing student in 2002. I was 30yrs old and gave up a well-paid job in the chemical industry to become a nurse. I still had a mortgage and bills to pay. If there had been no bursary available undertaking a nursing degree would have been impossible for me. The demands of your clinical practice make it extremely difficult to work elsewhere and make enough money to have any kind of life and have time to live it! Removing the bursary will deter mature students with life skills and experience that help enormously in nursing from being able to follow this path as feeding their family and paying their mortgage will be impossible without running up debt that they will find themselves saddled with way into retirement.



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## Bethany, South Devon

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I am a post graduate student so already have debt from my 1st degree, I realised too late that the degree was the wrong choice for me but soon found my calling to nursing. If it wasn't for the NHS bursary I wouldn't have been able to afford to go back to university and train to be a nurse. I get so many lovely compliments from my patients and they value what we as students do whilst on placement, unfortunately so many of us wouldn't be able to attend if the bursaries were cut and this would mean you would have less and less British nurses caring for the people of Britain. I hope for future nurses that this does not go ahead as we would be missing out on so many wonderful nurses who just wouldn't be able to afford to train if it was scrapped.

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## Angela, London

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I am a HCSW Band 3, which I have been for the past 12 years (16 years NHS service). I have graduated with a Foundation Degree in Long-term Conditions and a Diploma in Leg Ulcer Management in 2010. We were told that there will jobs created for Band 4 assistant practitioners in the community, however I do work in the community but now this does not apply according to my Trust and CTL as the government has changed the gateposts. For the last five years I have been working on a higher level and I am expected to do this as well, but without any reward for my skills and competencies. I feel very demoralised.

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## Sharna, Birmingham

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From the bursary, I get just over £400 per month. My rent is £320pcm without bills so you can imagine how much I have left after bills and everyday expenses. I don't have children and I do not drive so I do not have half the expenses that most people on my course do have. I have a bank position which helps with my income when I am not on placement but when I am on placement working is impossible especially when you have exams to revise for as well. Basically with the little amount we do get (which works out as just over £2 an hour whilst on placement) nursing is already a huge struggle financially but to take it away completely or make us pay this back is just unbelievable. The government should be finding ways to attract the 100s of people I have seen whom have said "I would be a nurse but financially ...", and they wonder why there is a shortage?! Just makes us feel undervalued even before we have started our careers.

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## Gillian, Gloucester

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To begin with I would never have started my course because I was 32 by the time I settled down (after 17 years of travelling the world and working in literally hundreds of different healthcare settings for agencies and NGOs abroad). I got married at the start of my 2nd year, and accidentally fell pregnant later that year - I could NOT have continued my studies had it not been for the bursary with a baby on the way. I'm now qualified working in Theatre Recovery, with an amazing two and a half year old and this June we bought our first home, which could not possibly have happened with more than £30,000 debt on £21,000 a year (£17,000 now as I've dropped my hours slightly to spend time with my son). I love my job, I love my life. The bursary has been an integral part of that. Thank you.

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## Emma, Ilford

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Without the bursary I wouldn't be able to do my course. For me, the unpaid hours is exhausting and a struggle but as this is my second degree I wouldn't be able to get any funding for my tuition, meaning I wouldn't be able to qualify as a nurse.

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## Laura, Barnsley

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I am a mature student. I would have been unable to complete the degree to this point without a bursary. My last placement I was travelling 70 miles a day and a lot of the weekly cost of petrol is still sat on a credit card waiting for some reimbursement from my travel claims. I love every minute of what I am doing I've laughed and I've cried. I've been hugged and I've been screamed at. I've worked every shift that a paid nurse works. I'm not sure that I would have done this if I had to pay to do it. That thought makes me very very sad as I feel privileged to be entering the profession.

## Rachel, Reading

I worked in the NHS as a HCA for 13 years. I finally decided it was time for me to start my nurse training as my children are now all at school. I have been filling out my application for me to start my train gets September 2016. I no longer think I will be able to do my training as I can't afford to if I have to take out a student loan. It's hard enough to be a student nurse as it is as when on placement there is no way of maintaining a part time job like you can with any other degree. This is a heartbreaking decision for me as being a nurse was my dream. I guess I will just have to find a different dream now.

## Dianne, Tyne and Wear

Can't believe this is happening at a time when many nurses are leaving the profession! Who's going to fill their shoes? They haven't thought this through. Many mature students have a home and family to provide for therefore can't afford the added debt. This is crazy

## Charlie, Leicester

The bursary is the only financial income for most students to live off. We move away from home to study and now you want to take away the only financial source we have to do this. We're going backwards to the time when you had to be from a well off family to go to university. The job comes with enough strain and now you want to add a financial one to the mix. It will deter future nurses to study and we will have a shortage of nurses in the country and the government will only have themselves to blame.

## Katie, Barnsley

When I qualify from my nursing degree I will be 28 I would not have considered starting this course if I knew I would have a massive debt to repay whilst working to save money to buy a house and start a family, goals that many people in their 30s are likely to want to achieve. Nursing is a difficult job and there is already an issue with nurse wages, having those wages and a student loan repayment would make my future even more stressful than it is already going to be in such a high pressured job. I have already taken out a small student loan alongside my bursary and work a part time job just to be able to afford rent, bills, travel and day to day expenses, no bursary would have made this past year unliveable.

## Esther, Leighton Buzzard

Without my bursary I would not have completed (or maybe even started) my nursing degree. I was not entitled to a student loan due to having completed a previous degree. I moved back in with my parents and lived solely on my £280 monthly bursary. I worked full time hours on placement completely unpaid. I then supplemented my income by working shifts in a call centre. Often I worked weeks without a day off for socialising or study. Some days I drove to placement with my petrol light on or held my breath while paying for things on my card, knowing the possibility my payment would be declined was high. On top of that a nursing degree is very emotionally taxing and stressful, I came close to quitting many times because I couldn't see a way through. My bursary was quite literally my lifeline, it was my food and it was my petrol. Without a bursary I would not be a nurse now. If the government thinks hospitals are understaffed now, just wait to see the effect of taking the bursaries away. Nurses are necessary, without them people will suffer. Becoming a nurse is difficult already and now you've made it harder. Well done.



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## Nicole, Cardiff

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During the first 8 months of starting university, my bursary did not cover the cost of my student accommodation. Due to this, I had a part-time job to supplement my bursary to be able to feed myself, working anything from 12-22 hours per week on top of studying full-time. My first placement was in a community setting - so Monday to Friday - and with working on weekends, I became very close to a mental breakdown and put my health in jeopardy. I went weeks without a single day off because I couldn't financially afford to miss work and I couldn't afford to miss any placement hours. However, without a bursary I would have been much worse off. Currently, I receive £384 per month from my bursary - this has to pay for rent, bills and living. The maintenance grant is only £800 per three months, and knowing that this could be changed to loans only terrifies me. If the bursary was not in place, I would not be able to cope. In fact, if the bursary did not exist then I would not be able to survive doing this course. A course that I am absolutely besotted by that will launch me into a career that I cannot wait to begin. Taking away the bursary will leave many of those unable to afford the debt unable to become qualified nurses. It is horrifying that a profession that is already struggling with lack of staff will be paying the price, because God knows the Government won't be there on the wards getting their hands dirty.



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## Nancy, Scotland

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As a mature student who is now qualified I would have been unable to embark on my chosen career due to financial responsibilities and my family. Childcare for clinical placements had already left me in debt prior to qualifying. The real time cut on our wages has had a negative impact without the addition of a massive debt to pay on top thus again reducing the living wage. Many students already have incurred student loans to achieve access to apply for nursing, some already have 3 years' worth before they start by using the access courses/NC/HNC routes therefore they would have 6 yrs of debts to pay, which would reduce the numbers using these routes. The nursing course is not a normal academic year reducing the ability of students to also have jobs during extended holidays to balance their finances, or the normal "office" hours thus excluding evening work. It will be the only course in the country where placements account for 50% of the course at 37.5 hours per week i.e. working for nothing. That is less than any other benefit or work placement remuneration and amounts to slave labour. Student Nurses are integral to our teams at a time when staffing shortages are incredibly high and budgets strained and whether we admit it or not are essential in maintaining the safety of our patients. I predict a large reduction in admission applications that the government will only have themselves to blame for but it will be frontline staff, patients and students who will suffer.



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## Eloise, Chester Street

Dear Mr George Osborne, if you think that the NHS crisis will thank you for this think again. Do you truly believe people are going to actually PAY to put themselves through 12.5 hour shifts and 37.5 hours a week, break their backs moving patients, get covered in the blood, vomit, urine, poo and other body fluids of perfect strangers, skipping your breaks because your extra hands are so needed, whilst dragging yourself home to complete the amount of essays and work required for a full time degree? Do you think the pay is worth the while at the end of the day? It's not. Do you think nurses aren't valuable enough to train up whilst the NHS is at breaking point and the current nurses are not getting breaks working up to five 12-hour shifts in a row and morale is no longer there? You obviously have absolutely no idea about what it is like to be a student nurse and the fact we care for hundreds of patients during our degree for FREE, trust me George you get your money's worth out of us. I wish you the very best with training up future nurses, they may start the course out of naiveté but I bet my hat the dropout rate will be huge, as people realise they don't want to pay to push their mind and body to breakdown point. I wish you the very best George with all this, I'm sure you know what you're doing. Personally I think you're an idiot.



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## Katie, Manchester

Had I started the nursing degree course after these changes I feel that I would not have been able to do nursing. I came into nursing straight from college, with no savings, and am living with parents and younger siblings on a single low income household. With bursary and student loans I have been able to pay rent to help my parents out, however WITH the bursary my rent has had to be reduced as it didn't leave me enough to travel for study and placement, or for essentials like books, nursing shoes, stationary etc. The student loans only pay nursing student as if their academic year ends in May, when in fact most of us finish at the end of July or August. Currently with the bursary these months are just about covered, without the bursary these months would be penniless, leaving me unable to travel to study and placement. The bursary is a small compensation considering that nursing students actually work 37.5 hours a week with their studies.



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## Lindsey, Coventry

I am married with 3 children and have just started the second year of my adult nursing degree. I gave up a full time job to do this. The bursary I receive is less than the wages I previously earned. In September my husband was made redundant, he cannot claim Jobseeker's Allowance unless we put in a joint claim, but my course means I cannot fulfil my side of the claim. We are now living off my bursary and we are struggling. If I didn't have a bursary there's no way I could continue with the course. Even without my husband's unemployment I could not do this course without a bursary. On placement I am expected to work 40 hours a week unpaid. In addition I have to pay for parking (around £350 per placement) as well as petrol for a commute that could be an hour's drive each way. My bursary ensures I can do this. I love nursing and I'm glad I have the opportunity to do it. Please don't remove that opportunity from future student nurses.



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## Laura, Dewsbury

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I am starting a nursing postgraduate in 2017/18 and I already have £27,000 worth of debt from tuition fees alone from my psychology undergraduate course. Due to this, I will be seriously reconsidering my options and do not see nursing as something financially viable for me to enter into. Such a shame!



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## Sara, Cornwall

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I am a nurse and qualified in 2006, my husband is a veteran and is now a nursing student started sept 2009. We are surviving on my wage and the bursary. Without this my husband would not be able to undertake his training and he would never be a qualified nurse in which he is meant for after many years of working as a medical assistant within the armed forces. We both have to work extra shifts in order to survive, I have no idea how we are going to survive like this for 3 years?? This is detrimental to the NHS as no one is ever going to put themselves into so much debt to become a nurse, our profession won't survive this!



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## Michelle, Salford

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I may possibly still have entered upon my nursing degree course when I was younger (I am a mature student of 42) and with less responsibilities without the option of receiving a bursary and having to fund the course with loans, however I now have a family and a lot more responsibilities which means that had I have to repay a larger debt due to loans, and the relatively low starting wage of nurses, I would be unable to even consider this possibility now.



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## Jennifer, Manchester

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I moved out of my parental home at 18, I come from a single parent family and have a younger brother so relying on funding from my Mum wasn't an option. I initially started studying psychology knowing I wanted to work with people and I loved science, but the prospect of loans and fighting for funding for years to come put me off and I started looking for alternative careers. When I found out that the nursing course was funded I jumped at the chance, and I haven't been disappointed, it's the career I've always wanted but I'd never have considered it. Over the years I've worked long shifts, travelled up to three hours a day on buses and trains or cycled in all weather to save money, and came home at night to piles of books that needed reading and essays to prepare. I've spent my days, and nights, and weekends caring for patients, crying for patients, helping the staff nurses, watching helplessly as over worked understaffed wards did their best wishing I could do more to help than I was capable of as an unqualified student. And all my 'free' time with my head in books, digging out research papers, learning the theory for the skills I've learned in practice over the week. While my friends at other Universities on other courses go to lectures if they feel like it, spend a couple of hours reading at home, have part time jobs in local bars or rock climbing centres, and spend their loans on nights out. I took a year out of the degree to work full time and save up enough for my final year to take some of the pressure off, but it's still going to be tough. I would not have considered nursing as a career at all had the NHS Bursary not been available. Take it away and the Government risk losing an entire class of nurses, those from working class homes, single parent families, young Mums and Dads, those on the bread line who often have such a wealth of experience in their youth that they become amazingly compassionate nurses.

### **Orla, Northern Ireland**

I have planned to go back and do Mental Health Nursing in Northern Ireland but with these changes it will now be impossible as I have a huge amount of debt from my previous degree and will not be given any more years of finance.

### **Student nurse, Brighton**

I've almost finished my first year of my nursing degree and like all other NHS students, I receive a monthly bursary. Without this I wouldn't have been able to afford the course, the books, travelling to and from placement or anywhere to live to complete the course. The amount of pressure my course puts students under is already immense and fortunately for me, I don't have to worry about paying back my bursary once I'm a qualified nurse. The bursary has given me the opportunity to achieve my dream job. I'm privileged enough to be able to work 12 and a half hour shifts caring for my patients and their families, helping them in any way that I can and even being with them in the last few hours of their life. Being able to care for people is my passion and I'm so grateful I receive a bursary that makes this possible. If it had been the case that I would not have received a bursary, it would not have discouraged me from entering the profession. However, I would have been put under even more pressure than I already am to re-pay a loan I would have had to have taken out. It worries me that other potential health care students will be discouraged from starting courses due to the fees that need to be repaid after qualification, leading to a larger shortage of nurses than there already are.

### **Pauline, Northampton**

As a mature student with 4 children, I am struggling as it is with the small bursary I am getting and I can't imagine surging completely without it. The course itself has caused me to be in debt more, missing my mortgage payments, as I am in a 3-month placement with no time to work extra hours or spend time with my children. This has put a strain on my marriage, my family. Travel expenses to placements, 12-hour shifts to come back to children sleeping after leaving them sleeping again in the morning is psychologically, physically, emotionally straining and now this. Please bring back the bursary if NHS is to survive.

### **Jessica, Cheshire**

I am now fully qualified nurse, when training I had minimum bursary which I am extremely grateful for however it did not even come close to enough to live on, so I kept my part time job at weekends. However with placement 5 days a week from earlys to lates many weeks I ended up working 7 days a week. To the point where I started to faint with stress and exhaustion on placement. Without the bursary or the fees being subsidised I wouldn't have been able to go to university to be a nurse and fulfil my dream. I am now a senior research nurse on a band 6 wage and only having to work 5 days a week.

### **Rachel, Gloucestershire**

I am a single mother of 7. Am really struggling to make the ends meet. Am on bursary and I work Saturday and Sunday and still I can't be able to cope with 50% of my bills. If the bursary will be changed, I have to quit my nursing training. I will be starting my 3rd year in February 2016. George Osborne, walk in my shoes and make a decision after.

## Rachel, Cheshire

I am currently in my 3rd year of nursing studies and have so far clocked up 1,522 unpaid clinical hours with 2 outstanding placements to go. I am on the minimum loan and bursary as I live with my parents who earn over the threshold, yet I still struggle to pay for hospital parking permits, petrol and some days a proper bite to eat during my 14 hour shift! My bursary is better than nothing but still doesn't cover even half the cost of commuting to placement. However, I am incredibly grateful for the NHS bursary that pays for my tuition fees. I feel as though this is earned through my hard work out in clinical practice as a student nurse. Imagining having to PAY to work for clinical hours 6 months out of the year with no financial support (excluding the loans, which are sugar coated as financial support when in fact it's short term help with long term debt) would definitely put me off applying for the degree if I were to do my time again. In addition, when nurses qualify, if the loan is not paid off in full then this will land the country in more debt as well as a shortage of nurse's as many will be put off study as they cannot afford it! I feel George Osborne's decision has made student nurses across the country feel undervalued and disregarded, I know I do!

## Helga, Droitwich Spa

I already have a degree (I was a maths teacher for 14 years). Because of this, I don't qualify for student finance. If my tuition fees weren't paid for, and if I didn't get a bursary, I wouldn't be able to afford to retrain as a nurse. As it is, even with a bursary, I still have to work part time to make ends meet, and they barely meet. Many people on my course are mature students who also don't qualify for student finance due to previous degrees. Without the bursary countless people will be deterred from applying, which won't help the nursing shortage within the NHS.

## Ashleigh, Shrewsbury

I'm 19 years old and I've just started my first year studying Children's Nursing taking the plunge to move up from the South Coast to the West Midlands. Nursing is something I've wanted to do for years and after studying hard at school I finally got a place! However being based away from the main campuses meant that I needed to find my own accommodation which is some-what more expensive than student accommodation. Therefore I find myself using my NHS bursary for rent (my bursary is only £1 more than my monthly rent) and then trying to plan my student finance loan to cover food costs. If I knew I was going to be in a lot of debt by the end of the course I would have thought twice about applying. You hear a lot of horror stories about being a student nurse; the stress, work-load, placement hours on top of assignments and OSCE's. To then leave your training being on minimum wage and in a lot of debt. Yes it's a career that I want to be in and I feel I'm going to thrive in but if it's going to bring more problems financially in the long run then maybe it wouldn't be the smartest of choices. Especially as there has been an increase in apprenticeships recently, I would have definitely considered doing one! I'm glad I started when I did so that the changes did not affect me and my choice as to whether or not to study nursing. However I'm sympathetic to all those out there that feel they can't do the carer of their dreams because of the budget cuts.



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## Chloe, Norwich

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Training to be a mental health nurse at UEA has taught me many things, patience, compassion and how to care for people. I believe that these politicians need to learn these qualities to truly understand our job. Many of student nurses plan to work for the NHS although they could work in places such as New Zealand or Australia and be paid far more for working less hours. What the government should know is we want to do this job because we love it. There are so many emotional highs and depressing lows being a nurse, but I cannot see myself in another role. Our student bursary means we can afford to do this course, we can travel to our placements and then have a decent meal after a 13 hours shift on a ward. So George Osbourne, when there are a lack of nurses in the next few years because the students cannot afford to do this course and take over the retiring. I hope you will be there holding that dying patients hand when they take their final breath. Because believe me, it's a tough job.



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## Gillian, Melton Mowbray

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Without my bursary I would not be able to follow my dream. I have spent four years at college gaining the qualifications required just to get a place at University. Without the bursary I would not be able to fund my travel to University and placement, let alone pay my mortgage and bills. My husband retired from 20 years in the Army and we have three children, the youngest is disabled. I am a mature student and I do not have a previous degree. I have worked very hard to get my place and I give up lots of family time and I miss school activities with my children to look after other people's families. I do not see how it would be viable to do this without the bursary. I would not get myself and my family in to over £50,000 worth of debt to achieve my dream, it is unrealistic



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## Beth, Middlesbrough

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I rely on my bursary to pay for my rent, petrol and food so that I am able to live closer to my university and the hospitals in which my placements are. Without my bursary I would not be able to do that. We work 600 hours of unpaid work, and yes, I understand it's training, however, 600 hours of unpaid is also time that I could have spent earning money. I have a part time job and at the minute I have to work a minimum of 15 hours a week to be able to pay for things. 15 hours plus 37 and a half hours is 52 and a half hours a week - plus study time, plus my own time. It's extremely difficult for student nurses at best never mind taking the bursary off us. If I was to apply again for a course at university and found that they now operate a loans service rather than a bursary service for student nurses, I would not have applied. Too much pressure. I don't want to spend the rest of my life paying off a student loan AND a NHS loan. Other university courses aren't as long winded as ours. They get two/three months off in summer... Weeks off at winter and Easter, us, no. We work through all that. I spend my "holidays" working so that I am able to keep my house and feed myself. I'm really disappointed in the government for making this decision and feel if they were to live the life of a student nurse now they'd get a HUGE shock. It's going to mean student nurses are more focused on providing for themselves rather than studying and being a good nurse, which of course leads to mistakes and that's an even bigger problem. We're here to save lives, not save lives whilst worrying what we're gonna eat tonight!



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## Naomi, Peterborough

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I am currently a second year student nurse. Half of each academic year I work 30 hours a week in Hospital, in the community, in nursing homes or wherever the demand is for student nurses. My fellow students and I are the future of the NHS. When I am not in placement I have assignments, presentations, home study and a full week at university for theory or clinical skills practice. My summer consists of another month in one or two placements. I have three weeks off before the cycle starts again, and each year the workload gets bigger! The bursary that I receive is not enough to live on, and without my partner working full time I simply would not be able to be a student nurse. Even with him working full time we still barely keep our heads above water each month. But we persevere because I love what I do. But take away that bursary for future nurses? The NHS shortage is just going to become more drastic, as our future nurses will not be able to afford to train. In my previous degree I worked, but I had so much more time off and the workload was not so intense. By taking the bursary away you have made the situation so dangerous. Student nurses will have to work alongside placement and theory. Most students will have to work at least another 20 hours on top of the 30-37.5 hours in placement, and the 20+ hours we put aside for our independent study. If they don't work then they won't be able to afford to be a student, but by working that makes us even more tired, even more stressed and is quite frankly dangerous. We care for every single patient and relative that walks through our trust doors. But who cares for us? Certainly not the government. That's clearly quite evident. I understand the NHS has a finite amount of resources, but save money from elsewhere. Would you be happy to have a pay cut? Get rid of your expenses? You earn thousands, yet I receive £394 a month working full time. Now you've taken that away from future nurses. But still make them work full time for absolutely nothing. You do that for the next three years, miss important days with your family, rarely take a break, go

10 hours without using the toilet and you come back and tell your future NHS staff that that's fair. You say you are trying to save the NHS. You just destroyed its future even more.



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## Stephanie, Belfast

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This is awful. I have struggled immensely during my nursing degree. I work 20 hours a week on top of 40 hours clinical practice just to have enough to get through this course. This is not a standard degree choice and it's clear as we don't get Christmas and summer holidays like our fellow students. If bursaries are being cut student nurses will REFUSE to work clinical practice for free we do over 600 unpaid hours a year and even more on final year for experience.



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## Becki, Sheffield

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Without my bursary I would have severely suffered to afford to live, it isn't enough as it is I am scraping pennies but I would have had to seriously think about whether to take up the course in the first place, which is a real shame the amount of potential fantastic nurses we would lose when we already have a shortage that is stretching the NHS beyond its capabilities.



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## Sam, Chesterfield

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I wouldn't have been able to do my nurse training at all without the bursary due to financial commitments, this will cause a further shortage of nurses on an already stretched NHS! What were they thinking?! Very unfair considering being a student nurse involves working for free whilst juggling families and academic work too! Who is going to want to be a nurse now?!



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## Josh, Stockport

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I was lucky enough to complete my adult nursing course with a bursary despite this I still had 3 jobs. I worked at a nursing home on pretty much every day I had off. I worked a restaurant one day a week and picked up every extra shift whenever I could there. I also worked at a sports club in the days on a weekend, every weekend. Along with this I had the bursary and a student loan. I worked hard and still came out with a £2000 student overdraft, and just under £6000 worth of student debts. All this just to get through my course to support myself through to a job that pays about £21500 in the first year meaning that After I get taxed, have paid back my fair share of my student loan and put into my pension, paid £120 a year to work and paid £30 a month to be part of a union just in case someone is unhappy enough with the job I have dedicated and I mean dedicated my life to I still have to have two jobs to pay back these debts. I work long hours and I work hard what are student nurses going to be put through if there now expected to take a larger loan. There were nurses on my course who were financially worse off than me for example I don't have children yet but what happens to the mothers and fathers who want to become nurses. Nursing has developed so much in the last 20 years we take on more and more responsibility as a profession and we apparently don't deserve the same pay raise you gave yourself as an MP. MPs should be ashamed of themselves you should all come and spend 1 week as a volunteer at hospital see what nurses, doctors, support workers go through every day. With your pay rise I suspect you can afford private healthcare now. Fantastic. Talk to the staff in the private hospitals, find out where they trained, find out what health care system they have worked for before and finally ask them if that if this is their second job. How many of us work two jobs just to get by? Chances are they are still paying off their student debts imagine if they still had more to pay off no bursary. We are a struggling profession employing more and more nurses from overseas as people turn their back on the profession

fed up of being mistreated and underpaid. You have now taken away the one last thing that makes nursing accessible.



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## Bethan, Poole

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It is sad to no longer reward student nurses for their hard work. I myself would have never been able to complete my nurse training without the bursary.



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## Enda, Maghera

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I think this is awful, all the student nurses work really hard on placement and for the government to be giving out loans is a complete joke having the stress to pay it back when you have a full time job, nurses have enough stress without stress paying the loan back, this will put a lot of people off doing nursing and then the government is crying out loud wanting nurses!! Complete joke!!



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## Katie, Lancaster

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I honestly think I would have chosen a different degree - I'm no fool, I don't want to pay £9,000 to work 40 hour weeks, qualify and earn under £22,000. I would've gotten a job that would be less satisfying because I wouldn't have been able to afford the debt.



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## Laura, Brighton

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I studied to be a mental health nurse between 2005 and 2008 and earned a diploma. I was lucky enough to be in receipt of a modest bursary. The course was full time apart from brief breaks in terms - much as it is now. In 2005 I had £380 per month to live on to complete a course that, during term time, was equivalent to full time hours. This is unlike other courses where there are fewer classroom hours and much unlike other courses as there were clinical expectations of us in full time working placements. I provided care and treatments to people during my training and, as a sign off mentor, can now recognise that students provide valuable support to a climate with ever reducing resources. Outside of these hours I also had a bar job in order to afford to survive in Brighton. Not only do students provide clinical care but have nationalised bursaries so living in Brighton was very tough. Had I qualified as a band 5 in Brighton with debt I would have struggled to achieve anything at all and would not be in the position I am in now. And that was hard enough. (Thank you bank shifts!!!!). I am now reasonably financially stable age 30 with the help of my partner, a teacher (don't get me started on her story). Nursing gets harder and the pay gets smaller. I am already thinking about leaving the profession and city that I love despite being a band 6 because I am not valued and am not being treated fairly - consequently I am poor and overstretched. I worked hard to earn this pay cut(!) and if I had not had a bursaried course wouldn't be here in the first place! Where do they think nurses come from? We are working classes or international imports. No nurse I've spoken to has come from money. I ADORE my job, patients and colleagues, but in this tory climate - who wants to be a nurse? Not me. We lose out every time there is a tory budget review. Losing the bursary will be dangerous as there will be no incentive for people to train. As I said, people take the opportunity of the bursary based on their backgrounds but also, surely you can't expect students to work with the public and pay for it???

They work hard and are skilled, they EARN their bursary whilst on placement and the teams are grateful for them. The attempted assassination on the NHS continues. Maybe we will be paying for our Obama-care next? I give full permission for any grammatical errors to be corrected.



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## Christian, St. Helens

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I left the military to do my nursing degree. By having a bursary I was able to complete the intensive and demanding degree alongside the hours of placement. If the bursary was not available I would have either stayed in the military or maybe have chosen a different degree (so that I could work and study). You would be one mental health nurse less.



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## Helena, Swansea

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I began the BSC adult nursing degree at Swansea University 8 months ago. I am in my early forties with 2 young children I gave up a paid job to undertake the degree. There is no way I would have been able to fulfil a dream to become a nurse without the bursary.



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## Julia, Kent

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I don't know if this counts as evidence, but I will say it anyway. I qualified as a Staff Nurse back in 2013. I was a single parent to a young son. I had previously studied Biomedical Sciences at university, which would have meant I'd not be eligible for further student loans. The bursary enabled me to pay costly childcare fees, petrol money and car running costs (my lectures and placements were 30 miles from home - public transport would not have been feasible), parking fees, and buy the books etc. I needed. I also worked part time to support myself and my son. I could not have managed to retrain as a nurse if I didn't have the bursary. I assure you that this bursary money was not used for socialising (I was juggling a full time course, being a single parent and working part time). Unlike my first degree (and many other degrees), we had just two weeks off each at Xmas, Easter and in the summer. No long holiday periods to cram in extra work hours to boost income. The rest of the time, one was expected to attend lectures and placements equating to 37hrs each week. Ergo, not much chance to work enough hours in a part time job to support oneself. As a student, one is not entitled to help with housing and rent costs. Quite how the government expects student nurses (or indeed physios, OTs, SALTs, etc.) to embark on these full time degree courses without any bursaries and with their current timetables (you show me who can make enough to support a family when working for just a few hours a week in a part time job!) is beyond me.



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## Juliette, Northamptonshire

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I am currently studying an Access to Higher Education - Health Studies course. I hope to gain a place to study at degree level next year. However if I am not offered a place to begin in 2016 then I will have to abandon my hopes of joining the medical profession. I simply will not be able to afford the cost of the fees and I will not be able to obtain a student loan as I already have a first degree. I thought that the UK, with an aging population, needed more highly trained and committed health professionals? But sadly I may not be able to become one of them.....



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## Charlotte, Chesterfield

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I have been applying to do midwifery for years due to competition for places I have so far been unsuccessful. I am now a single mother with no support with childcare. The entry requirements are even harder now and I have to complete an access to health higher education course which would need to be funded with a loan. Without the help of a bursary or childcare costs it's now an impossible dream for me to become a midwife. I am disappointed beyond belief there isn't enough support for single parents as it is without taking away bursaries like this.



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## Aimee, North Bristol

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I live in North Bristol and I travel to Plymouth university for academic /theory study; my placement in North Somerset to travel to my placement its 1 h 21 min (73.6 miles) via M5.I pay £56 for a parking permit whilst on placement which vary from 8-12wks and sometimes up to 3 a year. In my first year of training my bursary was granted at £450 pcm this was a token towards my living costs/accommodation/ course literature and travel costs to name a few. Spending £3000 on an access to university course at a local college was just the start I also applied for a university much closer to home and even considered other options. Furthermore when you enrol for a nursing course you attend for at least 50+ weeks theory can be 5days per week and when on placement it is a variety of shifts experienced from early to lates, nights and weekends; for me I couldn't get a job around my studies due to traveling and when I am on placement the hours I work combined with the traveling I have no time to pick up shifts on the bank or apply for another job as I am unable to commit to hours. With that said I am now in my 2nd year and I already owe over £2000 for accommodation, I have a credit card/over draft and have to pay the maintenance on my car and fuel costs to and from placement. However, I am very fortunate unlike others I can apply for travel expenses unlike thousands of other future nurses this is a lifeline for me to be able to pursue dream of being a RGN. Without my bursary or travel expenses being an option I would not have been able to pursue further education as I do not have anyone else to subsidise/ support me. I fill this would have denied me of a better future. Prior to securing a place on the course I personally experienced times of great darkness; any hope of a future didn't seem achievable. The access course enabled me to re-build my life; I gained invaluable life and transferable skills to apply for Uni which has not only inspired me to live a life not solely reliant on benefits but it has helped break the cycle of deprivation. I am physically and mentally a completely different person since starting Uni and

I don't have the added woes of owing thousands at the end of the three years. This means I am more committed to my. I am concentrating of assignment deadlines, achieving my competences and growing as an individual. Although if I had to apply for further loans to pay for my training I am not saying I would not of applied; nor am I saying that I am not willing to pay for the privilege. This is a dream come true for me and since I began my training I have encouraged other health professionals to enquire about doing so too. I am merely stating that if the NHS Bursary was not an option it would have made me question to whether aged 28 after over 10years of saving to make this even possible would I be sat here today? Sadly the answer would have to be no.



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## Kat, Nottingham

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It's disgraceful! Being on placement 50% of the time means we would effectively be paying the government to work in the NHS! How is that fair! I understand that all other degrees are loans but we come out with a degree that gets us a low wage as it is, without having the burden of a huge debt we need to pay back! It's pricing out low income families who would make amazing nurses because it's not financially possible! They are going to see less student nurses which means an even more stretched work place! Which would put lives at risk! Think this is an excuse to say the NHS is failing and selling it off! In 2 years I am yet to meet a qualified nurse who would promote nursing as a career which is sad and demoralising! The bursary lets me live, it gives me the funds to buy food and pay rent and get to placement. Without it I would never have been able to afford nursing as with placement I can only work when I'm in uni so I have only my bursary to rely on! I have had so many second thoughts about my career and that's the most heart wrenching thought I've ever had!



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## Nicola, Aberdeen

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I understand that the current cuts to student nurse bursaries will not directly affect myself but I can't help but feel disappointed and let down by our government. I would just like to take this opportunity to highlight the importance of our bursaries, Scottish or not. I receive £500 per month for my bursary. £300 of this goes to my rent, around £100 more goes to bills leaving £100 for food. Just like that, that £500 is gone. To be able to afford fuel to travel to my current placement that is 40 miles from my flat, pay for any unexpected bills/repairs I have to work outside of university. I understand this doesn't seem a big deal, most students worldwide do this. Though what our government fail to understand is that studying nursing isn't like any other course. We have clinical placements half of the year. This is working in wards and various other locations looking after REAL people. REAL patients that require our help, care, and support throughout our 12 and half hour shifts. REAL people that need that shoulder to cry on, that hand to squeeze as they go through painful treatments and that reassuring face after receiving heart-breaking and devastating news. We as student nurses ARE that shoulder, hand and reassuring face. We work full time hours a week to meet requirements as set out by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) in order to achieve our degrees. This is 2300 hours of unpaid work throughout our 3/4 years of training. You have student nurses working their days off in jobs outside of university in order to pay to live. You have tired, lethargic and exhausted (both mentally and physically) student nurses coming into placement for 7am every morning with the biggest smile on their face because despite the fact we are worked beyond belief for a measly £500 a month, we love what we do. When we can make a patient smile, or even make that day slightly more bearable for them then we soon forget how hard worked, and exhausted we actually are. THAT is nursing, What I am getting at here is it's already a hard and tiring degree to undertake and yes,

we have all been lucky up to this point to receive money whilst studying but by taking this away you're going to have even more tired and fatigued student nurses on the ward and this worries me as a soon-to-be professional. This may jeopardise care that we give. We will be tired, we will make mistakes, we could potentially make life threatening mistakes because we have already done 40+ hours this week between university and outside work and this is our last 12 and half hour shift of the week. Nursing isn't a profession that mistakes can be easily fixed. Our mistakes have big consequences and by cutting our bursaries and putting us under further financial pressure I fear these mistakes may become more frequent and have devastating results. Care vs. Cost



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## Beth, Edinburgh

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Student nurses spend 50% of our degree working full time hours FOR FREE in an already extremely understaffed NHS. Our bursary is there to supplement the money we would be able to make from having a normal part time job, although it doesn't even cover that. We have an extended academic year and therefore don't have the luxury of a 3 month summer holiday where we could earn money! If the bursary was not available to me I simply would not be able to complete my degree, and this I'm sure is the case for the majority of student nurses. The implications of taking away our bursary is simply that less people will be willing to undertake a nursing degree and sadly the people who will suffer the most are patients in hospitals who need our help and care.



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## Emily, London

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Without my NHS student bursary I would not have been able to start my course. I would not have the financial support to continue my dream of becoming a nurse. This is what will be the outcome for so many others in the future, and this is wrong. It is wrong to expect so much from us and give so little. To complain you do not have enough nurses then to cut the most important support for new student nurses is completely and utterly disgraceful. They should be ashamed of themselves.



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## Julia, Blackburn

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I'm speaking on behalf of my daughter who is a student nurse and is on her second placement. She works unpaid 8 hour shift for 5 days a week and her placement lasts 9 weeks.....This is where she gets most of her training by being hands on at the hospitals. Can the government please tell me where in her spare time, if any, she can find paid work. She needs the bursary to live. I'm not well off, I help as much as I can to support her so come on Mr Cameron you need the dedicated nurses and doctors to care for people in the NHS..... lets care for them as well.



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## Katy, Winchester

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I am one of the first Majors Advanced Practitioners in the emergency Dept at Basingstoke. All I can tell you if it wasn't for the Bursary and diploma nursing course I would NOT be a nurse. I was am now a band 7. I was a mature student and know and believe that you will lose a large number of potentially great Nurses because they cannot afford to be lumbered with debt!!!



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## Charlotte, Preston

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I am about to enter my third year of my nursing degree. I receive £300 NHS bursary a month and I work bank shifts as a carer. I receive on average £200 a month from my job. That's a total of £500 which just about covers my bills for the month. I cannot work any more bank shifts especially when on placement as I work 37.5 hours per week on placement. Without the bursary I simply would not survive on £200 a month. I am passionate about nursing and can't wait to be registered like many other future nurses. Unless they have massive savings how are the expected to live while doing the degree. There is going to be a decrease in the amount of people doing the course, which will mean less nurses, (staffing is already an issue) which will mean more issues on the frontline of the NHS and therefore our patients, our whole nation will suffer !!



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## Shabana, Middlesbrough

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If the bursary scheme was not in place you would not have had this nurse present today. A bursary is needed fundamentally as we have no opportunity to work alongside full time placements doing 12 hour shifts placements of 37.5hours a week!



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## Emma, Nottingham

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The student bursary has given me the opportunity to train for a career about which I feel truly passionate and alleviates a small amount of the financial pressure associated with student living. By not consulting those who represent the profession the government has shown itself to be making ill-informed decisions based on short sighted cost cutting. We work with real patients, service users and their families; we contribute to the NHS during our training and the removal of the bursary will reduce the numbers of people willing to make that contribution in the future. If the government remove the bursary the degree will only be open to those who can afford it which, in the current economic climate are precious few. Nursing requires compassion, commitment and above all the desire to care for people through all stages of their life until death. Those qualities should be held above all other things in order to provide safe care; by removing the bursary many who possess those qualities will simply not be able to afford to enter into a nursing degree. I am saddened beyond belief to think that people like myself will not be able to afford to study and become part of a group of dedicated professionals of whom I feel proud to train alongside.



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## Chloe, Hastings

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Placement is hard enough as it is working alongside it with a bursary. Without the bursary those of us with mortgages would struggle even more and this would affect our learning on placement. The government needs to understand that our degree isn't like normal degrees, we really work for our tuition fees to be paid. If they want us to pay student loans for our tuition fees they need to pay us more when we are qualified, as we earn less than teachers do.



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## Lauren, Liverpool

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I am currently in my third year, due to qualify next September. I am disgraced at the government stopping the student bursary. I would not have started my training knowing I was working for the government for nothing, to be riddled with debt at the end and constant cut backs! How do they expect student nurses to work 2300 hours in three years and live at the same time? It's terrible! I have flexibility with my job alongside my nurse training but I only work 6 hours a week (roughly) and just about manage at times, especially when on placement. I am grateful that I am not affected by this but it is not acceptable to future nurses, I feel as though it will put people off from wanting to be a nurse!



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## Susan, Preston

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I am a mature student nurse (29). I chose nursing as a second career after a family bereavement and have never looked back. I have sacrificed a lot to train to be a nurse, I still live with my parents, I rarely see my friends and have very little money. I know that I would not have made the decision to go back into education if I didn't have the small amount of financial support from the student bursary. Some of my cohort have to work two care assistant shifts a week to live on top of their bursary and loans. This means working 7 days a week when on placement. Nursing is not a degree where you can have a regular part time job you work weekends, lates and night shifts on placement. Although these changes don't effect me directly as I will have qualified when they are implemented, I fear that 10 years into practice I won't have the support of new nursing staff, the older ones will retire and there will be me looking after your family, your friends or you under unsafe staffing levels. There aren't enough nurses as it is without putting good people with life experience off the career.



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## Jennie, Malton

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Future students in the medical field will be unable to undertake the course as they simply will be unable to live. As a student nurse I went from receiving a full time wage as a healthcare assistant to a bursary of £300 a month, this does not cover my bills. Therefore I work extra shifts in hospitals to earn myself money to pay my bills and eat. I class myself as lucky as at least I have no family and children to support as many of my fellow student nurses do. It is a struggle to make ends meet. At such an important time of our lives it is essential to concentrate on university and placement but we are unable to do so as we are put under such financial pressure. Take our bursaries away as this will be 100% worse. Means tested loans will mean people who need the money most will not get it. Future students will not be able to afford to live, therefore they will not study. We desperately need more nurses, paramedics, midwives etc. please do not stop our carers before they have even started. I invite you all to spend a week working with nurses and student nurses so you can see our lives and the impact the course has on us. I would happily invite you into my placement / university / workplace to show you what we really do. We do not nurse for the money, we nurse because we have found our calling.



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## Lucy, Bicester

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I have already have a student loan for a previous degree and the bursary changes would have made it difficult for me to start nursing. On placement I struggle as it is with the bursary but with the hours of placement and the hours it takes me to travel into placement it is a struggle to work to provide the rest of the money I need to live through placement weeks. If the bursary wasn't provided I wouldn't be training as a nurse and I know a lot of people in the same position as me



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## Jacqueline, Aberdeenshire

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I feel that students will not start a nursing course without the incentive of a bursary. I am a degree qualified staff nurse and I was bursaried through my 3 year course, but the monthly amount you get doesn't cover your rental living costs, let alone all the books you are required to buy and your travel and/or accommodation costs while on placement. Often students are on placements in a completely different area in which they live in (for example living in Aberdeen City and placement in Moray approx 70+ miles away). I worked a part time job during my training to get me by without having to take out loan(s), but while on placements was unable to, due to placements being full time hours and often covered weekends and night shift hours. Also you have essays and exams to complete or study for while completing all the clinical hours required. Nursing is a life changing career, and something someone shouldn't go into lightly. The amount of qualifying staff nurses over the years have dropped greatly already in the years since I qualified in 2009, and I feel it will drop significantly again if the bursary is stopped.



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## Laura, Northern Ireland

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I am a newly qualified nurse. I couldn't have passed my nursing without the bursary. I also worked part-time during my studies as travelling expenses to uni and placement were not covered by the bursary. I feel it is unfair to put more pressure on nurses by cutting the bursaries and implementing the student loans. Any wonder there is a shortage of nurses, when qualified we work 12/13 hour shifts for very little money, we protect people's lives and try and keep them smiling during the worst times of their lives. I think the cuts need to happen higher up in the Government and that they should be taking pay cuts for doing very little other than sacrifice other people's lives by putting them in danger by making so many cuts.

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## Rachelle, Horley

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I have started my course as mature student. I got a credit card to pay for my access course prior to applying for my university degree. I am living in a house share because I cannot afford to live in a flat on my own as it is far too expensive when working 37.5 hours for free each week. My bursary covers 3/4 of my rent. The rest I have to work every single day off that I get free, also to pay for all living expenses. Not to mention my bills. It is difficult enough working 80 hours a week and praying that information for exams is being retained. Let alone taking this away from us. I just wouldn't even be able to consider staying at University! The bursary is the only way that I have any hope at living as I have no extra time to work the extra shifts that would cover it, I have absolutely no idea how we would be expected to live, I really don't.

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## Carla-Marie, Horsham

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I receive NHS bursary to help with my living costs, this pays for my rent and bills, which I still work a minimum of 16 hours per week to help to pay the rent of my living costs and more towards my rent. I work 32 hours weekly, long days at the hospital, this isn't paid for. I work hard on the ward just like everyone else. I also work hard studying to achieve good results for my future career. If the bursary was cut, I would have to work more to get another 450 pound per month to allow me to live. How am I able to work whilst doing 32 hours on placement whilst going to uni, exams, study and assignments?

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## Michelle, Glasgow

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I would never have been able to do any of my nursing degree without my bursary. It is a very complex degree which requires time and effort, so under taking a job to make ends meet would be a ridiculous ask. Most of us are students with children, trying to pay for our families and homes without a bursary would not be manageable and I think that many student nurses without this help will not complete the course due to financial difficulties

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## Gemma, Aylesbury

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I currently work as a HCA at oxford's children's hospital and have applied to do my nursing degree and will hopefully start in September. As I already have a student loan from a previous degree I did when I was 18, I am now 24 and have worked as a HCA since the age 19. I would of been relying heavily on the bursary I would of received to help my financially for the 3 years that I would be at uni for. Having heard the news that the bursary is going to be scrapped I feel upset and disappointed as feel that I may now not be able to train to be a nurse as I won't get another student loan due to already having one previously and will not be able to survive financially without a student loan or bursary.

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## Kelly, Durham

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I could never have fulfilled my lifelong dream of becoming a nurse if I had to have loans. I'm a mother of five children and at the age of 42 passed my nursing degree. If it wasn't for the bursary I would never have been able to complete my degree, instead I would have had to settle for a cleaning job or a job in retail or anywhere. Instead the bursary helped me to not only complete my degree but to look after my 5 children whilst doing it!!! I think a lot of people with families and older people will be put off applying to do nursing knowing they're going to have a huge debt to pay back!



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## Jasmine, Bath

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If I hadn't received a bursary I wouldn't be here doing my training today. I went from a £16,000 year job as a senior healthcare assistant to nothing when I began my training. We work doing the same job (basic care) as a healthcare assistant whilst trying to learn and adapt ourselves to the nursing role we are to take on in the future. We have already been deskilled. Costing the NHS more money to 'retrain' in skills. It feels degrading working for free when I know how much I could be earning but would have no future career. It makes you feel like you're not worth the time and care you put in. It makes you wonder why you do, it shakes your moral compass and your values. It makes me feel like I'm worthless when I know this isn't true, we are a huge part of integrated care and this is not recognised. I've had to move back in with my parents at nearly the age of 30. If I was still with my ex-partner there would be no way I could have done my training even with the small amount of money we receive. I simply could not have managed. To find out that the trusts get paid for students was a blow to our self-esteem enough, as I have been on placements where I have been abused in a professional manner and used as bank staff due to staff shortages. This is slave labour is it not? Did we not abolish slavery? Things are tough enough as it is, now they've even taken away the tiny bit of help we get. I'm not blowing my own trumpet but after serving the NHS for 9 years loyally I feel I have a good understanding of the system and I will make a good nurse. I strive to. But it feels like the government doesn't want us to be successful. It feels as though they are throwing barriers in the way, like we are just unimportant numbers being shoved through a system. If you don't keep up, you're replaceable. I would not have been able to start my nurse training and fulfil my dream of becoming a nurse had it not been for the bursary payments and generous parents, not everyone is so lucky. I have met a multitude of amazing and knowledgeable healthcare assistants who want to train and can't due to money

difficulties. I feel this is a huge shame as the NHS is missing out on some incredible people who could make a real difference in people's lives, they already do in their current roles but they're capable of achieving so much more with the right support. I think it's disgusting to degrade student nurses in this way and disguise it under telling us that it's to do with our dedication. How dare they question my moral standards with money when they are taking away nurses' basic wage increase? It's demoralising and inhumane. If you want good nurses then you need to support good people to train.



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## Kendra, Edinburgh

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I would not have begun this full time degree if I had known of the possibility I could end up in huge amounts of debt by the end. We as student nurses work full time while on placement and it is insulting to think that we are and treat us as if we are, free labour. We need nurses more than ever in this country so the government needs to stop discouraging people from pursuing this wonderful career.



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## Elizabeth, Scotland

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Without the bursary I would be unable to undertake my course. I come from a low income family, from a rural area of Scotland. I already work my 10.5 hours that I am allowed to work under the working time directive, and it's still hard to make ends meet. The only thing that keeps me going is the knowledge that at least my course has not saddled me with debt. At least when I get started (On a very low starting wage for a degree course) I will be able to support myself without having a massive student loan hanging over my head. Since the change to placement expenses I have had to work longer hours, even while on placement where before I would have taken a break from working. Taking away the bursary is setting up a nursing staffing crisis.

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## Dagmara, Bath

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I'm a former student nurse, adult nursing course completed in 2011. I would never have picked nursing degree knowing that I'll be left with a £9000 per annum to pay for the course without any financial help. It wouldn't make sense on a financial level. The debt at the end of my course would put me off - and with the approx. £21000 starting salary and 12 hour shifts it would make my life a misery. I was lucky to get my bursary and had someone that could support me during my studies that took pretty much all my spare time after working 37.5 hours on the ward. I was only able to do few occasional shifts in my first year thereafter when the academia requires more commitment and especially whilst writing my dissertation I would never be able to fit any additional source of income. What Mr Osborne has proposed hasn't got any bearing in real life. I was lucky to get a bursary as one of the EU nationals I was only one in my year. UK will suffer nursing shortages if this plan will be carried out resulting in more nurses from abroad being employed to fill in those gaps. What about reduction in immigration, that will frankly increase it.

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## Daniel, Brighton

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Since leaving school I have worked in care. I have gained over 7 years of care experience and have in the past couple of years work in a hospital environment. I have been working really hard to get my basic key skills and qualifications to a degree level which I have invested a lot of my personal time into while working 12 days 3 or sometimes even more a week, in hard sometimes unstaffed environments with the hope that one day I would be able to do a nursing degree and make a difference to the NHS and people in need of our health services. With this recent news all my hard work was in vain. You will lose some dedicated and hardworking people to make a difference to our health services.

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## Clare, Hull

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I am in my second year of training, I have one child who I have to pay childcare for when I am working in practice which in the school holidays can be as much as £30 per day. We have to work days, nights, weekends, bank holidays sometimes with as little as a week's notice of shifts. The 6 weeks holiday out of each year are spent revising or writing essays, there is no time for a family holiday. Other students get four months off whilst doing their course and do no work experience. Whilst in practice we can be sent up to 30 miles away and are not given any travel expenses and in addition have to pay for parking. Personally I have already achieved another degree so as I have used my tuition fee quota I would not be able to get a student loan. If they were to take away placements, and the lack of holidays then maybe they can treat healthcare students the same.

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## Josephine, Dundee

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With a student debt of over £25,000 from a previous degree there would be no way I would have been able to financially justify a career in nursing. My biggest regret is that I did not do nursing sooner, at least with the bursary I had this opportunity. By stopping bursaries people with life experience and passion will be prevented from entering the nursing profession.

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## Claire, Swanage

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Stopping bursaries will mean my daughter may not now be able to consider nursing as a realistic choice as being saddled with so much debt after three years of hard training and a starting salary of only just over 21,000 is not a realistic option. My fear is that more young potential excellent nurses will be put off considering nursing as a career!! How scary when nurses are already leaving or retiring.... Where will it all end?

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### Lisa, Warrington

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As a mature student (I started my degree aged 34) with a family and a mortgage, it would not have been feasible to take on the additional cost of funding this degree with my other financial commitments at this stage in my life. Of particular consideration to me would be the less than attractive salary that nursing offers. If I was going to plunge myself into that amount of additional debt I would want a salary that justifies it.

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### Charlotte, Wrexham

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I get very little loan and bursary which means that I am required to work long hours at the weekend in order to pay my rent. My bursary funds my basic needs such as food and clothing. This means that without the bursary I will be required to drop out of university due to being unable to survive.

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### Lee, Shrewbury

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If the bursaries were not available I would have had to give serious consideration to starting my new career. As I was already working in a vocation within children's centres the one thing that made my dream of studying possible was the bursary. This being due to the fact once qualifying I would already be taking a pay cut, which I accepted, when weighed against being able to get into my dream job (though I only required a level 3 nvq for my post and was not in a professional vocation). However if this had come with it a level of quite high debt, I would have felt it unachievable. As once the unsocial hours pay is removed, no pay increase and higher registration fees I would feel able to assure a financially secure future for myself.

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### Caroline, Worcester

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I am 45yrs old and I am currently undertaking the Access to HE course with the hope to attend university to become a midwife. Losing the bursary means that the two attempts to get into university I have allowed myself has been halved. I am a single parent to a 14yr old who is looking to go to university herself in the year I would qualify...I cannot afford nearly £60k of debt to get us both through university so her future will take precedent. I also would only have approximately 20yrs of working life ahead of me so would never be in a position to fully repay the student loan. This decision makes no sense and I have no idea how or even why Mr Osborne made this ridiculous decision.

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### Holly, Ipswich

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I am a student of nursing and I am outraged to hear such a selfish decision from the government. I would like to see one of them in my shoes and do what I do, deal with the financial stress I have to. I even live at home, but I still work part time to barely afford a car to travel to my placements. The money I receive from the bursary goes on living costs and not buying fancy things. I feel for those who have childcare to sort out and who already have a loan from a previous degree to pay off. In my eyes is a self-centred decision made by a group of people who simply don't understand. I am disgusted. The future of the NHS is now compromised due to such decisions and the pre-existing nurses will have time off for stress and over-work.

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### Rebecca, Rushden

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I won't be able to become a nurse even though I'm currently at college trying to get to uni as I have a family to support and I can't end up with that much debt and start my career on such a small wage. It isn't worth it. I am gutted as I have 6 years' experience in care and I would make an amazing nurse.



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## Mim, London

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I studied nursing in London as a postgraduate student and qualified for the full amount for bursary throughout my studies. After working for four years after my first degree, I made the decision to put my employment on hold in order to invest in my future. It took me a year to save up to afford to train as a nurse, I lived with my brother and paid a very subsidised rent throughout my training, and I worked throughout my course to top up the bursary. It was these circumstances made it possible for me to spend 2 years in training and become the qualified Staff Nurse I now am. I would not have considered taking out a loan to do the course, because I am already in debt from my first degree. The bursary was a lifeline for me and my postgraduate colleagues. Most of us have years of work and life experience, much of which we can use as a really valuable asset in a job that demands a high level of clinical skill, the ability to manage people and paperwork as well as patience, empathy, and steadfast compassion. Several of my colleagues came to the course as mothers or fathers, some as carers for family members. The calibre of candidates for my course was very high and, throughout our training, we became a close group with diverse previous experiences and yet a collective aim to become excellent nurses of the future. As a Student Nurse, I worked as part of the team for 50% of my training time. When on placement I worked full time, doing 12.5 hour shifts on weekdays, weekends and nights. This work was not financially reimbursed, but I was able to manage as a recipient of the bursary and through part time work (although finding time to do this on top of placement and coursework was often a challenge). Students on the wards are a pair of hands expected to pull weight as much as any other member of the team. On wards that are frequently understaffed and overstretched, students are valuable individuals who can carry a workload and gain experience on the ward. However, this MUST be acknowledged and balanced by reimbursement through high quality

training and a concerted effort to ensure that nurse training is financially viable for all individuals and trainees are not saddled with copious amounts of debt once they qualify. Taking this funding away risks losing people who would make brilliant nurses, and this is something we simply cannot afford. Put simply, without the bursary, I and many of my colleagues could never have afforded to train as nurses. This move comes as another crushing blow to our profession and to the NHS on the whole, where huge proportions of work are done on goodwill. This cannot last and we are seeing the consequences of an overworked and undervalued workforce every day, at work and on the news. I would appeal to those with power to make these decisions to strongly reconsider their decision.



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## Michelle, Wakefield

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I haven't been able to work due to the demands of this course, not only assignments and exams, but all those weeks on placement. I can't get working tax credits as I'm classed as a student who isn't working, but when I've tried claiming income support or any type of benefits, I am then classed as getting an income, which is a small amount of bursary every month that doesn't even cover my mortgage. They don't take into account the fact I have a child who is disabled, as they stopped my carer's allowance saying that it was my choice to go to university and study. I have a long-term disability myself but I am still putting myself through this course. I wouldn't apply now under these new rules, and instead would probably be on long-term sick, or claiming my carer's allowance with benefits, so that I didn't have to worry about my family or my income.



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## Lorraine, Sidcup

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I am a 3rd year LD student nurse, this my second degree like a lot of my class mates we are not only on low income working long hours, most of us are already got debt from previous degree. This new change will discourage people from nursing as how wants to work and studying all hours for a 30 - 40 thousand debt to work in a 23, 000 job, we work longer hours than most professionals even as students which means we cannot even work much in spare time. I'm already have a 10 thousand pound debt on top of my last debt so I can just live. So this no proposal will one make sure nursing number decline which means more money on employing overseas nurses and agency which will cost more that this will save in long run. So all in all a false economy.



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## Aimee, Bath

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I trained 10 years ago. I would never have been able to train as my family had no money to put me through training. I worked in nursing homes from the age of 15 and was encouraged by my nurse leads to pursue a career in nursing which I loved! I worked all the way through my training as the bursary only covered my accommodation fees. This work was additional to the nights, weekends and full time placement I was required to do. I am so disappointed that the government yet again are ignoring what's right in front of them. Introduce fees = less people applying and training shortage of nurses that will only result in overseas recruitment. I love my job, I love to care, but you are making it so hard to stay motivated and passionate about my career. Please reconsider



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## Charlotte, Sheffield

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I wouldn't have been able to afford to become a nurse without my bursary I've been working in the NHS for 9 years



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## Chloe, Derbyshire

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I started my adult nursing degree in 2013 and am due to qualify in February next year. My bursary sadly only gave me £100 a month, due to Being means tested on my parents income which I think is diabolical since I live with my fiancé and am not dependent on my parents! I've had to work whilst being on my placements doing a grand total of 55-65 hours a week 37.5 of that being unpaid! I've got bills coming out of my ears and my fiancé works so hard to keep us stable. It's been a massive struggle for myself, causing me to contemplate leaving my nursing degree when I was in my second year due to the stress. It has even made me very ill in the past all due to stress therefore I know how much cutting bursaries is going to affect the future nurses... The government do not seem to realise how stressful being a student nurse is, trying to juggle placements, essays, exams, portfolio, part time jobs and running a household is not fun I can tell you from my experience... By removing bursaries society is going to lose out on potential amazing student nurses all down to financial decisions- how is that right? The NHS are low on nurses as it is, it is only going to get worse! I've even got a friend who's considering going into nursing but now knowing she cannot receive a bursary anymore she cannot afford to take the step. This is saddening for society, financial support needs to be given to these students! There will be a massive decline in mature student nurses due to the financial changes, how can she/he be able to achieve their degree with no financial help when they have a family to feed and look after? The government really needs to rethink this through for the sake of future nurses and the future of the NHS.

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## Stephen, Dundee

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I'm a 42 year old mature student with children. I bring 20 years of field relevant experience to my studies. I balance a part time job with my degree. If the bursary was removed I would be forced to discontinue and seek full time work elsewhere. The bursary does not cover all my expenses by any means but it provides some monthly security of income. We already struggle to balance money, jobs and studies. Relying on loans would be near impossible, cause major anxiety about the future and force hard choices between extra work hours and the demands of proper study.

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## Joanna, Glasgow

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It is the money I receive for being the future of your NHS. It is the money I receive to study and learn the criteria that you as a government stipulate I must learn. It is the money I receive to clothe, feed, heat and support my family. It is the money I receive to travel to my placements, often paying "peak" rates. It is the money I receive to work full time, often gruelling 12 hour shifts and look after vulnerable people. That money is not enough, but I make it work, now I will have to work to pay it back. Conservative? You are conserving in the wrong places.

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## Ashley, London

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I would have never even considered studying without funding to pay for childcare. More than half of my cohort had children to support while training. Mature students will not train in future!

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## Ali, Motherwell

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Allows me to fuel and pay for my car to make it to placements and pay for transport to university. They can't expect us to work 12 hour shifts for nothing--they certainly wouldn't do it.

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## Lauren, Perthshire

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Without the bursary my partner and I wouldn't have been able to get a mortgage or support our new family- our son is 3 weeks old. I would have never have been able to afford to start university without the bursary. I now worry how my family will afford to support ourselves during the rest of my course.

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## Vincent, Leeds

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In his Autumn Statement yesterday the Chancellor revealed that our bursaries would in fact be getting cut. It's a pity that many people didn't know this was coming, but it is a clear example that this government does not care about the NHS and the system in which we are trained to become effective practitioners. As a Student Nurse, you work in a medical environment for 50% of the course, and it's not a course where you break up for Summer in May, the first day of my Summer holiday is the 29th August 2016, so we are here for the entirety of the year. We don't get paid for our hospital work, and our Student Loan is limited to £2300 a year, so the bursary was key in ensuring that students can actually live. For example, my rent in the cheapest halls of accommodation in the University of Leeds in £3600 a year, so I can't even afford that with my Loan and my bursary combined. For anyone who thought that this government cared about services such as health and the training of nurses I think this is a clear indication that they are not.

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## Sophie, Powys

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With an already huge amount of debt from a previous degree I would not have begun another if it meant this would increase. Had this change come in earlier I'd have been left with no way to fulfil my dream of becoming a nurse. Whilst on placement we are working full time for the NHS (unpaid) and have assignments to complete during his time. We also have longer academic years. This makes is extremely difficult to earn any extra money. Without the bursary I would not be able to cope. I'm extremely saddened by the decision.

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## Emily, Nottingham

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The NHS bursary allows myself, and the 5 other healthcare students in my flat to afford food and accommodation for the extra weeks we spend at university. It compensates for the hundreds of hours of unpaid work, which equates to 50% of the time we are studying. It compensates for the variable timetable we have as we are not a traditional degree, so cannot work a regular part time job to assist us financially. It compensates for the travelling costs which get us to placements, where we work for our country and for our people. Without the NHS bursary myself and the 5 other healthcare students in my flat would not be able to undertake the degrees to become nurses and midwives.

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## Nicole, Aberdeen

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I am in my final year of Adult Nursing at University and can honestly say I would have majorly struggled with finances if I had not received a bursary. I am lucky enough to still live at home therefore do not have to pay rent, yet working 8 hours a day, 5 days a week for 3 months put a huge strain on my bank balance. We have to fund transport and in my case, I was driving 40 miles a day meaning I used a lot of fuel. To fund this without a bursary would mean working my only 2 days off, and therefore putting little effort into my academic studies. For those who live away from home, this would be impossible. A nurse's salary does not reflect the work we have to do but we do it because we care. Having a loan to pay off once qualified is an extremely unfair proposal and many people will unfortunately be unable to fulfil their dream of becoming a nurse.

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## Sharon, Salisbury

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It's another kick in the stomach! We will lose many excellent nursing students as they just won't be able to afford to train. I would also like to say that our earning potential as graduates is far less than the private sector and so saddling student with more debt is morally and whole heartedly unfair. How on earth will we be able to afford homes most nurses even without debt do not earn enough to be able to live in their own property! I am outraged.

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## Rachael, Perth

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If this decision is passed my partner won't be going back to university to complete his training. Nursing is all he has ever wanted to do, He doesn't see it as a job or a career but a way of life and it is who he is, he has lived as a patient after suffering a blood clot in his brain and fighting for his life he was inspired by the nurses that looked after him and he wanted to inspire others to do the same, he has fought the past 2 years to prove he is medically fit to then successfully be accepted to study at Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen. He now is petrified and doubts he can afford to study and even live as he doesn't need the debt after, we are looking to the future and we are saving up so we can afford a life together! It's very disappointing that all student nurses are being made to take a loan out to survive when they are nursing another. Sad times ahead. How many student nurses will leave their way of life now, from discussing with my friends/ family members who are student nurses they are all doubting their careers as well!

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## Mandy, Kegworth

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If this was the case when I completed my degree I wouldn't have been able too with two small children to consider and a hubby who was already working hard to keep us a float even with the bursary it was a real struggle



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## Isla, Edinburgh

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This change in the bursary is absolutely horrendous. As a student nurse at present, I already work my 37.5 hours a week over 3 days doing 12.5 hour shifts. Plus another two days in my part time job. Whilst on placement, this is incredibly tiring and having the strain of knowing I won't receive a bursary, but rather a loan is disappointing to say the least. I already work extremely hard trying to juggle placement, a part time job and my studies. As we do not get long holidays, I do not get the chance like other students do to have three months off at summer and work. I get three weeks, please tell me how I am expected to work full time on my minimal 3 week holiday so I have enough money to live. People do not understand quite how hard we do work. They just think that we are being paid to do nothing, quite clearly they, and the government, do not realise quite how much we do in an effort to learn our profession and turn out to being the best nurses we can be in the future.



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## Charlotte, Wales

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I could never have completed my nurse training without the NHS Bursary. Even with this I still had to work as a HCA working extra shifts alongside clinical placements and night shifts and weekend shifts around theory hours. Even putting in all these hours I struggled to pay for rent, utilities, food, paying for petrol, car insurance. I missed out on a lot of social events because I couldn't afford to go due to having to work just to get through my course. I also had to use a student overdraft which meant I owed a £3000 debt at the end of my studies which I wasn't able to pay off until nearly 4 years after I qualified! I don't know how anyone self-funding (meaning no parents to help pay for tuition fees) are going to be able to train to be a nurse now that the bursary has been stopped. It is cutting off a whole workforce!



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## Jennifer, Norwich

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I wouldn't have chosen to study nursing had the funding not been available. I feel committed to the NHS as they have invested with me. If the funding had not been made available to me, I would not feel inclined to work for the NHS and would seek private employment.



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## Sadie, Gloucestershire

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I wouldn't have been able to start my degree without an NHS bursary. I have to pay childcare and travel and parking and it's convenient getting this monthly. It is better as I can budget better. Getting a one off loan would be awful!!! Having more money in your account can be tempting for students to purchase unnecessary desired items. Having a strict set monthly income from a bursary is far better.



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## Hilary, USA

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There is already little respect for the profession in UK, undervalued and unappreciated. Those are two of the reasons I brought my training to America. I was proud in the fact that you at least invested in your student nurses and talked to many who felt the nursing shortage here. Now you are even going to take that away. You will have no nurses at all within 25 years.



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## Cassie, Dundee

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I come from a poor background. Poorer than a lot of people. Both my parents died when I was a child and then the grandparents that raised me died when I was a teen. I have no one to rely on for financial support now. The bursary equates to 506GBP a month. I chose to live in Dundee because I couldn't afford to live in Edinburgh or Aberdeen around people I know on that sort of money. After rent and bills that leaves me with 180GBP a month, many of my friends have nothing after bills. We struggle to find part time work because of placement. I had a part time job I was forced to leave when I was sent on placement to Dunfermline for 4 weeks. Placement already costs far more than what we can claim back from SAAS. And we have to pay this upfront on very little income. You work 37.5 hours unpaid on placement and are expected to be able to subsist on air as very few jobs are available that allow the flexibility to support you during placement times. There is the nursing bank but that can take a year to get on. These changes to funding will stop a lot of people who care like I do about giving care to vulnerable people in their times of need because they won't be able to afford it. It will stop mature students, people who have already done a degree and as such would be valuable additions to the nursing workforce with their breadth of knowledge. Osbourne says that it'll free up more university spaces for nursing students, if spaces are so hard to get on how do so many end up in the clearing? Osbourne said a large amount of prospective nursing students were turned away, did he stop to consider the interview process for nursing to ensure that it was people with a passion for nursing that got in? A nursing salary upon graduation is lower than a lot of degree level jobs, when people choose to do it, it isn't for the money, but to force people into massive amounts of debt when the average nursing student is older with a family will only alienate a generation of prospective nurses.



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## Kayleigh, Devon

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I am mature student and have just started my second year of training to be a mental health nurse. Currently, as well as my degree and all that it entails, I am working 3 jobs as well as providing peer support to first year students. I am poor in terms of time and money, and often struggle trying to balance the demands of academic work, my employment and my placements. As difficult as all this is I am managing at the moment and am currently on course for a first. If I didn't receive a bursary and course funding I wouldn't have even been able to realistically consider even applying for the course. As a mature student the difficulty of giving up full time paid employment is hard enough but would be impossible without my bursary (which isn't hugely generous but much better than nothing!) I decided to become a nurse because I love working with people and supporting them through their darkest and most difficult times - it would be a shame to lose a huge proportion of students who can't afford to take on this level of debt at the start of their nursing career.



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## Lynsay, Glasgow

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My whole life, I've wanted to be a midwife. I decided to go a different route than straight from school into a Nursing or Midwifery degree, and do a Psychology degree first, then an accelerated post-graduate course in Nursing. I already have a student loan for my current studies, and it's going to be extremely hard financially for me to complete either a 3 year course in Midwifery with Registration or Adult Nursing with Registration. I am genuinely so gutted, I've wanted to be a midwife since I was a little girl and it may not be possible now.



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## Charlotte, Northamptonshire

I am a 28 year old woman with two children under 4 and a mortgage and bills to pay. I am lucky in that my husband works full time and we have been able to arrange flexible child care around his hours (many of my fellow students are in a much less financially stable position than me). If there was no bursary, I would simply not have been able to afford to study on this course. I love it and am so happy I am realising a dream but people should realise that the hours are long and the work is very hard; at the same time as working full time you are expected to turn in essays and assignments and revise for and sit difficult exams. It isn't a course for the light hearted and for the government to imply that it shouldn't be funded at a time when we are crying out for nurses is both overwhelmingly upsetting and wildly ill thought out. I know that financially these changes are unlikely to affect me, but they will affect future would be nursing cohorts who will now have to think very hard about whether they can follow their dream. We have one of the largest percentages of mature students on the course like myself, and these cuts mean that for many of those who want to train later in life, unless they have private funding there will be no hope for them. I worry that long term this will create shortages that mean qualified nurses will have to bear even more of the strain on the NHS than they already do, and that can only lead to diminished levels in quality of care. People need to understand that this will not only have a detrimental effect on nursing students, but other medical professionals and the people they care for as well. It's a frightening and uncertain future and one that the likes of Osborne and Cameron have seemingly little regard.



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## Jess, Oxfordshire

As a single mum trying to make a career for myself and set an example for my daughter I rely on bursary to help me with costs of daily living. I travel 25 miles to university as I could not live in halls with my daughter, I have an economic car that is on loan from a family member who thankfully can front the cost of running it but I still pay out for fuel. This alone is barely covered in my bursary allowance. Let's also consider my childcare costs, my parking costs to attend university and placements, my rent top up, my gas/electric and actually being able to feed me and my daughter. I work up to 14.5 hour days caring for people and their families during my placement and go home tired and sometimes emotional. If I were to work out my bursary as a salary during my placement I would be on below minimum wage. Students NEED financial support from bursary for our courses. We do not have time between our studies and practical placements to take on a job and if we did who would employ someone who didn't know when they could commit to working due to placements. Student loans are NOT suitable for student nurses as they do consider that we have far more outlays than a student who only has to attend university 2-3 times a week!



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## Nicola, York

I am currently studying FD in health and social care; Associate Practitioner, with a view to going into the nursing degree in the second year. The majority of my cohort are mature students working as health care assistants. We nearly all have young families and have financial commitments. We have many years' experience and a wealth of knowledge and an excellent understanding of the nursing role but I doubt many of us can afford to take on a huge loan at this time in our lives. My dream of becoming a staff nurse is absolutely shattered. I'm sure I wasn't the only one who shed a tear yesterday not only for myself, my colleagues but for the NHS. Another nail in the coffin, when will this government learn.



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## Claire, Oxford

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I am a third year student nurse and I come from a single parent home. I struggle to financially support myself at university as it is, even with the full bursary. I live off my student overdraft which causes me to have great stress and worry that I won't be able to pay my accommodation bills in time. My mum does not earn enough to give me any money to help me through my course. The NHS bursary was a large reason as to why I was able to do my nursing training and I feel that it is the same for many people. I believe that by the governments cut of the bursary will mean less people will be able to follow their dream of becoming a nurse and this in turn will then effect our work force in the future and might even cause wards having to shut and waiting times in a and e to increase due to unsafe staffing, lack of staff and exhausted staff. This will then effect patient outcome and health. I don't think the government have any idea what it is like to do a 13hour night shift and then do a full day at university followed by another night shift and then go to work the following day to try and earn some money to live off. I think they should try and do what we do and see how they cope because I don't think they would! Getting rid of the bursary is like getting rid of the future nursing staff! It's time the government get their heads out of the clouds and start supporting the NHS and nurses because one day they will need us and we won't be there to help, because no one will have been able to afford their course to become a nurse



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## Laura, Cheshire

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I'm currently in my second year of an adult nursing degree and was lucky enough to get a secondment from my employer, so don't receive a bursary. I would not have been able to survive on a bursary alone as a mature student with commitments and bills to pay with no partner or financial support. Even with the increased amount of SFE loan proposed it still isn't enough to survive on. I would never have been able to do my training without my secondment and now with the bursary being scrapped I fear for future generations of potential nurses who like me have no support and now will have a mass amount of debt to contend with as well as not being able to live hand to mouth whilst studying. I fear for my qualified future and the huge downturn nursing recruitment will take, meaning more staff shortages than we already have to care for an increasingly demanding public. I love the NHS and everything it stands for and ideas for its future, we should be standing together as a country to defend all aspects of it including education. Not allowing ourselves to be divided and defeated. Make no mistake, this is not about money. That's not how students see this. We see it as the dismantling of a service we care deeply about and will fight to the end to protect. We are not normal degree students and since the introduction of the degree we never have been. We are encouraged not get part time jobs to supplement bursaries (even though they know it's not enough) as it impacts on our studies and our patient care. But what choice do the majority of us have? We must stand together, don't let our voices become stifled as we won't end up being the only ones who suffer the ones we care for will too.

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### Rachel, London

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I do not believe that I would have been able to complete my nursing degree without the bursary. I have three children and do not have a partner, the bursary allowed me to provide for my family and study. I am now qualified and am loving my role. I am a firm believer that I and other mature student nurses bring a different and important aspect to the role, life experience and a unique perspective that enhances our role. By no longer providing a bursary the government are pretty much ruling out all mature students from nursing as we tend to have more financial responsibilities, therefore taking away this uniqueness that provides a richness to our workforce.

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### Laura, Scotland

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I did not go into nursing for the bursary however this could drive people away from nursing, it is near enough impossible to work a part time job as well as be a full time student and for 50% of the year work full time hours as a nurse. This bursary allows us to have a life as well as be a nurse. If we had no income the level of people willing to stick out the course and become qualified would drop dramatically as at times this is the only money we receive.

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### Katie, Chester

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I am a student nurse, I can barely make ends meet with student loan and bursary as it is. If I had have been applying for this course and there would not have been bursary available I would not have been able to apply.

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### Nicolle, Dundee

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There won't be anyone wanting to become a nurse if they are put into lots of debt.

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### Nicola, York

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I am currently studying FD in health and social care; Associate Practitioner, with a view to going into the nursing degree in the second year. The majority of my cohort are mature students working as health care assistants. We nearly all have young families and have financial commitments. We have many years' experience and a wealth of knowledge and an excellent understanding of the nursing role but I doubt many of us can afford to take on a huge loan at this time in our lives. My dream of becoming a staff nurse is absolutely shattered. I'm sure I wasn't the only one who shed a tear yesterday not only for myself, my colleagues but for the NHS. Another nail in the coffin, when will this government learn.

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### Laura, Wishaw

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I already have a 6 grand debt from the student loans company so I could do my HNC as I didn't have the grades to get into nursing beforehand. I'm struggling at the moment with the bursary and trying to fit work round my nursing career so I can survive paying my bills of my house and trying to live. I'm nearly at the of my studying but the thought paying off my loan I've got the now is frightening 6 grand may not be a lot to some people but to a single girl who lives on her own and has a house to pay bills it's a lot.

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### Siobhan, Airdrie

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I am a single parent trying to educate myself to do a job I am incredibly passionate about, also teach my son life lessons on the way, I will not be able to attend university to further my career if it goes back to student loans, I urge the government please do not distort our dreams



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## Jasmine, Doncaster

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I am a young working mother, with a mortgage to pay. If the student bursary was cut and I was forced to take student finance I simply would have been unable to do the course. I would have remained a support worker or nursing assistant forever. I am from a working class background and to go to university and train to be a nurse, was something I thought as a teenager was beyond me. I am proud to be doing my mental health nurse training and I believe people of all backgrounds should have equal opportunities, as we need a variety of different nurses.



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## Laura, Chester

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Living on the budget of a student bursary with a family is a challenge as it is, however had the option not been a bursary but a loan I would not have been able to even start my nursing degree, I like a lot of people on this course am older and have children who are at school, without the option to claim back childcare costs or even travel costs for placement from the NHS bursary, I wouldn't be in a position to pay for these things. I also would be wary about putting myself in so much debt when I have the responsibility of a family to provide for. Student nurses work for their money, we cannot, like other students do, have part time jobs to help us financially through our course because of the demands of working hours on placement. Working placement hours for free, without the option to have a paying job and finishing my training with a massive debt to pay back would make the degree an impossibility for myself, other people in families and those who come from lower income families unable to support them financially through the course.



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## Lynsey, Bristol

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Being an older student (I'm 33) and a mum of two girls I could not have afforded to go and study my Nursing degree. I am still working (far too much) to top up my bursary and small loan to be able to provide for my children and family home. I only started in September and I am exhausted already! I will carry on though and get the degree I have worked long and hard towards. I wish government would have a rethink on this, students who are going to be working long and hard for the NHS deserve some help to make the course achievable, it's hard going studying full time as well as working, and it's only going to get worse when I go out on placement in January.... Both financially as I can't work as often and emotionally. But I can't wait to do it.



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## Gavin, High Wycombe

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I came over from Ireland in September 2015 to study nursing because, nursing in Ireland is very much closed off, in regards to be able to get a place on a course. I worked very hard the year prior so I could afford to make the move and had lived back with my parents. I am not entitled to any funding from Ireland (because they only look at gross income not net income). I am also not entitled to any funding from England, because I haven't resided here prior to starting my course. This is leaving me no choice but to work every spare moment (which doesn't even cover my rent) while attending university. This will only become harder as time goes on as we've to complete half of our course on unpaid clinical placement. If this came into effect before I started my course there is no way I would be able to afford it, with massive debt you'd be paying off for years. I would be forced to look further afield or more than likely change career path. This decision will lead to a huge reduction of future student nurses, in an already failing health system.

## Emma, Liverpool

What about the mature students who have previously studied at university? Will they be entitled to another student loan to allow them to attend the course? We as student nurses when on placement work the same shifts as our mentors and have to complete assessments throughout including assignments, we will sadly not have any time to work on top of this if the changes are submitted and accepted. There will be a decrease in student nurses resulting in a detrimental effect on the NHS which in turn could result in the current nurses leaving their job. The NHS will cease to exist if this is accepted in parliament.

## Claire, St. Helens

That good potential nurses and carers will not do the training as they won't be financially capable which will lead to a national shortage. This will then create unbearable strain on staff already under pressure leading to potential life threatening situations! False economy as the government will then have to get a quick and expensive fix by bringing in nurses already qualified from abroad! Which incredibly will have trained in this country free of charge originally!

## Elaine, Tyne and Wear

Without the student bursary I simply could not have completed my nurse training. I had a young family and could not have managed on loans and then being saddled with debt. I have been a qualified mental Health nurse for fourteen years now and love my chosen field, however what worries me is how many will be unable to follow me due to the changes you have made.

## Elisha, York

After studying mental health nursing for 2 years, I failed a role play based assignment on the second attempt by just 2% and unfortunately had to leave the course. I was advised not to bother appealing the decision as not many students won the appeal. After some time I decided not to apply to do the course again until 2017. This decision was made as I felt I needed enough time to prepare to go back, feeling I'd rushed into uni after completing an access to nursing and midwifery course at college. I wanted to be financially and mentally stable before I returned in order to be the best nurse I could be. Despite having my NHS bursary throughout 2 years on the course, I still worked as a carer in any free time I had. Without the bursary I would have found it financially impossible. The recent news of the bursary being removed is very concerning. I am unsure whether returning in 2017 will be possible. I feel very pressured to apply to start again in 2016 and I worry I will not be in the best position to do so. Training to be a nurse is the hardest but most rewarding thing I have ever encountered. It is simply not another degree. It is a lifestyle and a commitment. A typical week may consist of 37.5 hours on placement and another 20 in a separate paid position to supplement the bursary. This is without researching and writing assignments around this. Social life and family life disappears within the first month of university. There were many days where even sleeping was a luxury. The bursary to me means being a useful member of society in pursuing something I am passionate about.

## Naomi, Bristol

This means I will have to work on top of completing my placement, meaning I will may be working a 60 hour week.

## Heather, Northern Ireland

That's appalling. Nursing students are underpaid for the amount of work they do on top of their studies. A few years ago my son, who was a nursing student at the time, and I worked out that for the hours spent working on wards he got 50p per hour. A total disgrace. They are the only students I know of that are unable to do any sort of part time work elsewhere to supplement their allowance. When other students were out at weekends enjoying themselves, the nursing students were working in hospitals. I'm disgusted by our Government and sincerely hope they reconsider before they end up with no nursing students in the years to come.

## Tara, Middlesbrough

The NHS bursary allows me to pursue my dream of nursing whilst also raising my child. I have received maternity pay during my training which I would not have been able to do if I was receiving a loan. Falling pregnant would mean that future nurses cannot continue with their nursing degree as they couldn't afford the time off like I have thankfully been able to. Without the bursary I couldn't afford to travel to and from placement. I couldn't afford childcare for the hours I do unpaid on placement. Without the bursary I'd be forced to work every single day I wasn't at university or placement and I'd miss out on seeing my child grow up.

## Sarah, West Midlands

I agree with the change to Uni fees, however the bursary is a different matter, because of the structure of the course i.e. having to work in practice (working full time) for half of the course it is very difficult to fit paid work in therefore the bursary is essential unless the course structure changes. I am a very mature student and only get minimal bursary but I couldn't cope without it.

## Dawn, Cambridgeshire

I am a mature student and without the bursary it would have been too much to expect my husband to support me in my degree knowing that after three years of sacrificing a full time second income I would be saddled with more debt than my first years income. A mortgage and family means that every penny is accounted for regardless of the amount he earns. As it stands I will still start my first year with a student debt of over £7000. The government state that it will allow for 10,000 more degree places, good luck filling them! I do not know one person on my course that could consider doing it without the bursary. I am dedicated to being a nurse but not at the cost of those dependant on my ability to provide.

## Joanna, Kent

I am a 3rd year student nurse, I am also a single mother to one child. Having the NHS bursary that pays for my tuition fees, and living expenses and 85% of childcare costs. Thanks to the bursary I receive monthly I have been able to go to university and fulfil my dream of becoming a nurse. I qualify next summer, so I'm nearly there. If the government take away the bursary for nursing students then not many people will want to pursue nursing as a career. Saddled with 27,000 pounds of tuition fees debt, taking out a maintenance loan to pay bills, not many people will be drawn to this. I didn't study nursing to make money, I wanted to become a nurse to make a difference to a patient's life, to anyone's life. I go on placement for 50% of my time often doing long days, then going home and studying late into the night, so that I can keep up with all the theory. We start off as a tiny seed and blossom into a fully-fledged flower, we need the bursary to water our garden. The government shouldn't take it away.



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## Jack, London

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The Bursary change would mean I personally would have to pay off the loan for 111 years based on the Council Of Deans OWN CALCULATIONS. If the government is going to write it off after 30 years then a HUGE debt bubble will form ready to burst just as I retire!!! I sit on the NMC's Education Advisory Group as the UK's Student representative, even there it is acknowledged by everyone that there are not enough mentors and many placement areas are under increasing strain to provide quality placements, HOW will an influx of new students be accommodated? Currently we attract some amazing talent into this profession from people who have previous degrees or life experience, lumbering these entrants with an even higher loan will lead to a brain drain on the profession and a loss of some of the most active and influential future nurses we could have. Opening the doors to fee paying students has happened because the Council of Deans and the Government have said half of applicants get turned away when they apply. THAT'S BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT SETS THE NUMBERS THAT CAN BE ACCEPTED! This will allow for international students to come into the UK to study nursing, I am not against this, however a university can make ALLOT more money from international students, which shows the motivation for them to do this, not to mention through FOI requests we have seen that at my university there was a £3,214260 difference in what the University received from government to train nurses Vs what the School of Nursing actually received for its budget in the year 2014-2015, is that an ethical amount to make in profit PER YEAR from public money? Does it not show that Nursing Education is a cash cow for universities, OF COURSE the Council Of Deans wants to open the doors! The education in this country it is accepted is not on par with our global and European colleagues and now we are going to have to pay for this substandard education? Whilst the Government can sell a "British Degree, with accompanying visa" to the

rest of the world! Why not secure British Nursing positions AND open the degree to international applicants? That would increase nursing numbers! Too many of my colleagues would not be able to become nurses as a result of this, myself included. I already have to work and study to supplement myself as does the majority of students, especially mature students. The attrition rates of Nursing students (20%) is another reason the government has been using to claim that will come down with the loan system. The attrition rate for Nursing training has been at 20% pretty much statically since the time of Florence Nightingale!!! And that was prior to the Bursary, and it's because this is a HARD JOB! It is not for everyone and many academics now wonder whether the 20% mark is just a fact of the profession that should be factored in!



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## Lucy, Shropshire

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If I was faced with the prospect of a massive amount of debt and working for free for half of the course only to qualify for a £21,000 salary, I would think twice about training. The government may think this will open the door for more student nurses in the future they are mistaken and we sadly may lose out on so many people who would make superb nurses.



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## Jessica, Bridgwater

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Whilst on placements we do nearly 40 hour weeks unpaid. Getting the bursary means that we can do this without having to work as well. The degree is longer than any other degree with very little time off to earn money. I'm not sure future students will survive without it, plus the stress of having another huge loan to add to their debt. A lot of students are mature with children, I think they will struggle with finance and childcare seeing as the bursary helps with childcare.

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### **Vikki, Isle of Wight**

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Insult to the profession. How on earth are we going to recruit to the profession that is already at crisis point? No other job would you work full time and have to pay for it!! Slave labour!

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### **Richard, Grimsby**

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I am 57 and a mature student, without the bursary I would not be able to study. My University is in Hull which is over 30 miles away. I am extremely lucky because I am in receipt of a full military pension which supplements my bursary. As has already been stated we do 50% study and 50% unpaid placement in Hospitals or the community caring for real patients.

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### **Chloe, Anglesey**

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I am an aspiring nurse who is going to be going to university next year to complete my nursing degree. The scrapping of the bursary will have a devastating effect on my abilities to support myself financially during my time as a student nurse, as I will not have any spare time for a part-time job.

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### **Laura, Northampton**

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Without this bursary I wouldn't be able to afford to do my nursing training. I have to drive 45 miles a day, to placement, for 5 days. It equates to £30 a week. Which works out at £660 a year. This means that in the three years that it takes to qualify, I would have spent just under £2,000 just to travel to placement. That is also ignoring the fact that it is hard to get a job on the side to actually earn some money.

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### **Louise, Cardiff**

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I have been a qualified nurse since 2001 and the fact of the matter is this wouldn't have happened without my bursary as it supported me through my training. This is essential to all student nurses as unlike other students who can be in uni for a paltry 6 hours a week, if I wasn't in uni Mon-Fri full time, then I was on the wards working weekends and shifts to gain the experience I needed to complete my education. Because of this, it made it impossible to also hold down a part-time job. As sad as I am that the government has made this decision, it doesn't surprise me when you look at the way it is currently treating junior doctors and other medical professionals within the health service. However they need to remember one thing - the bursary gives people the opportunity to train to be nurses and do a job they love for life (despite the government doing their best to stop it). So in 5 years' time when we have hardly any new recruits to replace the aging working population, don't wonder where it all went wrong, and don't think you can rely on nurses from overseas, because the NHS will be in such a state that no one will want to work for it. Then at that point the Tories will get what they have wanted along- privatisation!

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### **Sarah, Kettering**

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I'm a mature student nurse, my youngest and only child still at home has started an apprenticeship. This means I have lost £350 of child tax credits and child benefit. I now have only £756 of NHS bursary plus £100 rent my daughter can afford from her wages. My rent is £500 and then bills on top. Making the decision to become a mature student was hard but it is the best decision I have ever made. Also remember a student nurse's academic year structure is very different to that of other degrees and therefore how loans are paid must be adjusted accordingly.



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## Lisa, Aberdeen

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Attending higher education in Scotland is beneficial in its own right as we get our tuition fees paid for us, and for that I am extremely grateful. But Nursing is an entirely different university course in its own right compared to other courses. We spend 50% of our academic year (which might I add isn't like every other course, we do NOT get summer holidays off nor Easter breaks) on clinical placement, working 37.5 hours a week, full time hours, and NOT getting paid for it, as our bursary is seen as our payment. I receive £506 a month in the form of the nursing bursary, which I appreciate so much as I genuinely could not live without it as it pays my rent and my bills for the flat I live in with in Aberdeen city, which is an affluent oil city, therefore it is not a cheap place to live, with your standard 2 bedroom flat costing £800-900 a month in rent alone, not including bills. Obtaining a part-time job is not easy due to the nature of the nursing degree, with working full time hours during clinical placement, if we were to work a part time job on top of that (which I do) we are essentially working overtime, however not getting paid for 37.5 of those hours, it sometimes feels like slave labour, however it is essential to our learning to becoming a registered staff nurse. Not only are we working full time hours, but unsocial ones at that, with working weekends and also nightshifts too. Like I have said, I receive £506 in student bursary and I do have a part time job working as a health care support worker in the local hospital, Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, and I still don't have enough money to live off of. I cannot afford a healthy substantial diet as I am torn between working a shift for my part time job on my day off from university to earn money to eat, or instead of working that shift, going to the library on my day off and completing course work which I have to pass to graduate and get on the register. In order to save money, rather than cut the student nurse bursary (which we rely on in order to LIVE) how about you cut MP's wage or put them on a pay freeze for a minimum of 5 years instead of giving them an 11% pay rise like they got this

year. Stop punishing your NHS and your nurses of the future and protect them, make the course an appealing course to apply for and complete. I am not on this course for the money, I love nursing. I love caring for people and their loved ones, ensuring I provide the best possible care I can every single minute I am on duty. Without nurses, your health service will crumble and you're only encouraging this to happen by taking away a crucial necessity to a student nurse.



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## Dilu, Reading

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I am a mature student and I am originally from Nepal. There were two factors that attracted towards me to the nursing course and that were NHS funded tuition fee and the bursary. I wanted to come out of university and degree with a min loan. It sounds like I am in the nursing course entirely for the money, but it is not true. I have always admired nursing profession. To be able to care for someone else is a quality not everyone can have and to be able to build career in the profession is blessing for me. Even with the bursary, I need to have a part time job. I cannot imagine myself to go to course at my age with no support. This decision of cutting down bursary will undoubtedly discourage mature students like me to come to this profession when there is already shortage of nurses. And from what I have seen, majority of student nurses are mature student.



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## Kayleigh, North Wales

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I've already had to drop my wage to complete a year's worth of experience work as a carer before I can apply for uni, I have a mortgage and bills to pay by myself, I won't be able to afford to realise my dream to train as a nurse if the bursary goes.



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## Lydia, Nottingham

Unlike my student loan, my NHS bursary covers my rent for me every month with very little left over, my student loan gives me £700 and term, which works out £175 and month, (approx £43 a week) this money is what I use for food, the money I used to buy my nursing shoes, the money I use to buy necessities, and what I spend on travel costs, again, at the end of every month I have barely anything left over and spend. Lot of time in my overdraft. Without my NHS bursary, my dream of being a Nurse would be out of reach, I couldn't afford to do a full time job to pay my rent as well as the hours I put in every week going to Uni and studying at home. We will already be in £7000 worth of debt from our student loan which worries me, how can taking the bursary away and replacing with another loan going to encourage people like me, who want nothing more than to be a nurse, to train to be a Nurse, I know I wouldn't be able to cope, and sadly neither will thousands others. Thousands of people will turn down the opportunity all down to money, the NHS needs more Nurses, and this change will sadly make that worse.



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## Emma, Glasgow

I go to university next year and this has made me change my mind completely as I am struggling already at college to pay for anything and I work a full time job as well as go to college 3 days a week and placement one day, I get no money for doing any of this so every other day off and every day after college and placement I am spent working hours. This is going to be the same as when I go to university but 10 times worse as the work load is going to be so much more. I can't afford to pay to get to college anymore so getting to university will be harder. I have no time to study or do essays as every day I have to work to get money to pay for the stupid of little things.



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## Jenny, Cambridgeshire

I am 28 year old, 3rd year student nurse. Without the bursary I would not be able to afford the cost of living. I do not live with my parents so therefore I must provide for myself. Along with rent, bills to pay, I must also provide cost towards maintenance of a car which without this, would provide difficult in getting to placements. Therefore scrapping the bursary would not allow me to fund my living and I would have to rely on countless loans. We are on placement 30+ hours a week along with attending university study days, having a part time job is near on impossible. Especially with the placement requiring flexibility. Therefore the bursary acts as a small percentage of wage.



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## Becky, Mansfield

I plan to apply for a place at Nottingham University on the midwifery course. Without the bursary I won't be able to study as I will need to work full time to cover my mortgage.

## Elizabeth, West Yorkshire

As a qualified nurse of 10 years nursing was my only route into university. As the daughter of a working class single parent I did not have the means to funds a degree. I trained for 3 years working everyday both on placement, uni study and as a HCA to top up my living expenses. Since then I feel I pay more out than I earn with RCN, NMC fees and staff parking. If I didn't love my job (my patients) I would definitely be off to Aldi where I know I could earn more with no responsibility and stress. Living wage will eventually take over staff nurse pay yet the nurses of the future will be paying all the above fees and a loan. The profession is going down the pan!

## Nicola, Essex

I am a single mother of two children, without the bursary I wouldn't be able to study to be a nurse at university as I wouldn't finically be able to support myself and my children, I would have to get a job to support my studies making my life unbearable as I would be studying, working 30 hours a week in placement, running a house, being a mother and the little time I do have would be trying to support my family, I probably wouldn't of trained as a nurse if this would of been the situation as I feel I would be physically and mentally stressed

## Chris, Glasgow

I'm a qualified learning Disability nurse, while studying I found it hard to work due to the demands of university and placement hours. Finding employment that was flexible with these demands was very hard. And the bursary helped me with transport to uni, placement and also for my study materials including the list of books needed to study.

## Emily-Kate, Plymouth

I am from a very low income family, as a child I was brought up in poverty caring for my dad and brothers who have Mental Health Difficulties. Becoming a Mental Health Nurse was a natural path for me I am now in my second year. The changes to the student bursaries are ridiculous, in their manifesto the Tories state they need 20,000 Nurses by stopping the bursaries how do they expect to get this. Without my bursary I wouldn't have been able to go to university, when I'm home I work 3 jobs to make ends meet as my parents cannot help me and my bursaries make up my rent. Not all of us are so lucky to have multimillion trust funds like Mr Cameron and George Osborne. #bringbackourbusaries

## Katie, Sheffield

With the full time nature of the course, I work as often as possible around placement hours, this sometimes equates to a 60+ hour working week just to stay afloat, and that is with a bursary (I only receive £251 a month). How are people like me expected to live a normal life without this? I have dreamt of being a nurse to improve people's lives and experiences and this dream may not be achievable in the future. I also know many other peers in worse financial situations with a family to support. Nurses provide the backbone of the NHS but recently seem to be suffering the most. This is the profession us, the student nurses are working to improve, but this now may not be possible for some.

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## Cheryl, Todmorden

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Prior to my nurse training I worked as an hca. I have three children and qualified this year. Even with a bursary I am in significant debt, and behind on mortgage payments. Participating on practice placements and challenging academic work, I was unable to hold down a part time job, being a student nurse means putting yours and your family life on hold resulting in them missing out. Having someone of my experience I would not have been able to commence my training without a bursary

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## Tina, North Wales

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Although the change does not affect Welsh nursing students (yet) I still wish to share my experience of having the bursary with you. The bursary has allowed me to attend the nursing degree course, without it I would not have been able to afford to do the course. I am currently in my final year and qualify in September 2016. The bursary has helped with living costs and I also have to work part time to bring in enough money to cover all outgoings. The course is VERY demanding, with having to attend lectures, write essays and complete placements, I have little time to work shifts but somehow manage this. A typical week for me at the moment is going to University 3 days a week, two days a week I work 12 hour shifts and then I am left with two days to fit in the rest of my life (I'm a mum and have a house to maintain as well as cook, clean and everything else). My social life is very limited, I'm thankful if I go out to visit friends once a month. With stopping the bursary it means new student nurses will have huge debt once qualified and also might need to work longer hours. I can't see how that is going to be possible, there isn't enough hours in the day. By stopping the bursary I think many people who would like to become a nurse will be put off and not apply. I think it could affect the amount of people applying to get on the course.

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## Abigail, Tewkesbury

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I decided to live away from home whilst at university. My bursary helped me to be able to pay for my travel costs to and from placement that I otherwise would not have had the upfront money for. In third year I had to move house a month before my course ended because my tenancy ended in the house I was previously in. I was currently on my final placement in the community which was 5 days a week. I was already doing weekend shifts where I had the energy. Without my bursary I would have had to work every single weekend over a 12 week period with no rest. That's 7 days a week. This would mean I wouldn't have spare time to see my family or friends or just relax! Without the bursary my financial status would have been 100 times worse than it already is now and I'd have been forced to drop out.

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## Helen, Derbyshire

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I am 35 years old and married with two children. For me, the bursary was the only way I could afford to pursue a nursing career. I tried to keep a part time job whilst studying but this had a negative impact on both my family and academic achievement as trying to keep a job alongside placement meant I was working up to 60 hours a week. A nursing degree is unlike most other degrees, full time means full time, from September to September. I have 7 weeks 'holiday' per year but this time is usually used to write an assignment or work on my portfolio. My last placement was a 45 mile round trip, 5 days a week, for which I had to pay for fuel and parking until claiming expenses, without bursary I could not have possibly done this. My final point is to acknowledge the low salary of a qualified nurse. I could not justify the thousands of pounds worth of debt I would be left with without the bursary, to be earning a wage well below the national average. I would have simply chosen another career.

## Lisa, West Yorkshire

Nursing was my second career and second time at university. When I decided to go into nursing I had a mortgage and bills to pay and was already saddled with debt from my first degree. Had the bursary not been available I honestly don't think I would have pursued my dream of being a nurse. So many nurses choose to go into the profession later in life when they have financial responsibility and often dependants and by taking away the bursary the government are going to lose a huge amount of potentially excellent nurses. Shame on the government.

## Ellie, Carshalton

I am a full time nursing student, and I have worked a part time job since commencing my studies just to pay for petrol and parking to get me to placement or university. The NHS bursary provides me with £80 a month which I save up to pay for my car insurance. Recently I had to quit my job in order to go to placement on the weekends. I started a new job and it interferes with my placement: often I do not spend much time with my educator as I need the money to even get me to placement. Without the bursary I would not even be able to get to university or placement which would cost me £20 a day to travel by public transport. Us Student nurses work damn hard, I've done over 58.5 hours for weeks at a time, we should get the help we deserve and need

## Jessica, Cambridge

I am a student nurse and have been to university before for a year, before the tuition fee rise. I did not enjoy my time on this course, so I became a HCA at a local hospital. Through the confidence of my other staff members, I applied and am now in my final year. The bursary I receive is essential as now I don't have a loan to pay back. My choice to have started my nurse training would have been severely affected by taking out loans.

## Leanne, Birmingham

Without the bursary I physically won't be able to train. Why are we being forced to pay £9 per hour to work long hard hours for free?

## Katie, Ipswich

If I did not have my bursary I would be unable to pay rent, pay for food, cover to costs of commuting to placement and maintains the vehicle I use for placement. The combined amount of my bursary and student loan just about covers these. A nursing course demands its students to work 30-36 hours a week for the NHS caring for patients on top of the demands of university work. Taking away the bursary is essentially taking away the wage we deserve for this work. Our bursary each year is essentially equal to a wage. Other professional courses such as Health visiting which require students to work supply an amount worth a wage. Taking away the bursary will prevent the course from being financially feasible and will put off many young people who are potential nurses. The nursing staff shortage and reliance on agency and bank staff will only increase within the NHS -- further damaging a valued service and further damaging the quality of service patients receive

## Gareth, Kingswinford

I now work in critical care, looking after some of the sickest people in West Bromwich. I am currently mentoring a student who is about to finish her training and is currently looking for jobs. Without the bursary neither of us would have been able to afford to go to university. I would have had to work part time alongside my studying and working placement hours and simply would not have been able to afford it. Without the bursary I wouldn't be a nurse



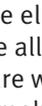
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## Angela, Glasgow

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I live right now off a £504 bursary, to which has been cut from the original £548 (if that wasn't enough already. I also pay £325 rent off of this, pay electricity bills, a phone contract and the measly rest I use to live off of, along with possibly the odd relief shift from my job in my hometown one hour away. It is disgusting enough as it is, having nurses live off money such as this in today's current situation and prices of private lets. However to take it away from us COMPLETELY is out of order. Let me give you an insight into my course. I do 37.5 hour weeks in placement. As of the end of January next year I will undertake 25 weeks of placement, following the months since September that has been consumed with a drowning amount of theoretical work. Alongside my 25 hour of placement next January I will also undertake two theoretical modules alongside this, and have one day in university. And let me tell you, placement is NEVER placement. I learn the hard way, I do all the jobs your staff nurses do right now however only under someone else's registration. And I also undertake all the "odd jobs" that no other healthcare worker has time to do. My days are extremely full, tiring, stressful... and I come home each day with emotional lag from maybe the mother I spoke to that day that's child is battling cancer. So HOW can you take away a nurses bursary, when they WORK for it, every single day. My friend who does another degree course in business, NEVER undertakes a hard day's work in the real world. While I do 37.5 hour weeks in placement, 1 day in uni, and then the odd shift in my relief job (to gain more money from the small amount we already get), my friend undergoes one day in university! This course is unlike any other degree, so the thought process in this decision is wrong, wrong, wrong. In the third year of my course, I have already had to take out a £2000 overdraft, due to the receiving amount from my bursary currently not being enough, and not having the financial help from family. And you want to add a student loan payment on top of the financial situation your current nurses are already in? I do this

course because being a children's nurse is something I have always wanted to do, however try getting me to do it, knowing the pay nurses get paid each hour as staff nurses, as well as having to pay a chunk of student loan back from this when they qualify. You will decrease in nurses wanting to do this, I can guarantee. I speak to my fellow student nurses every day, and I work the job. You, George Osborne, don't



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## Zoe, Barnsley

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I would be prohibitive for me to seriously consider training to be a nurse if it wasn't for the bursary we are paid to train. I would have still tried to do it as becoming a nurse is very important to me. Perhaps if the nurses pay scale was in line with other graduate professionals it may not seem like such an enormous blow to be encumbered with £50,000 of student debt! I also worry about how I would pay to complete any further qualifications (MSc for example) without support. As this is one of the only ways to move up the nursing pay scales.



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## Charlotte, Nottingham

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I am a mature student and a single parent. I have previous debts and high outgoings. It is a fact that I fall into the bracket of students that are far less likely to drop-out of a course part way through. I can honestly say if these changes came into effect before my course started then I never would have applied because in the long term I wouldn't have been able to afford it. For what we do as students (working 37+ hours a week + coursework + revision + reflections) we are not compensated enough as it is and the changes will deter many students like myself who are considered 'the cream of the crop' from even bothering to apply. I love what I do and am happy to put in the work for a degree to work in the NHS but I would not ever use a loan to do it.



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## Estella, Kingston

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I decided to go into nursing because I felt like it was a rewarding experience. I wanted to start helping children and their families get back to their health. I understood that the pay would not be a lot but still wanted to go with it because I'm so compassionate with care. Taking away the bursary means that we have to pay it back. How can nurses be able to afford to pay back the money and live? If I had to pay student loans for nursing, I would not go ahead as I wouldn't feel I'm rewarded for hard work.



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## Sarah, Gloucestershire

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I am 33 years old and live with my husband and 4 children aged between 11 months and 7 years old. My husband works full time nights so my chance of work i.e. Bank is nil. Without the bursary I wouldn't be able to manage. It helps our income and childcare costs. I believe I have a lot to offer the NHS as a nurse and I'm fortunate in that I've been able to train under the current regime. If things were different I would never have been able to do it, as the financial burden would have been too much to manage with a family the size of mine.



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## Amanda, Cambridge

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I am an adult learner with a husband and two children. I had my children young so was unable to fulfil a degree at the usual time. I am able to fulfil my desire to become a nurse now made slightly easier by the fact that I will have next to no debt at the end of my degree. If I was to have a mountain of debt at the end it would not have been worth my while! I fear it will put off adult learners entering into the degree programme, which will mean the NHS losing out on valuable, decent people who would make fantastic nurse!



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## Jane, Suffolk

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I am currently applying for a University place on a midwifery degree course. I am a single parent enrolled on an access course which will give me the qualifications I need to gain a university place. I have to work at least 3 days per week already, alongside my current full time course, to enable me to manage financially. The NHS bursary would have enabled me to afford to study at university. Because of the nature of the course, it would be near impossible to have another job alongside the degree. I understand that scrapping the bursary is intended to free up more spaces on a heavily over-subscribed course, but having seen the many comments on online forums, it seems this decision is putting aspiring midwives off applying. Myself and others who desperately want to join this profession, and fight hard to get places due to the competitive nature, do not want to become midwives because of the pay. They want to be able to give women the right to a positive birth experience. We have already heard in the news this week that more infant deaths are likely after a child is born in hospital over a weekend, though staffing levels have not been attributed to this (yet). We struggle financially to try and enter this profession because we feel we can make a difference to an already stretched NHS sector. Cutting the bursary will have a dramatically negative impact, the result of which could be disastrous.



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## Anne, Wirral

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My uni course is not like other courses. I'm a student nurse. I work 50% of my time doing a full time job, in care settings like hospitals and nursing homes. My role is a cross between the work of a registered nurse, a healthcare assistant and an all-round dogsbody. I'm the runner - I do the odd jobs that the ward needs to run on a day-to-day basis, but I also do the heavy stuff. I wash patients, help feed them, dress their wounds, help them walk from place to place, help them move when they can't, help give them their medications, write in their care plans, take them to the bathroom, chat to them, reassure them and their relatives, make them feel safe, loved, cared for, wanted, and I help care for them, wash them, dress them and lay them out after they pass on. I regularly go home after a 14 hour shift exhausted, too tired to eat anything when I get home and both emotionally and physically drained. I get in to bed, ready to get up again and do it all again the next day. And I do all this for free. I, and others like me help keep the NHS running. We keep the wards going even when they're incredibly short staffed, and we more often than not do it with a smile, because we're helping people, and at the end of the day that's what we want to do. But without us, I have no doubt that the NHS could not keep running as it does. Students are the backbone of so many care settings, if that doesn't sound too big headed. But it's true. This course isn't easy - we knew that when we started. However, without even the small bursary given to us by the NHS, it would be very nearly impossible for some. We complete around 2,700 hours of clinical placement work over our 3 year course (37.5hrs/week). The average healthcare assistant (whose duties student nurses are a big part of) earns about £7 an hour. That comes to £3150 every 12 weeks (the average length of my clinical placements). That's £18900 for the 2,700 hours that we work overall. A lot less than the bursary we receive, or received. When I say that we work those hours, we really do WORK them. Our job is no less intense than any other healthcare practitioners - we aren't

sitting in an office, we are doing the physical work required to run a hospital, or a nursing home, but we do it for free. We don't have the time to work part time jobs in between working a full time week, writing assignments and attending university when we're not on placement, so the bursary is a much needed help for us. Not to mention that our course is longer, with less holidays, meaning that we have less 'holiday' time to get a part time job and earn some money, like other students can. With the added responsibility of childcare and previous student debts for some, doing this course would be nearly impossible without the bursary. Yes, you have opened up more places in university for nursing courses, but what's the point if people can't afford to take the course? That's why we need the bursary, not because we're spoiled.



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## Adrienne, Glasgow

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This nursing bursary is crucial in order for me to continue with my studies. As a third year student with a young child (who I pay £700 a month in childcare fees whilst on placement for) it is a crucial source of income for my family. I have resorted to moving home with family as the bursary although enhanced for myself with a child, still is not enough to cover both childcare fees and my own home. This bursary being scrapped from students would result in me being unable to carry out the rest of my studies, giving up my course place so close to qualifying. I know many other students in my positions, each struggling financially but willing to persevere for a profession in which they LOVE! This nursing bursary is a necessity for most people within the course in order for them to be able to achieve even just a basic standard of living



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## Beatrice, Southampton

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I am a first year nursing student and although these changes shouldn't affect me, I would like to make clear that without the bursary I would have been financially unable to pursue my dream career. I am 19 years old and live with my partner who works part time and my daughter who is 2 years old. The bursary helps me towards my rent and also pays my childcare costs, without this financial support I would be unable to do the degree as lengthy placement hours and issues with childcare would make it extremely difficult to work part time alongside the course, leaving me no time with my young family. I think it is terrible that this is being imposed as it will prevent those from working class families such as myself from being able to follow their ambitions. As a young mother I constantly face judgement and wish to prove that you can still go to uni and provide a stable environment for your child, yet the government seems to be intent on going against this.



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## Sarah, UK

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Currently applying to study nursing as a second degree. Now due to decisions made by people who had access to a free education and bursaries, we will be working not to the equivalent of £2(!) an hour, but will actually be working ourselves into debt. My question is how do you build a debt free Britain when bursaries are loans?



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## Clare, Scarborough

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I am 44 with 2 children and now in my third year. I cannot work as I travel 2 hours at least a day when on placement and work 13 hour shifts. When in uni I have to juggle childcare with lectures and essay writing. Without the bursary I could not have even contemplated this course and I have so much to give.



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## Kayleigh, Derbyshire

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I am a 27 year old mature student. I am in my second year of my adult nursing degree. I have two children, one is four and the other is two. My partner works full time to help cover the costs of childcare fees. My daughter goes to nursery 5 days a week for 10 hours each day. My son is in full time education but I still have to pay for breakfast club, after school club and holiday club which is during half term. My child care fees cost me £1300 per month. To live with my partner and children costs me £1800 and that is excluding food and petrol. I am now having to join an agency to cover the costs of travelling to and from university. As a mother and a mature student I heavily rely upon my bursary. If I didn't have my bursary I would not of been able to pursue my ambitions of becoming an adult nurse. I have no support network as a mean of family to look after my children and therefore I require nursery to do this. I do not understand the scheme of making NHS students pay to do the course. Because as nurses we are never going to be able to pay off the debt of £30-50k from student loans. The starting salary of a staff nurse is £21k. I believe this is going to have a significant impact of the NHS because fewer people will want to become part of the NHS. Many of us do not come from backgrounds where our parents can pay for living costs. In addition to this nurses and other professionals will not be able to optimise further education or enhancements of their skills due to this massive cut.



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## Laura, Glasgow

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To deliver safe, effective and person centred care we need to attract the brightest and best nurses. The bursary allows people from all walks of life to realise an incredible dream, the dream of joining an amazing professional and having the honour of being a guest in our patients' lives. The training is tough. The pay isn't the best. The hours are long, but we do this because we love the challenge. The systematic demoralisation of NHS staff began with junior doctors and now the Tory government are trying bring their poison to our profession. We will stand with our colleagues to defend our NHS. Our precious resource. The NHS will remain our most brilliant shining example of the welfare state despite all the actions taken to destroy our morale. I believe that there has been no consideration taken around the affect this will have on front line services. Students are essentially going to be slave labour, this is what the Conservative Government believe is progress. I am further disgusted by the day at the actions of this government. I hope our devolved government can in some way shield us from this, as they have done with our pay in NHS Scotland. Staff are not even valued enough in NHS England to receive their 1% pay rise, while the MP's were awarded a rise from 67k to 74k. There is no equality, there is no respect and there is no awareness of the value of NHS staff in England. I whole heartedly support my medical colleagues striking in England. This may perhaps take nurses the same way.



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## Abby, Mansfield

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The change will cripple me if I am accepted into my midwifery course. There is no time to earn money alongside placements and the degree. Therefore my partner will be fully responsible to pay our mortgage bills and house bills! The bursary would have helped to pay bills and also go towards my fuel to get to and from uni and placements!



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## James, London

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I am not from a wealthy family. As such I have been entitled to the full amount of NHS bursary. Even WITH the full amount I have had to rely on help from my family and taking on extra work, often while on placement. Removing these bursaries will mean many people will not be able to pursue nursing as a career. I am confident that this will negatively affect the NHS's capability to recruit nurses in the future. I also believe this opens the doors for nursing to become a money-making degree for many universities.



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## Sian, Worthing

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This would deter many people from undertaking a nursing career as it would be impossible on a nurse's salary to pay back. We already lose many applicants due to nursing being a very unrewarding vocation to take. No one does it for the money we do it because we care about people, but we can only do so much because of our compassionate nature. Many of us struggle to make ends meet already, with our stagnant pay not matching price of inflation. To be in so much debt before even starting a hard career is crazy and will put thousands off pursuing this career.



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## Kerry, Rotherham

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There is no way I would have been able to access a career in Mental Health Nursing if I had to have a loan to pay for the course. I am a mature student who has 3 children. I gave up permanent employment to do this course, so that I can hopefully help people suffering with mental illnesses. I cannot imagine how many past nursing students, who are now amazingly trained nurses (who work damn hard) would have not entered into nursing if the nursing course had not been funded. We are short enough on nursing staff. This will only add to the shortage of nursing staff. The Tory government should leave the NHS bursary funding as it is. They should support our NHS not destroy it! Stop adding to the inequalities of this country.



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## Toni, Manchester

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Until you live the life of a student nurse, you will never understand what it is like to have what is pretty much a full time job and a lot of traveling on top, I know a lot of students like myself who spend at least 16+ hours a week traveling to and from placement or uni, whilst trying to juggle essays and exam revision, and also everyday life. The bursary we receive is not “free money” we work extremely hard, physically, mentally and emotionally for what works out below minimum wage. We haven’t chosen nursing for a job, we’ve chosen it for a vocation, because we want to make a difference and do what we love, but, these changes will not make it possibly for many people who would like to become a nurse. All I can say is that I will be lucky enough to have finish my degree before the changes are made, otherwise I don’t think I would be able to do what I love. I just feel sorry for the people who long to be a nurse and may not ever get there.



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## Leanna, Coventry

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Without this bursary, I certainly wouldn’t have been able to leave full time paid employment to go on to study full time. Working 13hr shifts with my bursary and having to take out a second student loan is not enough as it is. When on placement it is a huge struggle; working 40hrs in clinical placement and possibly not being able to work part time makes it even difficult to pay for my fuel to get to placements; not to mention living expenses and bills to pay (with the 25% student nurse discount on council tax). The constant worry about finance makes it harder to study...without the bursary, future students would have to rely on parents or other means of financial support...some students do not have that luxury... It will be only those who could afford to study that would go on to become a nurse which means future good nurses may not get the opportunity to deliver excellent care. The future of our nation relies on nurses; it’s cheaper to get people who want to nurse rather than pay more for agency nurses, who, often don’t have the passion nor compassion to deliver care. Care will not be consistent. Nurses are overworked and under paid currently; workloads are increasing and many experienced nurses are due for retirement; newly qualified nurses will take the brunt of this crisis; but ultimately; it will be the public that will pay the price of Government decisions...unsafe practices will arise; nurses will go off with stress and there will be a further crisis if the Government do not rethink this decision and make cuts elsewhere to fund the future care of the nation.



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## Kathryn, Manchester

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Imagine working 37.5 hours a week, made up of university hours and 13 hour shifts on placement. Having to navigate public transport in 'interesting' parts of the city, alone, early in the morning or late at night and feeling vulnerable and exhausted. Then imagine all the assignments and preparation for seminars and reflections from placements adding up to even more hours. Imagine missing out on social events, university societies, friends' birthday's, opportunities to go home and see your family, even weddings, because your holiday times are set and you don't even get sick days, therefore having to make up these hours in your precious weeks of holiday time. And the stress of having to find somewhere to live for the few months you have to stay at uni whilst most of your friends have left for the summer. This is what it is like for nursing students. Imagine then, if you have to pay to work these hours, and then end up with a huge debt to try and re-pay when you qualify, and your chosen profession isn't particularly well paid in the first place. Nursing is a vocation and it one of the few degrees that is truly inclusive of people from all backgrounds, subject to interview. There is a serious risk of burn-out in this degree, due to the stressful nature of the job and our heavy workload and having limited time off. I can foresee many more students having to drop out of the course after trying to juggle part time jobs in the future. I feel I would have started this course with or without the bursary, as I was so motivated to become a nurse. However I know now the reality of what this course involves, and I truly believe I would have dropped out by now if I had had to pay for the work I do as a student nurse. It simply doesn't make sense to get rid of the student bursary, and I feel it is taking advantage of well-meaning people who at the end of the day do this job because they want to help others, and try to make a positive difference to people's lives.



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## Adele, Birmingham

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I couldn't and wouldn't have started my mental health nurse training back in 1997 if I had not been in receipt of the bursary. We worked shifts on placement for six months of the year, only had six weeks annual leave and had to pay for our own uniform laundry and travel expenses. In addition to working for six months of the year we were expected to complete assignments and do research for those, exams and revise,,,, I still had to borrow money to just live. There was no time to work, although I tried to fit in carers work for an agency, but as a young lady it was unsafe for me to be going to people's houses at ten o'clock at night after placement had ended, and I was exhausted. At the end of my three years training I got myself a job which I love. I have worked my way up to band six and feel really privileged to be where I am today. Honestly, if there was no nursery the NHS wouldn't have itself a passionate, caring, happy mental health nurse in me. Oh and I only recently finished paying back the money I borrowed from back then, so I don't know where I would have been without my £410 a month!



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## James, London

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I am not from a wealthy family. As such I have been entitled to the full amount of NHS bursary. Even WITH the full amount I have had to rely on help from my family and taking on extra work, often while on placement. Removing these bursaries will mean many people will not be able to pursue nursing as a career. I am confident that this will negatively affect the NHS's capability to recruit nurses in the future. I also believe this opens the doors for Nursing to become a money-making degree for many universities.



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## Kate, Aberdeen

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Are we at the cusp of a Nursing crisis in the UK? That's what the facts say but apparently this is not an opinion shared by the UK government. I am truly saddened today to say I am ashamed of our Government. Never before have I uttered those words. I am currently in my third year of studying Nursing after 2 of the most physically and emotionally demanding years of my life to date. Many have fallen short of getting to this stage due to the intense pressure and responsibility that comes with being a student Nurse. However I sit here proud of where I am and where I am headed hopefully to be a caring and compassionate Nurse of the future. However none of this would be possible without the bursary that supports me day to day. I can safely say I would not be studying Nursing if not for the bursary. 12 hour shifts, an extended academic year and reduced holidays are not an incentive for any young person looking into Nursing as a career. It's the fact we have the ability to make a difference to people's lives that makes us choose this career. The thought that people who would make fantastic Nurses would be dissuaded from choosing this career due to loans and the prospect of having to do additional work on top of a chaotic student Nurse life is tragic. Student Nurses come from all walks of life, this change will make becoming a Nurse almost impossible for those from a lower economic background. It's a disgrace. I believe this will be one of the biggest mistakes the government has ever made in terms of Student Nurses and it will have an impact not just the future of British Nursing but also the whole of the NHS. If they do not listen to reason then they foolish and using a hardworking set of students to play politics and save pennies. The money saved would be a drop in the ocean. Unnecessary, damaging and catastrophic. Enough said.



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## Aspiring Nurse, Manchester

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I am a mature student who completed one year of a nursing degree before becoming very ill. I had to make the excruciating decision to withdraw from my studies, and focus on my health. Now better (and more determined to become a nurse than ever) I have been planning to return to University to carry on my studies. As a mature student who has studied prior to Nursing, I am not entitled to any more funding from Student Finance, and so removing the NHS Bursary and replacing it with a loan and tuition fee loan would mean I COULD NOT carry on with my ambition of becoming a nurse. You say that this new plan will enable 10,000 more people to train and qualify as nurses, but how many people will it be the end of the road for? How many people like me will have to give up their dream of becoming a nurse when they are so passionate about helping others?



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## Nikki, Inverurie

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My bursary covers my travel costs and food for me to get to and from placement. I have to drive around 40-45 mins to get to my placement where I work 12 hour shifts (unpaid) to make up 37.5hrs per week. I get abused verbally, from patients and families, I work with all different kinds of people, offenders, children, substance misuse patients, the elderly. I work nights and weekends so that I gain a variety of experiences and I do it all for nothing other than £506 per month. I can't work out with due to shift patterns and the fact I have to study, so £506 per month is my complete income. I can't go out with friends, I can't just go to the cinema because I fancy it, this year I've had to apologise to my family because I can barely get them Christmas presents. This is the reality of being a student nurse. God bless the bursary because without it I wouldn't be a student nurse.



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## Sophie, Lurgan

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Personally I never usually do this sort of thing because I always feel I'm at risk of losing my job and my nursing pin. It is sad that I have to fear using my voice to protect the job I love. I am absolutely devastated to see that the government are considering to remove the nursing bursary. Personally I could not have done my degree without it. I don't come from a rich family and I was not born with a silver spoon in my mouth. I am one of those kids that the government say will never amount to anything because of my social status but yet I had hope. Hope that I would be able to care for others the way my family and friends had cared for me. I had to work extremely hard to even be considered for university and cried tears of joy when I received a letter with a conditional offer to Queens in Belfast. I remember my first day of my first placement, I was on a busy ward and by lunch time I was part of the team I was expected to work. Not that I'm complaining I loved it! But over the three years of my course I had a lot of stress mainly to do with my finances. I am now one year out of university and am still struggling to pay of the debts I accumulated while studying to be a nurse. It's not that I didn't work, I did I worked 40+ hours of placement (because when your eager to learn you will stay on an extra hour to see chest drains being put in and to learn how to set up for intubation. Because these are things that we are expected to do when we qualify) following that 40hours of placement, between balancing family life and assignments, I worked as a healthcare assistant to help keep my head afloat. I remember thinking gosh it must be me, maybe I'm bad at keeping control of my finances but then we had a talk by QUB on financial strain because it turned out I wasn't alone, 80% of students in financial hardship were Nursing students. I think that speaks volumes as to why cutting the bursary is going to have a devastating effect on the NHS as a whole. Less nurses, less doctors no NHS. It's clear to see where we are heading. I can see where the government are taking it and it's not good. I know there are going to be people

who struggle to pay for medications, treatments and care. I know there are nursing students who are going to need financial support and because of that I am already preparing by planning how I can make a difference, how local charities will have to support these people because our government has failed them miserably and how I can help change that situation. Because being a nurse is more than just turning up to work every day it is caring for a community. Sickness does not make differences in who it chooses, it affects us all regardless of class, colour or age. So Mr Cameron if you actually take the time to read any of our letters and listen to our voices, I leave you with this point. If you could see what I could see maybe you'd understand. But you don't see what I see so therefore you don't understand.



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## Katherine, Boroughbridge

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Without a bursary I would find it impossible to survive doing the nursing degree. I get £420 a month, which compared to all of the hard work which I put into my placements is nothing. Student nurses are valuable members of nursing teams, and are often relied upon to fill staff shortages, even though we officially have supernumerary status. Receiving a bursary is often the difference between eating and not. Removal of the bursary is basically de-valuing the contribution all student nurses make to the National Health Service. We haven't come into this profession for the money, we've come into nursing to care for vulnerable people. The course is physically, mentally and emotionally challenging and student nurses can feel very vulnerable at times. Removal of the bursary shows a lack of compassion and care to the future nurses of this country. How are student nurses meant to begin to develop confidence and compassion, when they are shown none of it by their own government.

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### Carolyn, Surrey

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Fewer students will enrol to train as nurses, which will impact further on the shortage of trained nurses

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### April, Bolton

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When I decided to go into nursing in 2006 money was tight. I had three children and worked full time. By having the bursary I was able to study as well as put food on the table. I couldn't have completed the course without the financial help. By stopping the bursary it is going to put many students into hardship. Why should nursing students shadow nurses on a ward, doing 37.5hrs on average per week for nothing. Nurses are short and this is going to put a strain even further on the NHS

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### Kate, London

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Alike most people (especially students) living in London affording my rent let alone other living expenses is extremely difficult- my bursary and my loan do not even cover my rent. Nursing is not like any other degree, a student nurse works full time and just as hard as other members of the team, we do not have as much holiday as other degrees and are either working full time shifts or doing assignments and exams! The unpredictability of our lives means that it is almost impossible to find jobs flexible enough to suit. It is disgusting enough that the government have refused nurses a 1% pay rise when you look at the huge salaries of other professions, but to find out that we are undervalued to the extent that were expected to work full time for nothing and to have to leave in tones of debt is beyond horrible. If you continue to treat people that care this badly eventually there will be no one left to care for you or your family when you're ill and health care standards will fall beyond belief.

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### Penelope, Kent

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The decision to take away student Nurses' bursaries is one that the government will come to regret. I am in my 3rd year, about to qualify; and without the NHS bursary I would not have been able to take the time out of work to study towards my degree and qualification as a Registered Nurse. There will be fewer and fewer people able to take on the huge fete that is Nursing School. Do the government not realise that we work full time hours when on placement, and those same hours when in university? God help the NHS and the challenges this government is throwing at us!

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### Michelle, Edinburgh

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I already had a student loan from a previous degree, of I had to have another one I would be unlikely to be a nurse, meaning I wouldn't be in a job I love and my patients would miss out on my care. This will lower the age range of nurses as mature students will not be able to afford the further loss if financial aid and the nursing profession will lose valuable potential members of the team. Think this will hit those who have started as hcas the hardest, they lose and incentive to further their careers.

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### Glyn, Stalybridge

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It's not evidence...it's a loss of confidence in our employer...the NHS...which is run by the Government. They have picked an easy target, student Nurses. I have worked in the NHS for 55 years. I shall stop at Xmas because it has all become too much, this latest decision is the thin edge of a long wedge.

### James, Liverpool

As I already have a degree, one that I made the choice to do with all the confused naïveté of an 18 year old, I wouldn't have been able to start my training and become a nurse, a profession I am loving, as my 'funding' has been used up. This change would impact the hundreds of students in my position who retrain to be fantastic passionate nurses every year.

### Lillie, Shropshire

If the bursary or secondment did not exist, I wouldn't be able to do the nursing degree due to not being able to afford to get to placement etc. There is only so much that I and my colleagues can sacrifice and now the government has taken the last thing that would give potential student nurses and midwives the support to go through with the degree.

### Rachel, Caerphilly

I'm currently a third year student nurse with a two year old daughter. Without the bursary I wouldn't have been able to continue with my studies. Although we don't receive a great deal it truly helps to keep up with the bills. Most of us also have a part time job on top of the 37.5 hours a week we do on placement; working anymore hours would make us unsafe to practise.

### Hayley, Crewe

I am a mature student, single parent with 2 teenagers and a mortgage. I rely on my bursary, topped up with a student loan to pay the bills. I am at university or out on placement Monday to Friday and work for a care home on a Sunday. I'm finding the financial pressures already difficult, but try to remain positive in my goal to become a nurse. The thought of having to borrow more money through bigger student loans terrifies me. We spend 5 months of the year doing the same hours as other medical staff for no pay at all. I understand this is a learning experience but I really don't think the government understands the hardships a student nurse already goes through. After a 3 year degree I would be in debt to the tune of £40,000 I would have to pay this back for the rest of my working life... This is not an option for me and I know it could mean many other students also being forced to leave the course before finishing. The effect on the NHS would be severely detrimental and recruiting new students would become much harder. This has been a very sad week since hearing the news, and I and my colleagues are really worried for our futures.

### Georgina, Aberdeenshire

I am currently in my 1st year of adult nursing, and to go into 2nd and 3rd year knowing that I will not receive a bursary is very demoralising and disheartening. My 1st year is at a college where I am doing the same as a university student, if not more, and on placement in hospitals and I currently am not allowed a bursary as I am not seen as a student nurse. I was counting down the days until my 2nd year and getting that money to allow me to live while I am working ridiculously hard to get a degree and work as a professional that, at the end of the day, will get paid tuppence for the amount of things I will do to help other people. The government have no idea what it is like for students who are not financially well off, and do not have the time to support themselves and be in full time education. This decision should never have been made. The fact George Osborne has not even mentioned it when discussing the cuts he is making quite frankly says it all - he knows the decision is to benefit no one but himself and Cameron's government.

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### Rebekah, Staffordshire

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I am currently a student in an access course and applying for mental health nursing next year (2016). The changes to the bursary have had a massive impact in our class, some even saying that they won't apply for nursing. Isn't the NHS desperate for more nurses and midwives? At university I will be on placement for half of the year training (in a very challenging profession) meaning I cannot get a part time job for extra funding. I paid for my current access course leaving me nearly £2000 in debt, the prospect of an added £9000 a year really throws into perspective how little nurses in the NHS are appreciated.

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### Hannah, Barrow-in-Furness

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I have to work at least an extra 8 hours a week whilst on full time placement to be able to afford to travel to university and pay for my car and all the other things I need for university. Without my bursary I would be unable to do this. Even with the bursary I wasn't able to move away from my home as I was unable to afford too.

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### Natasha, Barnsley

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The bursary in which I receive helps me fund travelling costs, to keep my car on the road, to fill my stomach, and to provide me with essentials... I am one of the more privileged students and I do not have a family to keep and a house to pay for like my colleagues. However, I do struggle. I am unable to work because let's face it in the 3 weeks we are off for Christmas we can finally RELAX, and spend time with our own families. Getting rid of bursaries will cause a major impact on the NHS, yes it may save money – however, nurses WILL BE lost. I for one would not complete this course by using student loans. There is no incentive to become a nurse no matter how much you want that career... starting wage is on average £21000 a year... With an income like that who wants to be in 50k worth of debt. The government has not thought this through.

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### Claire, Bristol

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As a mum of two this course is challenging enough with juggling childcare, studies and placements, without the bursary I simply would not be able to train to be a nurse. There is no chance to earn while on the course, in fact we are encouraged not to as it would impact on our studies, therefore how do we live if we have to pay fees? Surely the government will now gain free labour by getting students to do 20 weeks or so unpaid work in hospitals. How can that be fair?

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### Emma, London

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I am currently a third year student nurse, on placement 38 hours a week with 2 assignments being written on my day off and weekends. Currently, my bursary doesn't even cover my rent, therefore, I have to try and work in the hospital as a HCA whilst trying to keep my academics up. One of my fellow students has just completed a 96 hour week! That will only get worse if people are given loans as they will try and take out less loans to reduce their payback amount, leading to exhausted, stressed and mentally drained student nurses, which in all honesty we see now, but it will only get worse. I for one would not be able to survive on the new proposed changes for student nurses and I know many others who have said the same, so I doubt it really will combat the staff shortages. I would not have joined the course if I'd have had to loan the money as when I joined the course I knew nursing pay is not great and knowing the amount of debt I would have ended up in when graduating on a low wage, would not have been financially viable for me, knowing that I also want to be able to save a deposit for a house and have a family, savings which are not possible when in that much debt! I think if people have to take out a loan, it will make them look to options which have more earning potential in the future (as a nursing wage is not a typical graduate pay). I think personally for me I would not have undertaken the degree and would have looked at other options which do not need a degree for.



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## Rachel, Aberdeen

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This news is extremely disappointing for future nursing students and the future of the NHS. I am in my final year of nursing and without my bursary, I would not have been able to go to uni. I depend on it to pay for rent and the little I have left I spend on food and bills. Also the nursing bursary is one of the reasons I chose to go to uni and study nursing. I think the decision to replace the bursary will have a massive impact on the future of the NHS. The government should meet with current student nurses to gain an understanding of how important it really is to all of us!



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## Kirstin, Edinburgh

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This change will mean I will have to get a part time job and/or rely on my already hardworking parents to have money lent to me. I do not want a loan as I know when I start working I will have this debt always in the back of my mind. I really would not like to apply for a loan as it does mean I have to pay this back. Having a bursary means that the government (at the time) respected that nursing courses are not just September to May time they are September to August and involve a great deal of hard work out with class time and only get 7 weeks for holidays each year but we do not mind as we are making a change to people's lives.



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## Katherine, Edinburgh

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Lack of support from these government officials will affect those who are not living at home and do not come from a background with a good financial support and have to support themselves. This will cause mass debt and discourage those who have to move out of the house to commit to an intense nursing programme. Which in turn will create a lack of nursing staff even though there already are very short NHS nursing staff.



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## Rebecca, Sheffield

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Due to still being considered dependant to my parents, although gaining no financial support from them, I have to work by the side of my degree to earn enough to live but I wouldn't have applied to study nursing if the tuition fees hadn't been paid at least. Without the bursary I would not be studying.



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## Sophie, Highgate

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Many of us who are converting to nursing from a previous degree have already taken a steep pay cut and our bursaries do not cover our living and travel expenses let alone food. I am -£100 without buying any food every month and therefore am reliant on some support from my generous family. I work extra shifts whenever I can which means I regularly work over 52 hour weeks which is exhausting but it's what I need to do to make it to the career I am so passionate about. Cutting this bursary is a slap in the face of the history of nursing where student nurses were traditionally paid a low rate throughout their training. Focus on reducing the dropout rates of nursing degrees and maybe putting in a year's Healthcare assistant work as a requirement for the course before cutting bursaries. Almost 2/3 of nursing students quit or fail during their course as working these long hours without much support is exhausting and young people aren't supported enough throughout this as our resources are being forever cut. Think of those changes as well as the mounting debt you are putting on us, and let's not forget the pay freeze and changes to unsocial hour pay, and then you won't open more nursing opportunities as people simply won't find it a desirable career anymore. Put yourself in our shoes and stop forcing universities to only accept the rich.



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## Rachel, Bacup

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The government really do not grasp how nurse training is so different to any other undergraduate course, as part of this they are expected to work shifts with assigned mentors, working early late and night shifts. How are they expected to work part time jobs on top of their study and ward based attendance??? There is already a shortage of nurses, as a G Grade practice Nurse I earn less than a band 6 nurse in secondary care, I couldn't do this and pay back student loans. The government should be ashamed of itself.



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## Vicki, Cheltenham

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This is madness when so much money is spent on agency nurses and recruiting nurses overseas in hospitals to meet safe staffing levels. If the student bursary is stopped less people will train as nurses and more money will be spent. On one ward that I was working on recently £14000 was spent in one month on agency staff as it could not recruit enough trained staff. The government should be supporting nursing by increasing the student nurses numbers across the country and giving people more incentives to train not making it harder as this will obviously have a further damaging effect on the NHS and patient care. Nursing is a very intensive course and it's difficult to do regular paid work alongside it. I was well supported in comparison to the government's proposals and I struggled with doing a professional course full time whilst working most weekends and throughout the short holidays. It was exhausting but it was worth it and I love my job and making a positive difference to people's lives. The bursary changes are going to have a massive detrimental effect upon people's lives and their families. These are real people and not statistics; it is their health and wellbeing that is at stake and should not be compromised.



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## Kate, Altofts

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I live at home with parents and work bank shifts where I can, but the cost of traveling simply traveling to university and placements means I'm left relying on my student overdraft. I couldn't even imagine how hard it would be if I did not have the bursary!



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## Lauren, Herefordshire

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I was pushed into a degree I didn't want to do, by people who didn't know me, because my dyslexia wasn't picked up when it should have been. I have struggled and succeeded throughout my life. I have worked hard to overcome my problems, and now have found my vocation. It's helping people. It's caring for people. It's looking after people who do not have the physical, mental or emotional ability to care for themselves. It's ensuring that patients get the best quality of life they possibly can, or the best quality of death they possibly can. We are the people who wipe your parents' bottoms and wash their hair when you're too busy. We are the people who stay up all night worrying about the people we care for during the day. We are the people who work 12 hour shifts with little break, only to go home and take care of our families, and study. Our whole career will be studying. Our degrees involve 50% clinical practice. This means that the NHS are currently paying us to work and learn in their hospitals. They are not paying us just to learn in university. We have only 7 weeks off a year, most of which is spent reading textbooks, and studying. We want to learn as much as possible to ensure we give as much to our patients as we possibly can. This change will mean we will be funding ourselves to work in the hospitals, communities and nursing homes for free. We will be paying for ourselves to do the work we would be doing as a health care assistant. Please try to understand that we aren't doing this degree to go drinking (the majority of us are old enough to know better), we are not doing this degree for the hell of it. We are doing it for you, we are doing it for them and we are doing it for all.



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## Alice, Nottingham

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When I started my nursing degree I came straight from school. I study mental health nursing and many of the students are older than me, with families, and possibly previous degrees which they are still in debt to. I believe this change to the will stop people apply for nursing even if there is no longer a cap on the amount of students universities can take. Our academic year is a lot longer than other students, with only 6 weeks off throughout the year. Half of our academic year is in clinical practice where we have to complete 40 hour weeks. We are advised not to have a part time job during our 3 year degree, however many people do. Nobody goes into nursing for the pay as I believe nurses are underpaid as it is. I went into nursing because I enjoy caring for people, I enjoy what I do. I do believe that less people will be attracted to the profession. Why would mature students quit their current job to get into +£30,000 debt for a poorly paid job? If the government want more nurses out in hospitals and the community, they need to put money into the education to attract people to join the profession! As a third year student, throughout my nursing studies I have been a witness to ward closures, which has led to a shortage in beds for people who desperately need them out in the community. As a third year you are expected to be nurse in charge on shifts and you are expected to do the jobs a qualified nurse does, with support from your mentor. People are doing this for free as it stands. If less people apply for the nursing degree, the wards are going to depend more on agency staff and the private sector, which will lead to more debt for the NHS. The private sector have more appealing job offers, with higher paid jobs for nurses, I believe the newly qualified nurses who will be riddled with debt will be more attracted to the higher paid jobs. I know that without my bursary I would not be able to pay for my food. I get the lowest bursary, which does not even cover my rent never mind my bills for the shared house I live in. I am in a fortunate position where my parents can help me

out. But I am one of many people. Cutting the bursary is putting more pressure on students who simply cannot afford to live.



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## Kelly, Leeds

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Without the bursary, I would not have been able to start my nurse training and be in my third year now. I wouldn't want to ask my parents for any support because nursing is my dream, my passion and I want to be able to pursue my dreams myself. I train in Leeds, away from my friends, family and boyfriend. I pay everything myself, helped by the bursary and although the changes won't affect me, I sincerely fear for the NHS and the student nurses which this will effect. Being in £65,000 worth of debt, possibly more, when starting on a wage of only £21,000 is so unrealistic for those students. The NHS needs more nurses and there will be so many who feel nurse training will now be out of their reach because of this change. We are the future of the NHS and so are all of those people who want to become nurses and won't feel they are able to because of the huge amount of debt they will then put themselves in. I hope these politicians realise how much strain this will put under the NHS.



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## Sarah, Glasgow

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I have just completed BA (honours) Nursing Studies at Glasgow Caledonian University this year. My time studying there was - let's just say different to the average student. My parents lived in Dubai for a short spell, my father was diagnosed with cancer - and subsequently passed away and I also had my son. I had so much going on that I relied on the bursary for day to day life! I needed the bursary to put food on the table and to pay bills. It was too hard to get the time to get regular shifts at work - on the rare day off I managed to do this. Most students get a 3 month summer vacation - nursing students don't. Most students get a month or more off at Christmas - nursing students do not. Most students have 2 semesters of teaching - nursing students do not. Most courses do not make you do summer placements consisting of full time hours - this is not the case for nursing students. Other students have the free time to have regular part time work - nursing students do not! When applying for nursing we are given that small but vital security of a bursary. It is not a lot of money for some - 500 pounds(ish) a month will not pay bills, rent, put food on the table and pay for supplies for university. The average rent in Glasgow is around 400-500 pounds PCM! I think it is an insult to hard working nursing students to even contemplate taking the bursary away when we are one of the most caring and hard working. If I did not have the bursary I would have had NO CHOICE but to drop out of university and get a job - most likely unskilled. I believe that if nursing students had their bursaries taken away then the British health care system would potentially lose hundreds if not thousands of potential new nurses. Asking nursing students to take out a student loan is an insult. As we all know nurses are not the best paid - but we are in nursing because WE LOVE WHAT WE DO. Why even risk losing out on thousands of potential new nurses!!! IT'S NOT WORTH THE RISK! The bursary is just a small price to pay for skilled health care professionals who love what they do.



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## Emily, Moffat

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I have recently just graduated from university and to say it was a financial struggle is an understatement. I received £548 per month from my student bursary. £440 of which went on my bills such as rent and my car which I needed to get to and from placements and uni which was 25 miles away. This left me with £100. £100 to feed myself, pay for books, pay for fuel to get to uni and placement for a month. So I had to work a job as well just do I could survive. Whilst on placement we student nurses work 37.5 hours a week with my job on top of that I often worked 50-60 hours per week plus coursework and assignments meant it was a constant struggle for 3 years. We got 7 weeks annual leave per year so no long breaks to recover either. There's no way in hell I would be able to do my nursing now as I couldn't financially afford to which is sad as a single 23 year old woman. Can't imagine what it must be like for the people that have families to support. It's sad that nurses are yet again undervalued and underappreciated before they even begin their career.



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## Rebecca, Glasgow

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I would have had to drop out my course if I hadn't had a bursary. I come from a low income family who wouldn't have been able to support me financially. As much as it was difficult working full time on placement and working part time in my own job, and maxing out overdrafts in order to support myself during my course, it would've been impossible for me to study at all without a bursary and I would've never qualified.



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## Victoria, Chatham

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Student nurses and midwives undertake a degree like no other. You will have an NHS staffed by students. Mature students will be forced out as with dependants it's simply unaffordable. I wonder if this is a solution to the 'retirement time bomb' as only young, unburdened students will be willing to take on the debt. I am a mum to three children with a passion to start my midwifery degree. I am currently juggling 3 kids work and an access course, I feel abandoned. I have already repaid a student loan from a previous degree. I would like it noted that repayments on loans are NOT tiny, they are significant. Student finance may be an investment in your future but it is also the biggest saddle bag, on par to the weight of a mortgage. In a moderately paid job at the end of it and when you consider NIC tax as well, take home pay will not be enough for my family to live on now I have to factor in repaying student loans. ... again.



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## Emma, Dundee

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I worked full time prior to starting my nursing degree. My wages covered the bills. I now have essentially the same day to day bills to pay, with increased travel costs. I work while I'm on placement, meaning I do (at least) 45 hours a week between the two. The other half of the year I work overtime on top of my coursework whenever possible. I go to work between lectures, or go straight from a full day of theory to an evening of work. Yet -with wages and bursary- my income is about half of what it was. I could not work more hours without becoming totally burnt out. I would not have been able to have another loan on top of a previous one. The bursary makes returning to education and the hope of new career (somewhat) manageable for me.



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## Claire, Southport

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Without the bursary I would never have survived. As a student nurse you are expected to work a 24 hour shift pattern when in placement. This means I did nights, weekends, earlies, lates, long days and bank holidays - where are you meant to fit in a part time job with these hours????? I also had two children to support and my husband worked full time but with just one wage - the bursary was a blessing even though it was only around £340 pounds- for those 3 years my family had no holidays and the food shopping was sparse! I did work in my last year and it was a juggle working 37.5 hours at placement - plus 20+hours in my job - as well as running a house and trying to take care of my children . I don't think my husband and I saw each other that year! The bursary is a crucial element of the course and to stop this for upcoming nursing students is ridiculous! Once qualified are wages are just above the minimum range - which is an insult for all the care and responsibility we have - if you saddle people with loans - their income every month is going to be even lower !



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## Caitlin, West Lothian

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I will have to work more hours in my work, on top of full time placement to try and avoid getting a student loan as I do not want to be in debt. It is difficult as is with a bursary and student nurses cannot not have a job as £500 a month is not enough for us to live off of. We come in to this career to care for people because it is what we love to do. A bursary and nursing salary is barely a thank you from the government for doing what we do.

## Jodine, Melksham

I am unable to work as round my area there is not a lot of part time job opportunities that help my learning and then give me enough money for travel and living. I don't drive so my travel to and from uni in Swindon is £200 a month. I also have a baby who is 9 months old. As it is with bursaries helping me I still live at home so I can survive on it. If this gets cut I honestly don't know if I am able to continue this career. I have dreamt of this since I was as young as I remember. Nurses don't get a huge wage as it is and as a student nurse the load put on us in placements is a lot. We work hard, and dedicated, we go home after long shifts, finish our coursework and get little sleep before starting over. We are working hard to get into a career that we know is long hours and little pay yet we do it to keep patients health. Even everyone who works in government. Cut the findings helping us to train to keep your arses healthy and your health care quality will reduce... nurses will cut down. This choice is something that will affect our NHS system. Don't do this to our country, our nurses, and all of us students who have this dream and to put our health last and put yours first. We develop dry skin as we treat yours, we develop back problems and we find solutions for yours. Don't just take, help us to help you. For the sake of Britain.

## Charlotte, Selby

If I didn't receive a bursary, I would not be able to afford travel, I would not be afford to eat. I have to work already with the support of a bursary which means that I have no days off and I am under incredible pressure during placement, to just survive. The thought of not receiving a bursary terrifies me, because if I am struggling now. What will this mean if I do not have any help? Why do they think it's acceptable for nurses to basically work full time plus and have to pay for the pleasure!

## Melissa, Elgin

The nursing bursary aided me throughout my training, I would not have been able to complete my degree without that financial support. Working/Studying full time made it extremely difficult to produce a regular income by other means. I also believe that if this bursary is to be cut it will produce huge strains on nursing students and deter them away from studying due to being unable to support themselves/ family financially. The NHS is a brilliant organisation and is always in need of nurses, taking away the bursary I strongly believe will deter people away from even studying and the repercussions will not only affect the NHS but the patients and families that use this service.

## Jenifer, Falmouth

One of the reasons I had to drop out of uni was because I couldn't afford it! I ended up having to get a job which is fine if you know when you're free! I had placement 2 days a week and uni on Mondays - this doesn't seem like much but I didn't know which days these were each week as it depended on when my mentors were in, it would have also increased in the amount of days/hours id do a week the further the course I went, then after placement had finished it was back to uni 5 days a week, I ended up doing placement from getting up at 530 to catch the 6am bus for placement 2 hours away, finish there at 4, get the 2 hour bus, get home for 7 then start a night shift at work (the only time in the day I could do) at 730 till 730 am - I did this quite a few times and after a while this really drains you! The bursary I received covered my rent a month, I'd then have £10 a month left for travel and food, so thinks omens I ended up in a huge amount of debt which then lead to depression - so reading this makes me feel quite annoyed! Hats off to all those student nurses who live away from home and make it all the way through their degree



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## Simon, Leicester

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I'm a first year student nurse. Without the bursary I doubt I would have seen nursing as financially viable. Many people point to the fact that student loans are repaid gradually as a portion of earnings, but I wouldn't have wanted to get into that much debt for a career that, whilst I would love it, will pay below average for a graduate job with as much responsibility as Nursing involves. The NHS bursary however means I can embark on this career without the worry of sixty thousand pounds worth of debt on my mind. Something that would be particularly poignant considering the real terms cut in Nurses wages since 2008.



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## Sharon, South London

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I appreciate my bursar so much, it helps get me through some of the toughest placements. I don't "get paid" like qualified nurses or health care assistants. This bursar helps me afford to complete my training without the huge financial burden that other degrees place on students. The course is already incredibly stressful, working on improving your own knowledge and understanding of the human complexity as to provide holistic (as it should) care is one of the hardest and toughest roads I have travelled. Unfortunately, it doesn't mean the same to all students. I have heard some speak of choosing this degree course because it is "free" that I find sickening to my stomach. Yet, I believe this is a very small minority that universities must ensure the right students get places in nursing because they are passionate about providing care that makes a positive impact on every human being.



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## Rukshana, London

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I am currently a final year Nursing student. Although this does not impact me as I finish hopefully in summer 2016. I am advocating on behalf of many student nurses out there. This will have a massive impact on current Nursing students and the future of nursing. Firstly, we are different from other degrees and courses. We spend 50% of each academic year in clinical practice with the same hours and shifts as qualified and registered nurses. Without the bursaries we would be struggling to cover costs for accommodation, travel, bills and food. We cannot have part time jobs as this is also difficult to maintain due to the demands of the Nursing degree programme. It's not easy on top of paying for the fees Nursing students would be in theory required to take out more loans to cover these extra costs i.e. travel, accommodation, food etc. This would mean we will be left with a huge amount of debt once finishing the course, only to get a job as a registered nurse to be paying off this debt! Already, the NHS is over spending in recruiting agency nurses due to nurse shortages within the UK, how can you expect to train more nurses if our debt will be higher than our starting salary once we complete the nursing degree! I just believe the government are removing the bursary scheme and using that money within the NHS rather than actually keeping the bursary system and investing in the NHS. This will definitely affect the number of students currently on the degree and those coming into the degree.



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## Karen, Bristol

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It seems unfair that Nurses are being targeted again and that there is no mention of stopping bursaries for student doctors or dentists, despite the fact graduates in these subjects can look forward to commanding much, much greater salaries than even the best-paid nurses. I know the government is trying to cut junior Doctors pay, but nurses already work 24/7 and their/our anti-social pay is also at risk of going, causing a cut in our pay too, as well having as pay restraints since 2008 soon we will be working for more or less minimal wage, which is criminal. I work 12.5 hour shifts (not out of choice) and students do the same. Other degrees with student loans do not have nearly the same number of training/educational hours and nurses have a longer academic year. Therefore would their student loan be greater? I doubt it, or be-it so large that the prospect of having such a loan when your end pay when qualified is so poor is too overwhelming and depressing to express in words. Student nurses work full time and unpaid this cannot be comparable to other degrees. I have only been qualified for just over a year and would not have been able to train if it was not for receiving a bursary one of the reasons being that I already had a student loan from a previous degree. I still had to work (for actual money) to survive on top of the 37.5 hours I worked (all be it unpaid) as a student nurse, which nearly caused me to have a breakdown. And no matter what you are told as a student most wards are so short staffed you do get counted in the numbers and you are not supernumerary and this further adds to the demand and work load put upon you as a student. The Governments new vision "is a modern NHS working for everyone seven days of the week. Everyone deserves care that is safe, compassionate and effective, at all times and regardless of their condition." "This Government will put the right measures in place to help spend taxpayers' money more efficiently and reduce waste – to help ensure every pound possible is spent on patient care. This ambition will

never compromise the safety or quality of services". However to achieve this is at what cost to the moral and health and well-being of the staff providing the care? The role of the nurse has changed over the years and is continually more and more demanding, requiring greater academic knowledge, increased pressure, longer hours and greater responsibility as they are required to take over many of the jobs that used be undertaken by junior Doctors. And as medicine continues to advance, the patients in our care become more complex, more elderly and more unwell. Nurses are already over-stretched, underpaid, discriminated against and undervalued and The Government want us to give more and more for less until there will be nothing left to give and because of this I believe scrapping the bursary will make many potentially wonderful nurses opt out of choosing nursing as a career.



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## Lewis, Cardiff

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As a mature student, I left a job in the financial industry to follow my dream of becoming a children's nurse. It was something I didn't have the confidence to do at 18 when I was pushed by my college in attempts to make me go to university. Going from being completely independent was something that came difficult to me and my parents. They did not have the spare money my wage had previously offered me. The loan I received did not even cover my accommodation and without the bursary, I wouldn't have made it through first term, let alone the full three years. I am currently in third year balancing my dissertation and other academic duties with placement (37.5 hours a week), maintaining some sort of social life for sanity and working a bank shift where I can in order to keep me going. Without the bursary, I would have to work 60+ hour weeks (including unpaid clinical practice hours) to keep me from starving and keep a roof over my head. I would have no work life balance and I doubt I would manage anything of academic standard to get to my graduation in July. Without my bursary, I wouldn't be able to live.



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## Charlotte, Sheffield

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The bursary is of such importance when studying to be a nurse. We don't have time to work a part time job and earn money because the course isn't like others, we spend 50% of our time out in practice working 40 hours a week unpaid. The amount I currently receive from the bursary doesn't fully support my financial situation but without it I wouldn't be able to complete the course, and I know that a lot of people will now not study to be a nurse because of the lack of financial support from the government, which creates future problems for the future of the NHS.



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## Vicky, Cambridgeshire

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I qualified three years ago becoming a nurse fulfilled my lifetime goal I could not have done this without the bursary I received as I was a mature student with my disabled husband and a teenager dependant on me. I could I no way have lived without this income as during training I could not do any paid employment as I had no time



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## Elinor, London

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I'm a 1st year Children's Nursing student and even with the bursary I can't even afford the rent for the cheapest halls of residence at my university, let alone living costs. I am only able to study for my ideal career due to the bursary and the support of my parents. It would be completely impossible for me to study this course and become a nurse without the bursary, as I would receive so little from Student Finance. I have tried applying for jobs but due to the intensity of the course and the unpredictability of placement shift hours I have been unsuccessful. It is entirely unrealistic to expect students to support themselves through a nursing course without the NHS bursary.



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## Emma, Leigh

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I am 22 years old, I wanted to go into nursing at the age of 20 and classed as a mature student the NHS Bursary has enabled me to do so. At the age of 18 with no responsibility or bills I could have gone to university, however it would have been to study a pointless degree that has no purpose for my career. At the age of 20 I feel that I had life experiences that made me want to become a student nurse. At 20 although I am living at home with my parents I still have bills to pay, a monthly bursary has enabled me to keep these payments in line. I am a traditional person, I do not believe in going to university to study a pointless degree and get myself in 27k worth of debt before I have even left home. NHS bursary gave me financial security that when I qualify as a RGN I will not have the fees debt. Nursing is not like any other degree, it really is blood sweat and tears. Normal degrees are in university for a few hours a day three days a week. A nursing degree is 37.5 hour per week on placement in a hospital setting for 10 weeks whilst studying and writing assignments as well as when in university having four days' worth of lectures in a row. What baffles me most is the shortage of nurses and how the government moans that we need more nurses to come and study. Yet they have taken away the bursary! Ridiculous!!



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## Emma, Scotland

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I am a Scottish nursing student so fortunately this doesn't apply to me...yet. I'm absolutely gobsmacked at the changes to funding. We barely get by as it is with the bursary, never mind removing it. I don't think people realise how difficult a degree it is. We dedicate 50% of our time to coursework and the other 50% to placement. We rely on the bursary to get us there every day. We work full unpaid shifts and are expected to do everything, if not more than those already qualified. It's an absolute disgrace. It's all fine and well creating more places, but when those who receive these places have to drop out because of financial difficulties, it won't make a single bit of difference.



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## Megan, Cannock

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I am very fortunate in that I have already qualified as a nurse therefore I don't need a bursary myself. This news still breaks my heart. However, I would like to make clear to the government that I would never have been able to do my training without my bursary. During my nurse training I still worked part time resulting in 60 hour weeks (40 hours placement/lectures + 20 hours part time job) with 7 weeks holiday per year, those 7 weeks I worked fulltime. On top of this there was studying, essays, revision, reading. I already have an undergraduate degree of which I am still paying off due to a previous student loan. I was fortunate enough to be accepted onto a post graduate diploma for my nursing hence qualifying for a bursary. For two years I was pushed to be limit, physically, emotionally and financially. Nurses already know that they are one of the least paid graduate jobs, so asking us to pay off a massive loan on top of this pay is going to deter more people away from nursing. Without my bursary I would be in approximately 45k of debt on top of debts such as a mortgage. I would have to still pay off a lump sum because there are not enough working year left in me to pay off the loans in the agreed monthly percentage. We need more nurses, we are struggling to hire enough nurses. Stop making it so that people cannot become nurses. I love my job as a nurse and every day I give 110% at work. It is an honour and a privilege to spend my working life making the lives of other better. Without that bursary, this nurse wouldn't exist, those lives would not have been touched. How many potential nurses are you, as a government, are willing to sacrifice never qualifying, never getting there PIN, never having the opportunity to change those lives?



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## Alexandra, Widnes

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If I were to start my course later and therefore not be entitled to the bursary this would cause significant problems. I would not be able to afford my mortgage, eat, and never the less I would work myself to death.



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## John-Paul, Coventry

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As a mature student in my 40's with a young family, I depend on my bursary immensely because of the lack of opportunity to earn money outside of my study time.



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## Anthony, Wigan

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Without the student bursary I would be able afford to study in a profession that I love, as I also have three children to support. Although some might say this is my responsibility I am working towards a job and an education that my children will be proud of as well as a good social awareness of what a good society can achieve. I did have children young and without the student bursary a different opinion of what can be achieved in a so called fair country would be greatly misconstrued by my children.



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## Bethany, Edinburgh

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I am currently a third year nursing student, I am on placement and rely on the bursary for travels and living costs. I live far away from home so during the summer I need the bursary to help with living costs whilst everyone else is on their summer break. Student nurses make up the work force in hospitals and without them every ward would struggle to meet the demands necessary to ensure that patient safety and wellbeing is maintained. We don't get paid for the hours which we work however the bursary helps up to continue with our studies and it ensure that every student works to the best of their capabilities. Without this bursary I would not be able to study and I would not be able to achieve my dream job of being the best nurse possible. For the sake of the NHS, patients and future nurses the bursary needs to remain.

## Lauren, Motherwell

I couldn't have survived my nursing course without my bursary! I had little to no time to work out with my course work! And if I had I wouldn't have been able to have a social life through uni! My bursary helped fund my car to get me to placements, petrol and all the books required for the course! I think it is horrendous that the choice has been made to cut the bursary! It is needed and even though it is a good amount, still not enough to sustain full time working! I know many other students have to take loans and it's fair enough if people aren't pleased with that but nursing students work a full year pretty much compared to those who are off from April to September!

## Giles, Buckingham

For me nursing has been my whole life for 3 years which mix of placements and study it is a hard course to complete but without the bursary which is paid monthly and tuition fees paid also life would be very difficult indeed and I am not sure I would have managed to get to 3rd year of course without this finance. This change to loan only makes us have more debt and no way to be able to pay this off as you don't come into nursing for money. This only just drives future students away from nursing and this means that in 5/6 years from now we will have even less nurses coming in.

## Vicky, Cambridgeshire

I qualified three years ago becoming a nurse fulfilled my lifetime goal. I could not have done this without the bursary I received as I was a mature student with my disabled husband and a teenager dependant on me. I could not have lived without this income as during training I could not do any paid employment as I had no time

## Jess, Sheffield

The decision to scrap bursaries and tuition fees is devastating. The bursary is already strict with its eligibility. I currently receive £80 a month from bursaries, and even this extremely small amount helps me to travel to placement. I am living away from home, and so am independent. I have bills to pay, and worry about money. All of this on top of studying and trying to work is pressurised and tiring. To carry on this course takes lots of determination and a strong desire to be a nurse and wanting to care for those who are in need. Being a nursing student is the best thing I have ever done but I highly doubt many people will embark on the course after the changes are made. This will make the burden heavier on those who are already practicing and people will no longer want to join this wonderful profession. Why has this not happened on other NHS funded courses? We work so hard, and you would think the government would give a little back. We need more nurses; good ones at that. I am so disappointed in the decision to stop the funding, and am worried about what this will do to the NHS. I really hope they change their decision and help to save the profession for the future and help to continue to deliver high quality care.

## Lianne, Southport

I and my Husband are both student nurses in cohorts 6 months apart. We would never have been able to do this without the support of our bursaries. We also have two young children who we would not have been able to support without our bursaries. We both have come from other careers and feel that we have considerable life experience to bring to the role. We both now have job offers for when we complete our course. Quite simply we would not have been able to even consider doing the course - our bursary pays for our home, it pays for our home to be warm and have water, it puts food on our table and enables us to travel to university. Put simply - it pays for life.

## Bethan, Melton Mowbray

Getting rid of the bursary is a ridiculous idea. Without it, I don't think I would have been able to even start this course. I currently get 460 pounds a month for my bursary which only just covers my rent on my house and bills. I have to work two jobs outside of the 37.5 hours a week I do on placement just to live. Then on top are the numerous hours I do for coursework. And on top of that I still have to cram in the odd house chore like a normal person! We only have 6 weeks off a year, just like a regular full time job. By doing this the government are going to make it so much harder for students and I admit that if this occurred whilst I was at university I don't think I would be able to do it. This course and the help from the NHS has enabled me to do something I never dreamt I would have been doing and would have been able to achieve. By getting rid not only will you be crushing people's dreams of bettering themselves, but you will find that this may (I pray to God that it doesn't) give us a shortage in nurses qualifying meaning more stress on nurses and less patient care. A crucial element to nursing. The government really need to consider what they are doing before they crush the NHS system all together!

## Lucy, Southampton

I could not and would not have trained to become a nurse without the bursary. It was financially challenging enough surviving on that, let alone with no help. I fear this will increase the already huge shortage of nurses and have a very negative effect on the NHS. It is a very poorly thought out decision.

## Hayley, Chelmsford

Hi there, I'm currently a nursing student myself in my second year. Even though the bursary isn't much I couldn't imagine if I didn't have it. I have rent and bills to pay and other responsibilities which also cost money. At first I use to work my placement hours from 9 to 5 as my mentors were understanding on how hard it was to survive then travel get home change then work from 8 till midnight and do the same every day just to boost my income. Now on my second year and soon to go out on my placement, I have to quit my evening job as the hours on placement can vary from mornings/ afternoons and nights so I can't hold down a job I've now have to look for zero hour paid worked and that's not even guaranteed income. It's not easy now I couldn't even imagine what it do to future nursing students. This soon to be bursary change will have such a domino effect that it will impact the NHS and the community hugely.

## Chloe, Liverpool

It is so heartbreaking as a student nurse that we are not appreciated or valued enough to keep the student bursary going! I'm only first year children's nurse I have children or significant other and I am struggling everyday living off under 400 pound a month, the mothers and father and wives and husbands on my course deserve a medal for how they manage! This course is a dream come true and I love every minute I am learning to become a nurse, every minute I spend in placement I treasure as I know I'm making a difference to poorly children and their families' lives! But there have been nights I have cried myself to sleep over money worries, how I'm going to afford dinner in placement how I'm going to afford petrol! We work so so so hard and are the future of nursing this course is hard in every aspect physically emotionally and mentally and now unfortunately even more financially, it's so upsetting and disappointing! I can't get over it, if only they could see the work we put in.



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## Julie, Burscough

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I have a degree in Psychology, and after 20yrs, 2 children and careers in Admin and the Armed Forces, I have been able to start retraining as a nurse. To achieve this I have moved my children across the country, whilst leaving their daddy, my husband to support us from afar as his own Armed Forces career keeps him located elsewhere. We could not afford to do this if we had to pay fees and take out loans to survive. With Armed Forces cutbacks and constant relocations, our family have paid enough. Had we stayed together as a family I wouldn't have started my nursing career until my husband left the army. Realistically, with the changes announced yesterday, that would mean not at all. I know quite a number of Army wives who have 'followed the flag' and only followed their own dreams at the end of their husbands careers. The government will be shattering the careers of so many parents and partners who have invaluable experience to bring to nursing. I would like to compare the 3 years of nursing training, followed by a Band 5 starting salary to that of a soldier. Ultimately both soldiers and nurses get paid by the government. Soldiers get paid through their training, and if they get promoted within 3 years (a realistic prospect) they would be earning the same as a newly qualified nurse, and they would have no debt behind them. So many people (including myself) believe that young front-line soldiers are underpaid for the job they do. Nurses are so often at the frontline of social care and it sickens me the disregard the government have for the future of the NHS



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## Louise, Shropshire

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I would not have been able to train without the bursary. As a mature student I have many years of transferable skills that I feel add value to the NHS. I fail to understand why students will now pay for the privilege to work for free. It's slavery.



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## Sarah Louise, Livingston

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I think it's absolutely ridiculous to cut bursaries as student nurses are already working for free during 50% of their degree we do not get the opportunity to work as our course is longer than everyone else's and we work over summer. I will not be able to afford to live if my bursary is cut and it's absolutely ridiculous to make someone go with this after working for free.



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## Rhiain, Cwmbran

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Nursing is my second career. Without the bursary I would be unable to afford to do my training. Most of my mental health cohort have previous degrees and like me, work up to 24 hours a week on top of a full week in uni or on placement....That's not including the 60 hours a week I do during the holidays to financially survive. Mental health nursing in particular attracts mature students. Most 18 year olds aren't mature or experienced enough to work in mental health. The end to the bursary is likely to exacerbate the national shortage of mental health nurses.



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## Emilia, Glasgow

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Bursary is extremely important to me. I can pay my bills and buy food and be more relaxed about my future. I don't need to worry that one day when I graduate I will go have a loan to pay. I give 100% on the placement, learn everything I can and also help with anything I can. It is indeed a full time job weather on placement or university because it's so time and energy consuming! We need bursary to free our mind from another worry and also to feel appreciated. We are those who experience it all: personal care, people's emotions, misery and death. We are those who bring smile, help the patients get better or not lonely, we do our best to make their days brighter and believe they'll get well or in some cases to die with dignity. We respect everyone so I believe we deserve to be respected as well.



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## Laura, Glasgow

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I trained as a nurse in 2009-2012 in Wales. It was my second degree. I could not have afforded to do it if it hadn't been funded by a bursary. I would have had to have worked and would probably not have completed the course as well as I did - I am proud of my first degree honours. My best friend has just started her midwifery course. She is a married mother of three and could not afford to do the course without the bursary. There are so many great potential nurses and midwives who will not be able to train if they get rid of the bursary. Student nurses and midwives work so hard on placement, how is it fair that they should have to get a loan to care for people? That sounds a bit backwards to me. To support the future of the NHS the government needs to support those who will become the future of the NHS.



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## Anna, Beck Row

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I would not have been able to cope without my bursary, it is hard financially with the bursary to support two children under the age of 7 (they were 3 and 4 when I started). The bursary (with childcare element) has meant I could send my children to nursery to attend my studies/placement. With the bursary being scrapped would mean that if I was thinking to apply now I would not have been able to!



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## Chantelle, Kent

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I'm a student nurse in my second year. I struggle financially and I have a loan out with the student loan company, as well as the NHS bursary. I work as an hca, and I'm on placement half the year doing full time hours, which I love. I could not continue my nursing training without the bursary. If I had to pay the bursary back and has a huge debt, would all my hard work be worth it? Being on placement isn't exactly work experience, it's a full time unpaid job.



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## Nicola, Bristol

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I am I 'mature student' at 24 years old. I have already done a previous degree, and there is no way I would be doing my nursing degree as I wouldn't be able to fund the tuition fees. When I was 18, I was living through the motions and went to university straight from college as that was the norm. I did enjoy my degree, however felt dissatisfied with my career following this. I was shy at 18, and nursing never occurred to me. But I love my nursing degree and wouldn't want to be doing anything else. It makes me feel crushed to think I would never be in the position I am now if the funding was different.



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## Roxanne, Bury

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As a student nurse that already has to pay for my course as it is non-funded, I do not receive the NHS bursary, I don't understand why as I work under a NHS trust. Personally non-commissioned places like mine mean there are 27 student nurses in my cohort compared with 150 at other universities, this means a lot more 1-1 support which a lot of other universities don't offer, also due to the amount of support we get we will not be doing long 18 preceptorships after qualifying. Personally I think paying for the course will filter out the people doing it for a free degree, or completing the degree and moving abroad after being funded for 3 years by the NHS.



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## Jessica, Nottingham

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Without my bursary travel reimbursements, I would not be able to attend placements outside the immediate area. During a particular placement, I gathered £300 of travel costs, and that was car sharing most days. Each DAY, parking in the hospital I was placed at was £8. There are no student permits. To put this amount into perspective, I spend £8 a week on food. We work hard. We work full time shifts alongside our academic studies. In addition to this, many of us try to work paid shifts with bank HCA alongside, and money is still tight. I realise the argument is that we'll each have more money per person during studying, however, do you really believe we'll ever pay this back based on the current pay bands for nurses? I don't believe that moving money from one pot to another is actually going to help the economy in the long run as no nurse will ever be able to pay off the full debt. Please stop hitting a profession that is already struggling.



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## Emma, Hertfordshire

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As student nurses we cannot fully commit to part-time work due to such an erratic schedule, as it was mentioned before our degree isn't like any other type of degree. We don't get the holidays like other students do, so there is no time to earn enough to fund ourselves for the year. When we are not in university doing theory work or manual training we are on placement gaining experience. As an NMC requirement we must work and study specific hours or we cannot qualify as nurses. It is almost impossible to cope now I don't know you expect us to cope with the financial strain as well as the theory strain. It seems delusional to me? The bursary is our main source of income when juggling such hectic timetables and allows us not to panic, in comparison to what we would if we didn't have it. And you're going to take it away from us for what... To lose more nurses at the end of it as it is physically impossible to maintain a job whilst studying a nursing degree.



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## Chloe, Lincoln

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I cannot even begin to explain the upset and anger I feel about the changes in nursing student funding. I am currently a third year student nurse just about ready to take on the NHS and all its high demands it now upholds for its registered nurses, but there is not one single chance that I would be where I am right now almost ready to qualify had it not been for my funding. A lot of people see nursing as an easy job and easy degree due to the bursary, but I vouch for myself and all my fellow student nurses when I say it is anything but easy. Working full time on a placement that you may or may not enjoy with a mentor and staff that may or may not be even remotely nice to you seems hard enough without the stress of having to reach your bondy level targets, produce evidence for a portfolio and revise for exams/write assignments or in my case this year prepare for and write a 10,000 word dissertation. The funding has allowed me to be able to focus more on my studies, my practice and my patients rather worry about paying rent, affording to live and being in thousands of pounds of debt. I am one of the fortunate ones when it came to NHS bursary funding. My bursary covered my rent and my phone bill so I was able to relax that my necessities as a student was covered. I do however have to work nights and long days as a health care support worker to fund anything outside of that because our student finance was insufficient to cover all extra costs. Although the government seem to think that this new scheme will allow for 10,000 more student nurses, I can only imagine this is now adding to the growing list that makes this course undesirable to even a person that has the drive to be an amazing person and become a nurse. There is becoming less and less reasons to want to fulfil that dream these young people might have because the demand is too high. I have no doubt that had this been the way it was when I was due to begin my degree, I most probably would have stopped myself and chosen an alternative option

## **Samantha, Weston-super-Mare**

I am a mother with 2 boys and my husband is a carer. He receives carers allowance so has a minimal income of approx £240. My bursary is £769 a month! I am the bread winner in the family and can work only when not on placement so can only pick up shifts for approx 20 weeks out of the year. I work hard to “earn” my bursary, reading to support my academic work in most my spare time, the rest of my spare time is taking on voluntary positions to improve my chance of a good job and then I scrape in moments with my children. On placement I work a minimum of 37.5 hours a week, the same as any full time employee, I support patients and families and provide the same care as my qualified mentors. I also have essays while on placement and have to complete a portfolio of competencies... more work!!!! A loan would mean that my hard work means nothing... I'm not being paid, I'm borrowing money I can't afford to pay back, for what will now be a luxury! A luxury to become a health care professional who will then qualify and receive a salary that does not reflect how hard I will work! I'm lucky I qualify next year but my situation is not unique... it is similar to the majority of people wanting to join nursing!

## **Alexander, Solihull**

The government is pushing and investing in apprenticeship programmes where people are paid to work as study and learn while practically doing the job is this not what we as nursing students are doing even businesses pay for employees to go and do degrees why is it that nurses should have to pay to work unsociable hours to miss their own family's highs and lows while looking after other people's we enter this career to be caring and we are all committed to that but for far too long have nurses been undervalued by our government

## **Katie, Cambridgeshire**

Without the bursary I wouldn't be able to get through the course, along with the bursary I also have a loan and work part time. I feel like I can pay my bills and still have a tiny bit of a social life which is much appreciated as the course is very hard mentally and physically. I think there would be a huge struggle for student nurses to cope without the bursary and would probably make a lot of good future nurses not want to go to university which is a great shame as we need more nurses.

## **Chris, Southport**

I would have been unable to part take on my nursing course. My wife and I are both student nurses with 2 children, who have changed careers to become nurses, as a mature student my bursary is my life line as a student nurse. To be on a course that requires 37.5 hrs a week on placement and doesn't support child care or daily living I would not be able to feed my children or to attend university or become a nurse. The bursary allows funding for vital child care to allow me to attend lectures and placements. It puts food on my table and pays for essential bills for heating water, electricity and putting cloths on my children. It supports me to make the 37.5 hrs requirement a week and allows me to see my family, as without bursary I would have to get a job to fund my course and in turn not see my young family as I would have to work outside the course hours to support my family to live.

## **Nicholas, Essex**

Could those who are in power please answer why should any of us as nurses (civil servants) pay for any of our courses? This will only decrease the interest within this profession and much like the issue we have now, staffing will be hard to come by or eventually non-existent. I'd also like to ask how this solves the NHS crisis of cutting back on bank staff and cost savings within this area.



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## Steve, Dorset

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I am 49 years old and have an abundance of life experience. I have spent the last few years supporting people with Autism and decided 2 years ago that I had a lot to offer helping people with cognitive disorders and mental health problems, you could say I have an affinity for it. With this in mind I prepared myself for a degree in mental health nursing by embarking on an Access to Higher Education Diploma at some cost to myself. I passed this with distinctions and gained a place at The University of Southampton. As a mature person I have considerable expenses, family and home to maintain but I planned that if I could work part time whilst doing the degree, together with the NHS bursary it would just about be feasible to do it. Now I am doing the course I have found that those initial thoughts were somewhat optimistic! I have found that due to the demands of the course my ability to earn money is somewhat limited unlike students who are doing 'conventional' degree courses. Without the NHS bursary I would not have considered doing the course, at my stage of life the last thing I want is a debt of £50k!



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## Anthea, Poole

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I simply would not be able to do this course had I not had a bursary. The course involves travelling a long way to placements. I feel incredibly saddened that future nurses will be in massive debt before starting in a job that is already low paid. I feel that the commitment, warmth and compassion that is needed to be a nurse has yet again been taken advantage of by the government. A truly sad day for the future of nursing in this country.



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## Kasia, Romford

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I am now in my 3rd year of my adult nursing BSc. Without the bursary there is no way I would have been able to study ANY degree specially nursing. Nursing is not a job or career it is a life choice. Yes it is a choice going into nursing but poor health is not necessary. You do not choose to have cancer, you do not choose to have a stroke, a broken arm a premature baby or to have bipolar. You do not choose to have HIV or have sickle cell, you do not choose to have asthma or any other health problem. Without nurses these people go untreated and un-helped. When I started nursing I and my parents thought they could help fund me with basic needs of housing and food but with the recession they couldn't I was left to fend for myself. With bursary I was just about able to do this with part time work at another NHS organisation - NHS 111. When I first moved from Kent to Romford in order for me to study I lived with a man. A man who then committed domestic violence against me on several accounts. Without the bursary I wouldn't have been able to escape and find new housing. I wouldn't be in my 3rd year of nursing without this bursary. Now that you - the government, have taken that away there will be no future nurses unless it's the ones that come from a family with money and let's be honest there's not many left in our financial climate. So good luck to those who have just started, who are half way though and who are almost finished because we will be THE last nurses who are in nursing for the life choice not those that can afford to do it. The NHS is crumbling and the only people that will feel the burn are the patients that need us.

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## Alex, Swansea

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The bursary is not only a lifeline to many students such as myself, but when the changes come into force what will happen is there will be an increase in students dropping out half way through courses, at the moment students feel a sense of pride because places are very hard to get and it makes you feel like you have earned your place, and allows individuals from all walks of life to apply, also a lot of people in my cohort alone including myself are mature students, whom have given up full time employment to make a career out of nursing a lot of people won't be able to do that because they would not want the worry of such a high debt hanging over their heads when they eventually qualify. Another point to add is a nursing degree is 50% theory and 50% practical which means students are expected to complete 3 6-7 week placements a year, working 37.5 hours per week, which is hard going when many people like myself have part time jobs. This is very unfair and the government are just making a bad situation worse

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## Lynsey, Elgin

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I have been completing pre nursing education for the past 2 years in preparation for my degree that I will hopefully be starting in August next year. The NHS bursary cuts would mean that I would be unable to go to university and complete a nursing degree like I have been aiming to do for a while. It would mean my years of hard work and extracurricular activities would be put to waste and I would be very unsure about what to do with my future. Although other subjects do not receive bursaries, nursing course structures and unpaid placements mean students are unable to get part time employment and ALL starting salaries for nurses are way under what is enough to pay off student dept. This is going to discourage a large number of future nursing students and doing nothing but harm to the NHS.

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## Katie, Lothian

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I left school at the age of 15 with a basic set of qualifications however no confidence to achieve anything. I had been let down by the school system due to learning difficulties that made the class environment difficult, I was told many times I would never pass my Highers by teachers, I felt disheartened so left before my exam results came in. I had my daughter at the age of 19 and then knew I had two options; stay at home relying on benefit top ups while working a low paid unskilled job or take the jump and further my education to better mine and my daughters chances. I already knew I wanted to do nursing however money was a big problem. My partner works 50+ hours a week on minimum wage and we barely make it at the end of the month, thankfully I knew with my course that I would be lucky not to be left with debt. I thought the struggle would be worth it, only three years and I could work, further my career and be finally stable. I took the leap, I am now starting my second year and love how far I have come, and I have gotten this far juggling childcare costs, study and home life. This week all of this has been thrown upside down. I know do not know what I can do, how will these changes really affect me and whether or not I can continue with my course. I cannot afford the debt and now feel trapped. I thought I was bettering my family, I thought I was building something great for myself and society, I love nursing, I love making a difference to other people's lives no matter how small that is. I feel the rug has been pulled from under my feet. I have been let down once again by a system that claims to want to help people make the best for themselves, set them up to support themselves in the future. How can they do this while taking away the single thing that could have helped me support myself and my family? I am scared of what will become of the NHS, many students are now in my position and it begs the question who will be looking after our children, mothers and fathers in the future.

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## Sam, Brighton

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Without the bursary I would not have been able to afford to start my nursing degree. I have previously studied, and had a student loan, thus limiting my options for funding to retrain as a nurse. The bursary helps me a huge amount, though it doesn't quite cover my rent. I am in my final year of training and as well as long hours on placement, lectures, independent study, exams and essays I also work two part time jobs to keep myself financially afloat. It is not unusual for me to work a 12 hour shift on placement followed by another 6 hours at my job, only to be back in the hospital at 7am the next day. Without the bursary this wouldn't be enough, and there aren't physically any more hours that I can work. Without the bursary I would not have been able to do my training. I love nursing, and I am so looking forward to being qualified, the idea that others in my position could have this opportunity taken away from them breaks my heart.

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## Gina, Central London

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Please be enlightened that nursing is not a course exclusively for school-leavers. Many applicants are mature candidates who, like myself, have given up a full-time job in order to re-train in a profession that will help the nation's most vulnerable people. We come into the course fully accepting it to be hard, and the exemption from fees makes it bearable and a good compromise. If on top of these challenges, we are to incur a large debt that we are then expected to repay on a humble salary, I'm afraid pursuing nursing education in this country would no longer be viable for many mature students, who offer extensive life and professional experience.

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## Gary, London

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The bursary barely covers my rent here in London as it is, to be exact it's 100 less a month (I receive the maximum bursary, and the average London rent is 650) so you do the math. But without the bursary, and with a regular loan, future nursing students will be worse off. Getting rid of the bursary means it's less likely for mature students or returning students (like myself) to be able to turn to nursing as a desired career. How are 18 year olds meant to know what they want to do when they leave college?!

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## Carla, Liverpool

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Doing my nursing degree without a bursary simply wouldn't happen as I wouldn't be able to afford it. I, like many other mature students have student loans from previous degrees whilst also the added pressure of running a household on my own. Currently my bursary covers my rent and phone bill alone. ALL other expenses, food, bills, travel etc. all have to be paid for by money I earn as an agency support worker. At the moment I am on placement as well as having to study for exams and assignments which leaves very little time for work. My nursing degree is my priority therefore I have to decide what can I can sacrifice and leave until next month to be paid in order to stay at home and do my uni work. Cutting student bursaries will undoubtedly cause a massive drop in applications, I for one wouldn't have applied if that was the case for me. A country that is already experiencing a shortage of nurses and the governments answer is to cut bursaries makes no sense whatsoever. Where do the government propose these nurses will come when numbers drop in the UK?? Would George Osborne and his fellow party members work 37.5 hour week including long days, nights and weekends unpaid, plus do uni work and agency work on top of it all? I highly doubt it. It feels like because it doesn't affect them they don't care which doesn't say much for them as a people never mind a government!



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## Llwyd, Bristol

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Cutting the bursary would mean that I wouldn't be on the degree, especially if the student loan repayment has been frozen at £21,000. I simply couldn't afford £360 a month straight from qualification. The supernumerary status that students have are not protected, if I was paying to access placements I would want placements closer to me with some level of choice as to where I go. Also on the subject of placements, we need more mentors who are wanting to take on students, some trusts make rn's become mentors after 2 years in trust which leaves students with mentors who are unwilling to facilitate there learning, and then when you get a mentor who wants students, she doesn't have the time to teach you because the pressure of the ward is too heavy, mentors who want to be mentors need more support in accessing training. Furthermore, the scrapping of the bursary would mean the end of practice expenses, meaning the cost of travelling to placement and using personal vehicles in the community would be picked up by the pocket of the individual. Student nurses already work over the eu working times directive if you include study, placement and the bank/agency work we do to sustain our program financially. The idea that 10,000 more students will be available is beyond belief. My university struggles with getting its full quota of intake, not because of the number of applicants, but because of the number of applicants, but the standard is not high enough. A worry that could arise from this change is a drop in standards to allow more students to enter training, but then there is a fear that a drop in standards could lead to poor care. In short, the NHS bursary was not perfect, it did not meet the financial strain of university life, but by scrapping it and introducing the loan system, many fear that the net result will be less student nurses, more strain on current nurses and the bill will be picked up in the future by use of agency workers. There is so much to say about this, I'm absolutely outraged that I would be paying to access placements, when usually student nurses are lifelines to acute and community nursing settings when the pressure is on. Yesterday's news was a sad time for the future of our wonderful profession



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## Emily, Cambridgeshire

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The bursary is essential for student nurses! I would not be able to commit to this course without it or without the fees being funded. This will have a detrimental effect on the amount of people who want to start the course. For example, Cambridge is becoming an increasingly expensive city to live in and a basic student loan would not cover the costs. The bursary helps pay for essentials such as food and petrol for travel for placements as well as rent in stupidly expensive cities.



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## Chris, Gloucester

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I am currently a third year mental health nursing student, if it was not for the bursary I would not have been able to afford to study. Even with the bursary I am still having to work, by reducing it even further will put student nurses at a greater risk of either not doing the course or pulling out midway through. If I were to be paid for my hours as a student nurse in practice at £6.50 an hour (not even the minimum wage) I would be paid £15000, that's a lot of money! There is already a shortage of staff and new nurses coming through, I feel this will be putting patients at risk.



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## Alyssa, High Wycombe

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Without a bursary, I simply wouldn't be able to study nursing. This change will not only lose students but will give students the idea that nursing is not important. As a student nurse we work for 39 hours a week when on placement. UNPAID. This bursary gives us the ability to do that. If a loan overtakes the bursary I can assure you will not see any more student nurses. We simply cannot afford it.



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## Precious, Enfield

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Nursing training is very demanding which has a lot of impact on the student both financial and otherwise. First, the intense commitment in both theoretical and practical part of the training cannot allow the student to engage in any paid job of which without my student bursary I will not be able to pay for my rent, buy food and most importantly travel to my placement areas. Though student nurses are learning to become qualified nurses. However, they have so much input in the care provision of patients. The idea of removing student bursary means a setback in our future nursing career. It is a BIG BLOW.



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## Lorna, Leeds

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I would not have been able to afford to study nursing and qualify without the bursary, even with it I struggled a lot financially and went without a lot of things that I simply could not afford. In addition if I had to pay back fees I would not have become a nurse.



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## Yasmin, Cambridge

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I am 20 years old and I am currently in the access to nursing course so I am able to get the grades for university. The bursary changes will heavily impact my life and many others. I want to be a mental health nurse and the bursary's made that possible for me, to go to university to fulfill my career dreams and be able to afford it!. If bursaries get taken away and replaced with loans I can no longer go to university. This needs to be thought about, nurses don't get paid enough as it is! For the bursaries to be taken away is in my eyes absolutely disgusting. Studying nursing takes a lot of time and dedication nursing isn't like any other course, working and being a student nurse is almost impossible! If this goes through then my future career will no longer be an option.



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## Sarah, Hampshire

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I have just put my application in to study in 2017, and I am not sure without that money I would still want to study nursing. With 2 children to support I do not want to be paying back student loans once I qualify!



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## Suzanne, The Highlands

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I am a mature student with financial commitments that is associated with having life experience. I would not be able to commit to a nursing degree if the only way to do this was by adding to the debt and financial strain already in place. Student nurses are often unable to sustain part time employment alongside the hours that they are committed to work in a clinical placement as weekly placement hours range from 30-37.5. Placement, assignments and exams tend to run into each other, leaving no room for earning potential. Student nurses are officially supernumerary but they are often expected to work in non-supernumerary situations free of charge. What other degree expects students to work for no financial reward for 50% of the academic year? Even the current basic bursary does not cover basic living costs. I rely on my family to help me financially on a monthly basis. Nursing degrees would be very unattractive if they were saddled by student loans.



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## Caitlin, Liverpool

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Ultimately, I would not have been able to start my nursing degree under the planned government changes. The NHS bursary enables me to get by day to day without the pressure that at the end of the course I am burdened with a massive debt due to tuition fees on top of a huge repayable student loan that under the proposed changes I would be. Taking away the NHS bursary would put me in a position where I would not be able to pay my rent let alone have money left over for activities away from my studies. These changes display the government's complete lack of respect for all nurses and demonstrates an alarming disregard for the investment in our future healthcare service which is already under excessive pressure.



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## Rebecca, Wales

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Although I am in Wales and nearly at the end of my nursing course I feel I must share my experience. Without the NHS funding and bursary system I would not be able to study. I am a mature student who has a mortgage and a family to support. I have 14 years of experience behind me prior to my degree course. I would never have been able to even think about following my dream and enter university without the financial support I have. I already struggle. I continue to work 24 hours a week while studying. This is not an easy thing to do while already completing 37.5 hours placement. To be the best I can be I push and strive to gain knowledge, even though I feel utterly exhausted most of the time. I do this to provide care and compassion to patients who are very often scared and fearful. I do this with very little money and I do it because I don't feel I could do anything else. Nurses are not made we just 'are'. I fear for the future of nursing. I am thankful that I am nearly at the end of my training, but I will stand and support future students. So much is already expected from us. Now our small amount of security had been taken too!



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## Michael, St Helens

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I am in my first year of nursing at Edge Hill University and I am a car owner. I live with my parents. I don't receive the full bursary amount because I live my parents. However as I have a car, I am sent to places further away from home for my clinical placements. My last one was in the Wirral and this involved £30 per week in petrol and over £20 per week in tunnel fees and hospital parking. One I've paid for my car tax and car insurance, rent to my parents and placement expenses I have no bursary left. I am only able to do agency work and this is unreliable as a form of income. I went for 8 weeks without shifts and had to be dependent on my parents for money for my placement expenses. Without this bursary I have no doubt that I would not be able to remain on this course. Even if I received the full bursary amount I would still be living off parental handouts and as a mature student this is highly embarrassing. And given that my father is retired and my mother is a care worker for the elderly, they do not have a large income either. Studying this degree is what I have always wanted to do and I am prepared to financially struggle but without this bursary many nursing students and myself would find it impossible. So please do not take this away from us. You are investing in the future of nursing who will one day look after you.



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## Abbey, Peterborough

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I am completely and utterly appalled that the government have made this decision. Luckily I am now in my third year of my degree, however, I already currently struggle with the amount of money I have. Having to get to and from placements, living costs and daily costs such as parking at placements. Without my bursary I simply would not have been able to do the course, I have already spoken to numerous health care assistants and friends of family who were seriously considering Nursing and now no longer see it as an option due to rocketing costs and the inability to work enough to gain a living wage alongside it. We want to concentrate on our studies and learn the most we can in order to become the best Nurses we can. Instead student nurses are going to be worrying if they can pay their bills, working a ridiculous amount of hours alongside their placements in other jobs just to raise some extra money, and as a result not be able to put as much into their university work as they need to. This is a terrible decision! I was looking forward to mentoring students in the future and it seems like now that will be a very rare opportunity. Students are just not going to be able to cope with the workload in conjunction with the financial and work related stress.



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## Rachel, Scotland

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I truly believe that nursing is not just a job but a lifestyle. We spend our working lives helping and supporting others. I am only a first year student but have worked for the NHS for 3 years previous. The NHS is crippling beneath our feet, we are under paid and severely understaffed, yet despite all that, nursing is my passion I don't have time for a part time job and being dyslexic I spend extra hours on my studies as the course is so extensive. I am 100% certain that creating debt for nursing students of up to £50,000 with an salary once qualified of only £21,000 will make people stop believing that nursing is the right career path. We hold the hands of dying patients, hold sick bowls for the unwell, are shoulders to cry for the receivers of bad news, not everyone can do these things, but I can. I want to help people I want to make a difference. Please don't take the opportunity away from future nurses.



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## Lucy, Glasgow

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I am in my final year as a student nurse I believe with all my heart this was the right choice for me...as a mature student at 29 with 2 children and a house to keep and also need to hold down a part time job to top up the bursary I currently receive... which sometimes means working 7 days a week which I am doing at the moment missing time I won't get back to spend with my family and friends.....plus fit in course work. There have been times when I didn't think I would make it through.....I most definitely would not have commenced on the course, to not put just me but my family into debt, when you have to work so hard to achieve your degree and gain your registration!! And that's in no disrespect to any other degree programme I can only comment on my own. I feel that loads of potential nurses of the future won't apply for the degree programme and we will lose out on the care and compassion of future generations.



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## Jess, London

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I am currently a first year PG Dip student of Adult Nursing. I am 27 and graduated from my first degree in 2011. Even with the NHS bursary, I am struggling financially. As a postgraduate I am not entitled to a second student loan, and did not qualify for a career development loan. It would have been extremely financially irresponsible to take out a standard bank loan, as my starting salary as a graduate will be £21k and I already have huge debts from my first degree. Cutting nursing student bursaries will essentially make the PG Dip course redundant, as no-one will receive any funding, or have the option to take out a second student loan. The majority of students on my course work alongside their studies to supplement their income, as we currently receive a maximum bursary of £550pcm and live in a city where the average rent for a single room is at least that. The government might think it is a sensible option to take out a loan on top of a loan, for me that just highlights how financially reckless they are. The NHS needs nurses, it needs student nurses, and the government needs to recognise that students are an investment not a luxury.



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## Saffron, Canterbury

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Without the bursary, I wouldn't be at university because financially it's not possible to rely solely on my parents. Without the bursary, I wouldn't be able to do my dream job and be a nurse. The price of coming to university is a huge amount which puts people off and makes them resent the idea of being at university having the huge financial issue and without the bursary, people will think nursing is the same. So don't change the bursary because nursing isn't just a job, it's a chance for me, and other people, to perfect the person we want to be; to devote the rest of our lives to something where money will never come close in repaying us for how well we deserve to be... Without the bursary, there simply won't be enough nurses and the world will suffer and so will we



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## Deborah, Oldham

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Bursary was essential to my decision to start nursing degree as I was a mature student/single parent retraining after marital breakdown. Would not have been able to complete the course if I had had to do any more extra bank shifts etc. Many good students on my course dropped out for financial/stress of additional working detrimental to studies/childcare costs reasons. In addition to the bursary I also had to take out student loans to support my family which I will repay until I retire thus affecting my ability to save for my retirement. As the bursary is means tested again it will hit the poorest hardest and discourage older nurses like myself who bring additional life skills to the profession. It saddens me to say this but I could not hand on heart recommend a career in nursing to prospective students in the current political climate.



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## Amanda, Redcar

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Being a student nurse is incredibly hard, we work 37.5 hours per week, whilst doing uni work on top, many of us have families. I am a single mum with three children and working extremely hard to get through and at times I have felt broken. It is hard enough financially to make ends meet than if I had no bursary. The majority of people going into nursing are more mature and would not be able to do this degree without financial support. Given that the NHS is stretched with staff shortages already this will make this situation far worse as less people will be able to complete the degree without the financial assistance. This is in my view horrifying and will make staffing shortages far worse in years to come. I worry for the care my children will receive should they need it as adults if this doesn't get overturned due to staff shortages!!!!



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## Anna, London

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I am so passionate about the nursing profession and the NHS. I believe in the NHS and providing excellent care for every patient. If the bursary did not exist I would not have applied to do a nursing degree. I would not be a student nurse. I would not have worked a 40 hour week this week looking after patients during their battle with cancer. I also would not have been revising for upcoming exams and drafting essays every evening. Although it's a demanding course and the wage at the end is less than I earned in my previous job, the NHS bursary made it viable for me to be a student nurse.



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## Toritseju, London

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I've got 2 kids and the little I get is helping me stay focus with the study without the fear of having a huge worry of putting food on the table for my kids. If this is taken away from us, as student, then I might have to drop out of the course and get a full time job as well as kill my desire and dream to become a nurse as I am a single parent. I had to wait for my youngest to be at least 3years old to be able to start. Things are hard financially as it right now but cutting the bursary, will mean worse issues for the kids and me.



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## Natalie, Cumbria

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I have started a nursing course this year as a mature student. If I knew I would have a load of debt that would carry through to a lot later in my life I never would have taken this course. The thought of still paying a student loan off into my 50s is not something I would want. Cumbria would miss out on a much needed learning disability nurse and I would stay stuck in a minimum wage job. This bursary has been fundamentally important as traveling for placements costs a fortune and unlike other university students in none NHS places I have had to spend a lot of money of shoes and clothes for a community team placement as I had no smart things for the job.



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## Sarah, Hampshire

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I have just put my application in to study in 2017, and I am not sure without that money I would still want to study nursing. With 2 children to support I do not want to be paying back student loans once I qualify!



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## Natalie, Sheffield

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I have just finished my nursing course and as a mother to 3 children I would never have been able to start the course never mind finish it without my NHS bursary and help with childcare costs. I would have most likely been still on benefits or part time minimum wages topped up my benefits. People like me deserve to reach our full potential and not be held back due to ending up in debt. The bursary has enabled myself and other people from normal unprivileged backgrounds to better our lives, go to university and gain a long term career to provide a better life for our family's and in turn teach our children the right way to go in life. Stopping the NHS bursary will have a massive negative impact on the nursing profession, only people who can afford to do it will apply, meaning the nursing profession is missing out on all the other people who will make compassionate and dedicated nurses. All that potential down the drain as they cannot afford to train, it is unfair and I have a very bad feeling it will cause much more harm to the nursing profession, we are already under staffed, I cannot see it going any other way then making the situation worse. I am shocked and disgusted by this government, nurses are already underpaid and over worked with no recognition for their dedication, and now they have to start out their working life in thousands of pounds worth of debt only to have to pay it all back with the little they get paid for saving lives every day. All I can say is I have to thank my lucky stars in did my nursing course before this happened as my situation would be very different and I would never have been able to become a nurse.



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## Tierna, Newcastle upon Tyne

I am a final year student Mental Health nurse due to qualify and commence my first post in March 2016. I absolutely love my job and feel extremely passionate and privileged to have been able to complete my training, however I personally know that I wouldn't have been able to do my training without my student bursary. Throughout my training within the practical element, which accounts for 50% of our 3 year training, I have worked 37.5 hours a week on placement as well as working part time as a care assistant to top up my bursary as it only just covers my rent so I have to work part time in order to eat; furthermore I have to complete academic work whilst on placement as well as collecting evidence to fulfil the competencies required by the NMC within the Practice Assessment Document. I am one of 6 children, my mum is a single parent and has worked hard (trained as a nurse herself) in order to financially support us through childhood, however she would not be able to support all of us through University at such extortionate rates! It saddens me to think that if circumstances were different and I was commencing my training in 2017, my decisions would be very different and I don't think I could do the job I love. Let's face it student nurses don't enter into the career thinking they are ever going to be high earners, they enter because they are caring and compassionate people who feel privileged to be able to sit beside people at some of the hardest times in their lives; how many of these amazing people are the proposed financial changes going to deter from entering this amazing career? Too many I fear.....#WeAreNurses



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## Katherine, Stafford

I am currently a third year nursing student receiving the NHS bursary. Without this bursary I would not be able to afford childcare for my daughter while I'm working full time on placement. As student nurses we are expected to travel across a large area to get to placement to gain a wide variety of experiences which costs money especially for students who have to use public transport. I would not have started on a nursing course if I had to pay for tuition and get a loan to afford day to day costs of living. As students we work just as hard as the staff on the wards for the same hours. We have academic work to complete throughout the year on top of working full time hours, there is no time for students like me who have children to provide for to get a job on top of the course and even the students who don't have children have very limited time as we are committed to the course for three years. If the NHS bursary is taken away from student nurses there will be too much financial pressure on students to be able to complete the course.



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## Anthea, Lancashire

I am a mature student with a young family, I already have a degree which I obtained a few years ago which I entered straight after school during that period where you don't know what you want to do. Without student bursary I would be unable to train to be a nurse, Student loans wont fund for a second degree so I wouldn't be able to fund a second, Student bursary is already a relatively small amount of money considering the amount of work we have to do in wards and out in the community as part of our course at the end of which we won't be in high paying positions. I believe that bursary should continue and that those people who then choose not to go into nursing should be eligible to repaying that amount rather than all nurses getting a loan and maybe the loan getting paid off if they go into nursing



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## Brad, Maidstone

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I am a 27yr old man and have a wife, a 7yr old son and a 6 week old baby daughter who I need to support whilst training. This change means I have no choice but to leave the child nursing course like millions of others as I will be unable to live and support my family. I feel disgusted by the decision and hope the government realise how evil and stupid they are before there are no nurses left in the country as many retire and very few new nurses actually train. The government are about to destroy millions of peoples dreams and millions of others lives.



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## Kay, Worcestershire

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With the proposed changes I simply would not have done the course, as will thousands now do the same. No matter that this will make more places, you are giving the working class who cannot afford to study university even more reason to stay in a dead end job, you are now to lose thousands of good quality nursing students because they will not be able to afford to go to university. All while you sit on your comfy wage protesting that you're making billions available for the NHS, at what cost? At losing well skilled nurses, that's what cost.



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## Amanda, Guildford

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I am a mature student and I already had a previous degree before going into nursing. I feel mature students bring a lot to nursing with our life experiences and emotional strength and understanding which is vital for excellent patient care. I think nursing is a career that a lot of people consider later in life when we realise that we'd like to do something more fulfilling. I don't think I would have been emotionally prepared for a career in nursing when I was 18 and I certainly would not have considered changing my career if I knew I'd come out with another 3 years of student debt on top of my previous degree. The current bursary that I receive as an independent student with no children is still not enough to live off. Many of us have to work part time to fill in the gaps. Taking away this bursary would make it virtually impossible for people like me to join the wonderful nursing profession as often we're working full time on placement and are not able to hold down part time work consistently. This is a real shame as I think we are extremely valuable to the profession and the NHS would struggle to find such dedicated and compassionate nurses.



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## Tamzin, Alloa

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I spend £90 every 4 weeks to get to university and from £90-£160 over 4 weeks depending where my placements are in Glasgow. I couldn't do this and survive without my bursary.



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## Cat, Sheffield

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I'm a newly qualified nurse so the changes to bursary won't affect me, however when I heard about them I felt I needed to say something. Without the bursary and the paid fees I would have never have been able to become a nurse, my family and I simply could not have afforded it. By making these changes you are asking people to saddle themselves with massive debt despite working thousands of hours for free. The only job I could have while at university was as an agency support worker, which I was not allowed to do until I started my second year. Even with that job and my bursary it was tough to cover my rent, food and other living expenses, whilst leaving time for me to actually study for the degree I was taking. It was hard for me but I cannot imagine how difficult it was for students who had families to provide for, many of my fellow students missed time with their (often young) children because they absolutely could not afford to miss work even with extra income from the bursary. By changing this system you are cutting off many potential nurses of the future, you say that this will allow you to recruit extra nurses but who will you recruit when people cannot afford to come to university and dedicate their time to thousands of hours of study and unpaid placement time, whilst also squeezing a job in there? Building on this, if people decide not to take up the training places this will further gimpact the staffing of the NHS in years to come. It takes a certain type of person to be a nurse, they must be compassionate, intelligent and able to deal with the emotional and physical strains of the job. If this new system was presented to me as I made my choice for my future career I would not see the benefit in working hard at three years training to then work in an understaffed and overstretched environment with thousands of pounds of debt.



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## Alice, York

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I think it's absolutely disgusting to be honest. If anybody from The Government reads this, I'd like to explain to your extremely privileged self why this recent decision is such a horrible one, because as nurses we constantly are having to use empathy, and that seems to be something you lot are apparently incapable of. When we are on placement in the hospital for 30 hours a week, as well as having to write essays and attend seminars, it is very difficult to work more than a few hours. This for many students, means they can earn no more than about £30 a week. The bursary is supposed to be there to help us with travel costs, costs to buy us food on our breaks and a little towards our living costs. It makes the 13 hour shifts on our feet, where we might have to wipe someone's bottom, make countless beds and actually save lives a little better. It's a little compensation for the free labour that we, especially people in their second or third years, are used for. There is a national shortage of nurses and the government are doing nothing to encourage people to study it. This will affect so many people's lives. Not only the thousands of young men and women who will not be able to follow their dream because they will not want or be able to work 30 hours a week essentially for free, but it will affect members of the public, when we get increasing numbers of foreign nurses, many of whom are not appropriately qualified, and when these poor students will start their first jobs already completely disenchanted for nursing. I, for one, am fed up of being looked at as a burden by the NHS and The Government. All they think of is the money they are giving out now, not the long term investment that it will create. It is incredibly dangerous to further alienate people from becoming a nurse, which is already an extremely difficult job with a pretty pathetic salary. But to add mountains and mountains of debt on top of that is horrifying.

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## Mary, London

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My belief is that we, as nursing students, have paid the government back for our education by providing our services free of charge and working hard at our placements. Placements, in reality, are not just learning experiences - they are work experience and students do all the same work as the HCA's and help the registered nurses. If the government wants to withdraw its contribution then they should shorten the nursing course to 1 1/2 years to encompass only the university part of it (because that's all we get at university anyway) and let nurses go to work - maybe at a slightly reduced pay - to get their experience. Student nurses should definitely not be forced into these non-paid working placements for the equivalent 1 1/2 years during school time if they are not getting any benefit from it. It makes far more sense to shorten the university duration by cutting out placements and let the new nurses work for pay to get experience.



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## Catherine, Cheltenham

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As a mature student with a family I simply would not have considered undertaking the nursing degree if I had been required to pay tuition fees. This is absolutely nonsensical and will only result in falling numbers of people applying for nursing degrees and hence fewer nurses at a time when demand is ever increasing.



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## Gemma, York

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I would not have been financially able to even think about training as a nurse without the bursary. To remove it is to further discourage new nurses coming into the field. We are already massively understaffed, please rethink this!



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## Bethan, Wales

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I began my nursing degree at the age of 27 and it is a degree many embark upon later in life. I have found the course to be difficult both in the information that needs to be taken in and the finding time it takes to complete the many practice hours the course requires. The NHS hospitals are incredibly busy and a high amount of responsibility is placed upon nursing students even in their first year to aid in the care patients need. I finish a long, busy hospital shift and then need to find the time for study. I have taken a part time job during my second year and have had to give it up as I've only had time for 2 shifts (one of those I had to miss lectures for). Without the funding from the NHS I couldn't afford to live and study.



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## Karen, Widnes

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If my bursary is cut I won't be able to continue on my course and fulfil my dreams of becoming a mental health nurse, my husband works 60hrs a week already, he can't physically do anymore so if we were to lose the bursary we couldn't survive.



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## Jamie, Warrington

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I am a third year adult nurse student currently, as well as 40 hours a week placement I also work 22 hours in a care home because of how tight money already is. I live at home with my mother who is a single mother with five children. She works in a low paid job and has to support herself and her five children. The small amount of bursary I receive almost pays for my travel to and from university and placement as well as necessities such as food and bills. If I wasn't to receive the bursary I wouldn't be able to do nursing and this would have never been an opportunity for me because of my social background and being working class. I have had a passion for nursing ever since I can remember and already as a student I feel as though I have impacted many patients' lives before I have even started my career. Charging students for the course and taking away benefits such as the bursary is almost a step backwards both for the NHS and the nursing profession. We are in an era where the NHS is struggling following the Francis report and nurses have a much larger and ambiguous role. Although attending university is a step forward for nursing by improving skills and qualities to a higher level, limiting those of which can attend will have a dramatic effect, especially for students such as myself. If I had to pay I would not have applied for the course knowing its demand as placement, assignments and keeping a part time job is not an appealing quality. It's a well-known fact that the nursing profession is stressful and can be mentally draining, but putting this much stress on a student will: increase the amount of students which drop out of the course; increase sickness levels and mental health implications; decrease the production of nurses and finally isolate those such as myself which would not be able to do the course. I urge the government to reconsider and offer some kind of financial relief before this implicates the production of nurses and the cracks start to show in the NHS, staffing levels are already appalling and immigrating students is also increasing. I want to urge all student nurses and qualified nurses to fight for this. This could be bad news for the NHS.



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## Lauren, Northampton

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I am a third year student and could not have completed my degree without the bursary. I am 27, married with a young daughter who is 5 years of age. I have dedicated my whole working life to health care and have wanted to be a nurse since I was a young girl. Without the bursary I could not have achieved my degree, I have struggled as it is for the past three years and the bursary had enabled me to reach my life long career goal. Six three month placements, of which you work 37.5 hours a week for free, surely entitles me to a £450 bursary. It is hard work and intense you will not get even a fraction of good people applying to become nurses if you are to pile them with debt.



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## Simon, Northampton

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I'm a mature student at the age of 33 I've worked in healthcare since I left school at 16. I have 17 years' experience as an hca in a hospital. I have two children and am married without the student bursary I wouldn't be able to afford to study nursing as it is I still have to work to be able to afford to study. If I had put off my studies till the loans came into effect then I wouldn't be able to afford to do the course as I can't afford another loan over my head and the extra financial stress. What I don't understand is why MPs get all their expenses large pay rises 7m a year subsidised bar and meals and a new 10m private plane yet AHP get a small rise and lots of cuts and we are expected to take it.



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## Marie, South Shields

It is deeply saddening how NHS bursary are to be stopped. As a student nurse myself I struggle on a daily basis financially enough as it stands even when receiving my bursary. We work long hard unpaid hours for so little a month, it's only the fact I love what I do that keeps me going. We work outside of normal degree hours which leaves no time for a second job let alone time with our loved ones. If I had not already started my course and this came into action it would deter me from ever wanting to start. The country already has a huge shortage of nurses and I believe this decision is only going to make this matter worse. There are people out there who have potential to make outstanding nurses and now may never get a chance to prove that as they are not in the financial status to be able to afford to take on the huge debt the nursing degree will now come with, which is very sad. We talk about the wrong people getting into nursing as it is and I think this decision will only make this worse. They should be ashamed of themselves for destroying peoples dreams and making this already challenging degree even harder than it already is and for what....Greed !!!



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## Claire, Gloucester

Without my student bursary I would not be able to afford to pay my rent or my bills. I already have to work part time to be able to afford these things along with my bursary so without it I would not be able to continue on the course. I am lucky that my partner is able to help out with additional finances whilst I'm studying although many people will not have this luxury. I have already spoken to several people who were considering taking up their nurse training who have now said they simply can't afford to.



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## Hollie, Cheltenham

I am a third year student and even with the bursary I have had to work through this course on every single weekend and day off possible just to be able to afford the cost of living. I know for many mothers that can't do this their bursary is a life saver for them. To put it simply for the members of the government that think this is just a "degree" course - this is NOT like any other degree course and simply cannot be compared to one! We work FULL TIME - meaning when other students on degree courses finish for summer in May we are still on placement all the way up until the end of July, we work over Easter and right up until Christmas while other students are enjoying their weeks off, and what is it we're so busy doing? Placement! Yes this is an essential part of the course and we should be supernumerary however due to the already low numbers of staff on wards we are often counted in the numbers, we work full time hours 37.5 hours a week consisting of a variety of shifts early to late to long day and night shifts, we work long hours and on top of this we have our exams and assignments looming over us! The bursary allows us to feel that we are almost on apprentice type pay for all the hard work and practice hours we put in, without that YOU are making us work FULL TIME hours for FREE! This is ridiculous and I would challenge any of you to do a week in our nursing shoes on our wage and see how you cope with it.



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## Daisy, Manchester

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I would not have been able to come to university this year had it not been funded by the NHS. I am a mature student with financial commitments and I would not be able to cope with a huge debt at the end of my studies as our starting salary is only £21,000. Nurses have a huge responsibility even as students. Working a 37.5 hour week alongside studies and a part time job is tough and I would not be able to pay to do it. These extra places now available may be filled, but where will these people go? My lecture theatre is full to the brim. Students do get turned away every year, but not only because of limited space, it's also because they don't meet the criteria to study nursing. So universities may make more money and the government has saved some, but I think this will compromise the quality of patient care and student wellbeing.



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## Hawys, West Wales

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Having wanting to be a nurse from a very young age, I've always been determined to do so. The bursary available has been a very encouraging source for making a definite choice of field to follow, due to the nursing degree being so challenging and such long hours due to practical training too. Without the bursary, I find it very hard to see through the fact that I'll have a debt of £50,000 or more by the time I graduate. The NHS are crying out for nurses, what sense does the cut of the bursary make? The decision is absolutely disgraceful!



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## Ruth, Leicester

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If the bursary change had come into effect before I started my course I would not have been able to start my training. I already have a degree and nursing will be my second, I therefore still have debt to pay from my first degree. Taking on more debt for a second degree would just be too much. The bursary has allowed me to pursue nursing without incurring more debt and I am so grateful for this as it is a career I truly love. I feel the new proposals stop anyone with a first degree from entering the profession as it means taking out a vast loan on top of existing debt, which equates to a huge debt that for the majority of us is just too much to bare. Even if I was studying nursing as my first degree the new loan proposal would make me think twice as not only would I incur vast debt, I would be entering a public sector job with current pay freezes by the government. I would need to weigh up the benefits of my job against the cons of debt and a low salary. I don't think the government realise the commitment that goes into nurse training. We don't have the long holidays that most degree students get and we work/study for longer hours. Having previously studied a degree I can confidently say that my nursing degree involves ten times the work and commitment of my previous studies. This should be acknowledged by the government. They clearly don't have a clue.



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## Rhyan, Cardiff

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Being a student in my third year of mental health branch I have overcome a lot of barriers to get to this final year of my training. I have given up a full time job, sacrificed going on stag do's and weddings abroad due to being on placement and given up countless weekends to work bank shifts, write essays, revise for exams and go into placement. On placement I have it found it can sometimes be a lonely, challenging place and you give up your supernumerary status to help with hcsw tasks ensuring patients get the care they deserve on understaffed and busy wards. This hard work can often go unnoticed by mentors and ward managers but patients and family members are always grateful which always gives me a warm feeling. Being paid £387 a month for all this hard often feels unfair but I accept it knowing I'll get the career I want, doing what I love and not saddled with too much debt when I qualify. However when I have run around a ward all day without thanks I have often wondered what keeps me and my student colleagues going when we need to do the same again on the nurse bank the next day and write an essay the next. I have seen some people take a break on training they are so exhausted and others quit completely. All I want to say is the ones that get through, having made all these sacrifices to help others, just allow them a future without £60-70 thousand debt around their necks to do a very difficult job they love. If anyone reads this thank you and a little investment in the future will ensure competent and safe practitioners caring for your family and friends in NHS, private or voluntary run hospitals.



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## Mark, Manchester

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I think it's appalling! Especially as we have to work on the wards and have to complete 4,600 hours of studying. It is a privileged job but it's a hard one, nights unsociable hours, weekends and Christmas. It really is unfair.



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## Leanna, Glasgow

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I am currently in first year after having previously completing a degree and graduating in 2009. If it hadn't have been for the bursary it's very unlikely that I would have applied at all, and if I had it would be after a few years of living with my mother in my mid-twenties so I could afford to save.



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## Sophie, Leicester

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Whilst doing my nursing degree I have constantly struggled financially. I have worked part time in a care home the whole way through to try and top up my bursary which is not enough to live on as it is. I have also had to use the small amount of inheritance that I received when my dad passed away to buy food/fuel etc. which is disappointing as this could have helped me to put a deposit on a house in the future. But despite this I love nursing and I wouldn't change my career choice. Despite the fact that it was only a small amount, without my bursary I wouldn't have been able to get through this course, it would have been too difficult. I am aware that I am probably one of the students in a better position considering I have no debts yet and no children, so considering how financially difficult it has been for me, I can't imagine what it is like for the students that already have debts to pay along with children to provide for and a house to pay for. If this course wasn't funded I simply would not have been able to do it. My dad passed away when I was 14 so my mum is on her own and struggles to pay her own bills so she is definitely not able to support me with money on top of this. I am so disappointed with this decision, as I know a lot of people that want to do nursing that probably won't be able to now.



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### Laura, Cambridge

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I struggle as it is with money at university, I am in my third year now and the pressure of having to work as well as study has been really stressful for me. However if I did not have the income of my bursary each month, I would not be able to afford the course and therefore not be able to have my dream career. Students depend on the bursary to be able to concentrate and focus on their course and studies, if it's taken a way very few people will go into nursing and the amount of nurses will decrease even more. Hospitals and wards are already short staffed as it is, the whole thought is ridiculous.



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### Katie, Cambridge

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I would not be on the course without my bursary. I have to work at weekends anyway, without my bursary I would have to work an extra 2-3 days a week to make up for this, meaning I would be working 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Nursing has always been my dream and bursary has allowed me to live this.



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### Angela, Weston-super-Mare

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I am currently a student nurse and have nearly finished my first year, it is a full on course which impacts on your whole life, but I really enjoy it, it is definitely different to any other degree at university. I am also a single mum, and without the student bursary I would not have been able to get on the degree due to the support I get for my child from the bursary. I feel a lot of the country that currently want to become a nurse would be put off doing the degree because of having to pay for it in 2017. The degree take up a lot of your time I find it does and I currently can't work, I only work once a month due to the commitment to the degree, I feel if I started after 2017 I would not be able to support me and my son through the course.



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### Geraldine, Welshpool

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Without my bursary I wouldn't have been able to complete my nursing degree. We are already burdened with maintenance grant debts, this will further debt when qualified. I also think taking bursaries will deter people from applying because of the massive debts it will accrue. A nursing degree is not like any other degree. We work long, hard 12.5 hour shifts, 3 or even 4 days a week when on placement, deserving more than a pittance of a student loan; a living wage whilst on placement would be sufficient for our recognisable hard work. Please, rethink this decision for the lifesaving profession. A shortage of nurses and lower standards of care will be imminent if this happens, going against the NHS constitution and compassion of our health service.



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### Alison, Lincolnshire

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As a first year student it has become clear that we have to cram a lot of theory into a short space of time so that we can go on placement after Christmas. I have gone back to live with my mum at 40 years old, I don't go out, I don't buy extravagant items. The bursary helps me to be able to give my mum some money towards the extra food she has to buy in now I'm living here. I know you need to make cuts, but please don't do it at the expense of student nurses. The country is already short of nursing staff, this decision could mean people that want to get into nursing think twice. We don't get a good enough salary to pay back 3 years' worth of tuition fees. Please rethink this decision, it will be detrimental to all future nurses.



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## Jennifer, Willenhall

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This is the worst ever thing to happen in nursing. We have nurses because students can commit to their trading without worrying about bills. I don't have family, my parents died when I was eight years old and I have no siblings. I am on my own but with the bursary there I don't worry about anything else but concentrate on my studies. Removing the funding will bring the number of nurses down, who will want to be in debt when they are still on training, this government has no clue, in times when the NHS, is making headlines this happens, What is happening, someone please help, I was in tears because I love what I do, I love nursing I eat, breath and dream nursing because it's my dream career, I won't be able to study if the funding is stopped because I have to go to work to pay for my rent and other bills. Children of wealthy people Will afford what about people like me with nobody, I we just thrown in the gutter. Shame on you George because you not thinking straight, you are destroying something beautiful, nursing is just not a job, it's a gift, if you can work as a nurse you have the heart to do it, that's why we student nurses go for training because we feel very blessed to do such a job, my heart bleeds because I might pull out of the course because I can't afford to pay. I hope the RCN , NMC and anybody representing nursing will fight. This can't be happening. It's sad, at uni today you could see how worried students were. Please help us.



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## Samantha, Plymouth

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No bursary in the future is unfair considering the long hours students put in to theory and practice. Student nurses have to be very committed and work very hard. The nursing community is a caring and supportive one, changes in funding are very sad. Will make it very difficult as most student nurses are older and have families to support. Costs are difficult to fund with a bursary.



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## Keira, Glasgow

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Working on placement revising for exams and having to work full time in a care home to support myself and my flat is extremely hard but with the help from the NHS nursery helps, having this scrapped and having to take a loan out when I go back uni will be impossible because of my recent student loans in college therefore when qualifying I will be in a lot of debit a lot if the girls I speak to about this are put off studying nursing and wish to apply for another course. We are looking after patients and families working long hours spending more time at uni, studying, on placement and away from our families, and while our house cleaning becomes less important and our families become less important we ask ourselves is it retake worth it for what? To end up in lots of debit? Is this what the world thinks of nurses – they're not good enough to get an NHS bursary to help keep them going? There will be a massive shortness of nurses in the future, as it's not just me that thinks this, today we had a debate about it and my uni class thinks the same! Very sad!



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## Rachel, Leeds

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For me this change is devastating. I would not have been able to start my nursing degree if I didn't receive the bursary and it scares me to think that when I qualify, nurses will be stretched even further than they are currently. If the aim is to stop people wanting to study nursing in order to prove the NHS isn't working and to privatise it as a result then congratulations. The government has succeeded.



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## Angela, Louth

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I'm a 41 year old mature student in my 1st year, I travel 95 miles a day to attend Hull University. I have a partner on low wage and 3 teenagers at home, I can only do this degree because of the monthly bursary. I would not be able to afford to do this otherwise.

## Vicky, Manchester

My nurse education was a post-grad MA course. For this reason I was not entitled to a student loan. If I did not have a bursary I would not have been able to fund my own nurse education. We must not allow this to change and put off any other people thinking of joining our wonderful profession! #nursesroar

## Rachelle, Hertfordshire

If the bursary was unavailable to myself I would not have been able to afford childcare and it would have been impossible to commence this course, with the additional funds needed to get to and from placement and general living expenses on top! I have already accumulated £9,000 debt with student finance, and I am only in the second year £3,500 of this money was a loan to commence the access course to enable me to start the university degree. Because I am a mature student with children I am unable to work alongside the course and placements to make any extra money to survive, therefore I would of perhaps have not chosen to come in to nursing if the bursary was not available to myself whilst my children were school age, if at all! The thought of accumulating £60,000 worth of debt for a very demanding degree that you are also working during placements whilst studying and not being paid does not make much sense, and will undoubtedly exclude many mothers who wish to pursue a career in nursing. The government say by introducing the fees will create up to 10000 more spaces for nursing students, however what they are actually doing are excluding people who care and want to make a difference, knowing that you will be saddled with debt that will probably take you your whole working life to pay off is madness, the wages once qualified do not reflect a degree standard and in reality this change will create and even bigger deficit in nurses as not many people will apply.

## Kate, Guildford

My name is Kate and I am a final year paediatric nurse. When I read about the bursary changing, my heart sank for the future of nursing, and our NHS. When I applied for my degree, I knew it would be tough. I knew I wouldn't be a normal student like my friends, but I also knew that I was doing something that not only benefitted the people around me, but was fundamental to maintain the exceptional care that we in the UK are lucky to have. I have worked 12 hour shifts every year. I have cried, laughed, and seen the best and worst of humanity. I struggle every year to pay rent, transport, and when I do get time to go out, it is always on the cheap. Without my bursary, I wouldn't have been able to get to placement, to do something I loved, to do something that I felt was worth the sleep deprivation, the long hours and the tireless commitment all student nurses put in. By cutting out bursary and making us pay tuition, you're not just stifling the amount of people who will join nursing, you're making it an altogether unappealing career. We are like no other degree, we can't plan part time work effectively, as the hospital always comes first. We change between night and day, without getting paid. There are not many degrees who would be happy with unpaid placement. But we don't see it that way. Until now. You really can't understand just how harshly this will affect being a student nurse. Unless you walk in our shoes, you are merely looking at figures on an expenses chart. If you want to know what it's like, try what we do for a month, a week. You'll soon realise that we work extremely hard, we don't live in luxury, and you're making it worse.



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## Sophie, Buckinghamshire

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I am a student nurse and I am current reviving bursary. Since starting uni I have had to have a part time job to help fund daily living as the bursary doesn't even cover my rent. So because of needing a part time job, I'm working 70 hours a week with placement hours included and this includes working until 4am (earliest!) on both weekend days when I really should be doing more work towards my dissertation. I am not the only student that is having to this! Bursary needs to increase! Not be replaced. This is a huge assumption to make however I think (and people agree with this statement) a nursing degree is difficult now, financially speaking, it would be near impossible to complete a nursing degree without funding. Meaning no new nurses!



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## Erin, Essex

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I'm a third year student nurse and the news has saddened and scared me. I worry about all the potential nurses who may not choose the nursing path now. I believe this will affect nurse recruitment negatively. Which will affect the future workforce. MY future workforce. We are set to be 47,500 nurses short by 2016 as it is. How are the government going to deliver 10,000 new medical professionals to the NHS, as promised, if they take away the incentives and support systems needed to train new nurses? Not to mention the other medical professionals this change will affect (physiotherapists, midwives etc.).



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## Mollie, Guildford

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As there is already a shortage of student nurses in training already how does anyone expect to have more student nurses coming in to training to be put on placements for free doing the same hours as a full time nurse whilst revising and doing course work whilst trying to earn money in the short periods of holidays we get. The government seem to forget that our term times are longer than normal courses and we spend roughly 50% of it working for free. I'm struggling to cope with a job and help from my parents surely that's evidence enough?!



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## Jen, Manchester

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I can categorically say that with a young family I would not have been able to complete this course without the bursary. I struggle as it is with the bursary e.g. Paying child care costs, bills, bus passes etc.... Without the bursary I would have had no choice but to give up my dream to becoming a children's nurse



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## Eleanor, Plymouth

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I am very dedicated to midwifery, so I will still go on to do the course, but it will not only have an adverse effect on students, but on the course. More places means overstretched NHS trusts won't be able to provide the necessary placements for students to learn on the job, which is bad because 50% of our time will either be spent on the ward or in the community.



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## Helen, London

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I graduated with a nursing degree just over two years ago. I was fortunate to receive a diploma bursary for the first two years and then a means tested bursary and loan for the third year. On top of this I worked bank shifts as a HCA and received financial support from my parents. Still I left with around £5k debt. With the inability to work due to the high intensity of this degree - both academically and clinically, I think it is unrealistic to expect people to take this career path without the financial support that currently exists. Student nurses have no more than 4 weeks holiday in a year, unlike other university students who can have around 3 months to work and earn money. The demands of the nursing degree just do not allow student nurses to fund themselves in the same way as other students. In addition, this is not a well-paid career path and paying off debts with interest will take significantly longer than your average degree graduate! Honestly, I am not sure I would have taken this career path if I didn't receive the financial support I did.



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## Kate, Northampton

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As a mature student I am retraining to be a nurse. This is a career that I've always wanted to do. I've paid out £900 for an access course just to get in the nursing degree, to meet the academic requirement of having studied in the last 5 years. I am getting the bursary and fees paid by the NHS. As I already have a degree - I am only eligible for £2000 from Student Finance England. Without the fees and bursary Nursing would not be an option to me - my husband and I have taken a 50% cut in out household income for me to do this. As a mature student I'm not convinced that I would be at working age long enough to pay the money back and I wouldn't want to be in that much debt at my age. On my course almost half are mature students. I think a large percentage of those over 25, wanting to retrain, will not do so without the NHS fees and Bursary.



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## Nathan, Bristol

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I've been a nurse for several years now, and during this time I have seen many demoralised colleagues either leave the profession or forced to take long-term sickness due to the pressures of targets, paperwork and shift patterns. These are dedicated individuals who have been downtrodden for too long, and I can no longer sit back idly and witness the profession I admire and proud to be a part of crushed by government targets and pressures that are filtering down to our wonderful doctors and nurses. For me personally, had it not been for the financial support like the NHS bursary I wouldn't have been able to undertake my degree. Whilst incredibly modest, the bursary acted as a life line throughout my training. Nursing is like no other degree. You don't get the long summer and Christmas holidays like most other undergraduates. Half the time is spent on placement to gain exposure and the skills required to become a nurse, whilst the rest of the time at university writing assignments and studying for exams. This leaves very little time for part-time work meaning the bursary acts as a huge lifeline for many. Speaking to many colleagues this week and judging the mood from various forums, nurses are angry and have had enough. We currently aren't training enough nurses, this is a very short sighted policy by this government. Years of pay freezes, long working hours and deteriorating working conditions really does leave a sour taste in your mouth. Also this hardly makes the nursing attractive to young people or mature students with families who may be thinking about joining the profession. As far as salaries go, nursing is already lagging behind that of other graduates. As mentioned above, what with pay freezes/cuts, increase in NMC fees, and the general cost of living, is it fair that a newly qualified nurse should be left to shoulder a debt of over 30k giving that our earning potential and starting salaries are being eroded. Therefore as my union and representative, I am asking you for the good of the profession and our patients, do something to stop this reckless behaviour by the government



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### **Koran, Torquay**

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I'm currently on a paediatrics placement having to stay away from my family-due to a two and a half hour train ride from home. I could not afford to be here if I had no help claiming costs back. With a shortage of nurses this decision is shameful...another dig for our wonderful NHS.



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### **Leona, Northern Ireland**

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I think this is devastating for the future of student nursing. I'm a first year student nurse and if I wasn't receiving my bursary I wouldn't be financially able to complete the lifelong desire to become a nurse.



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### **Katie, Edinburgh**

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Having just finished three years of training, from which I left a full time job to do, I can safely say that I would not have survived if it hadn't been for me bursary. Without it I doubt I'd have lasted the first 6 months. What people need to remember is that students are also valuable members of the team, working full time hours in the hospital alongside studying on the job, studying at home and exams. There is no option of having a part time job as we are expected to work whenever we are told. If the bursary was taken away it wouldn't allow student nurses to have any kind of life and would be detrimental to the amount of students there are.



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### **Leona, Northern Ireland**

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### **Lisa, Cumbria**

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The wage of a nurse will never cover the tuition fees that taking out a loan would amount to. It would be extremely difficult to manage without the bursary. By the time you attend lectures, write the 3/4 essays you have on the go and work full time unpaid on placement it is extremely difficult to take on a part time job to help make ends meet



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### **Samantha, Halesowen**

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The bursary is a lifeline, as a mature student I would not have been able to return to university to study learning disability nursing without it. I am extremely passionate about ensuring that people receive gold standard care and my heart goes out to all of the people who will be excluded from pursuing this challenging yet rewarding vocation. I have worked extremely hard in both academic and practical areas as well as working on additional projects to strengthen the course, raise awareness and promote best practice and feel I have been able to make a real difference to people's lives. I have had the pleasure of working alongside exceptional students, who are already affecting the positive change that is very much needed in the current economic climate. I fear for the future of the nursing profession if people with transferable skills, life experience, drive and compassionate are not able to join it just because they cannot afford to. This country cannot afford not to have them.



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## Rocio, Scotland

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I am a mature student and was working full time before starting my degree. I continued working part time after. But it is a very hard course and requires a lot of commitment. I had to give up my work so I could give my placement hours 50% of the course all I had. As I was working (placement hours) full time, normal shifts like a qualified nurse. We work at the same level than staff nurses and we have a lot of pressure because if we don't pass a placement we have to take a year out. Taking the bursary away would mean that mature students with a real passion for nursing won't be able to afford to dedicate their lives to help others.



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## Katherine, Wallsend

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As a nursing student living away from home travelling in and out of placements, and sometimes residing in hospital accommodation (at an additional cost) it's extremely difficult to finance. Working full time for 50% of their university career for £500-600 a month is £4.00 per hour and that is less than minimum wage, and yet it's too much to give to student nurses??? As a student I worked long days, night shift, weekends and held down a part time job. My bursary was not enough but it allowed me to train for a profession that I love. By stopping it you stop offering that opportunity, and I for one feel it's a mistake.



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## Susan, London

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It supported me through my training. My parents did not have funds to support me. Student nurses need encouragement to enter the profession that many people would not even dare to consider. The degree course requires far more emotional and physical energy than a normal undergraduate degree. Who is caring for the carers? Not our government.



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## Marion, Scotland

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I am now retired and have seen a lot of changes to nursing education. However what has not changed is the time spent in work placement working as part of the team to care for unwell vulnerable people. The work is both physically and mentally taxing despite being rewarding. The student is expected to carry out all tasks within their capabilities in caring for the patient and expected to work on a shift basis working day, afternoon and night shifts sometimes working 12 hours at one time. To remove the bursary is to me using student nurses as unpaid labour due to the physical and mental aspect of their duties. It is disgraceful that the government are using student nurses this way. I have seen the nursing profession being demoralised by the treatment of the present government and now they have moved on to the dedicated students who will become dedicated nurses treating them with disdain as they have overall with the nursing profession. This has rubbed off on the public who have believed the government who have given the impression that we are paid too much and not entitled to the pensions we have paid into. As a result I see no sympathy from the public towards the plight of student nurses so the government will again get away with downgrading the nursing profession and the financial rewards they are entitled to.



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## Chloe, Manchester

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I am passionate about wanting to become a nurse but with the proposed changes I would not have been able to begin a nursing course without the bursary. I have a previous degree and would not have been able to afford to take out yet more loans to fund my studies. Nursing is not like any other degree, it involves working 50% of the time so with the scrapping of bursaries and introduction of tuition fees the government are effectively advocating free labour. It is incredibly sad because I know that many many individuals who would have made great nurses will now no longer be able to become nurses. There may be more places but these changes will only create an even greater shortage of nurses. It is a great shame that once again our government doesn't listen and not only the whole of nursing but the population which will suffer.



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## Jess, Lincolnshire

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At 22 I decided it was my time to shine! For the past 6 years I have worked in a health care setting gaining experience, confidence and knowledge I would need for starting my degree. I knew starting university would be financially difficult for me and my partner and I am very lucky he has the opportunity to do overtime to support me giving up work! However I rely on the bursary to pay for books which I need throughout the degree, printer ink, paper for my printer, I have a car to run and insurance to pay and most importantly the travel expenses! I travel almost 100 miles to get to university a day and I am there 5 days a week at the moment it is not cheap, but the bursary allows me to do this. To take the bursary away from students is just heartless.



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## Joanne, Cumbria

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As a mature student with children not only do I have to give up my full time job to obtain my dream career, the drastically reduced income is hard to replace but the small bursary means some guaranteed salary coming in with the hope of tightening my belt for three years. This potential impact would mean potential excellent students not applying for the course or having to drop out mid-course. This seems to me to be a waste of money, time and effort for the students, universities and overall the general public who always loose out.



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## Charlotte, Nottingham

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Not having the bursary would have deterred me from applying to be a nurse. The bursary has ensured I can afford to live and eat whilst completing my studies. In addition the bursary has enabled me to afford placements out of area that are essential in my ability to becoming a well-rounded practitioner that sees the national picture as well as the local one. Losing the bursary is essential a pay cut for nurses as their wage won't rise but they will be expected to pay their loan back.



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## Nikki, Sheffield

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I am in my second year and if I have to take a loan I will not be able to complete my course. At 37 years of age, with a family to support alone this would be impossible. I waited until this age so that my children could understand the long hours involved in a nursing degree and have had to top up my bursary with loans already. To put myself and my family in more debt would be unthinkable, leaving me with student debt already and no further on in my career. What a disappointment for all mature students, who like me, will be unable to continue helping out the children we care for and their families in their time of need.



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## Amanda, Cheshire

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As a mature single parent and second year student nurse I am achieving a high standard academically and in practice. The degree programme of learning has exceeded all of my expectations and I am enthusiastic to become a nurse. I look forward with confidence that I will have a long career working in the NHS. I left a successful, highly paid career in sales to become a nurse. I would not have made this career change, bringing my life experience, skills, attitude and commitment to the nursing profession if the support of the NHS bursary was not available. I would not have considered it. Nursing degrees are not comparable with other degrees, the workload of combined study and placement is sometimes overwhelming. Just last week I apologised to my teenage son because I feel like I don't see or support him enough and the family focus seems to be on me and my training. Analysis of the high levels of student attrition on nursing degrees should be undertaken before steps to attempt to increase enrolment numbers are taken. Many of my cohort have suspended or abandoned their dream of becoming a nurse because of the pressure of the course. I think analysis of applications to nursing degrees and the outcome of unsuccessful applications would be valuable: just because an application is rejected by one university does not mean that the applicant is unsuccessful in all five of their UCAS applications. Every student on my access course secured a place on a nursing degree which leads me to wonder where the predicted additional 10,000 applicants will come from. I am now fearful for my professional future: I see overstretched nurses every day and 10 years down the line, as recruitment numbers dwindle faster than our experienced nurses retire, I will be one of those overstretched nurses, worried that I may be compromising patient care.



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## Fiona, Dundee

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Unlike students studying other courses at University we are not able to obtain jobs at Christmas or "summer" (the month or sometimes two week holiday we get). To ask us to pay a loan would only be manageable if the Government increase the wage of nurses nationally. Moreover, one third of my class would not be able to study nursing as they have previous loans from other courses... These girls and boy are very capable and it would be a loss to the NHS as a whole to no longer have a large portion of applicants apply.



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## Simon, Sheffield

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I'm a mature student studying mental health nursing. I have a newborn daughter and a wife on maternity leave. Even with the bursary things are really tight. Like many nursing students this is my second degree. I wouldn't have even considered this route into nursing if it wasn't for the free fees and bursary, it simply would not have been possible financially. My life experience has been invaluable for my studies and practice. It's mature students like me who will be turned away from a career in nursing. It takes a very special 18 year old to train as a mental health nurse and even these people will think twice after these changes. This winter when on placement I will be working my full time 37.5 hours, doing my part time job to supplement my bursary, writing essays, bringing up my family and trying to read around my subject. It will be a struggle made just about possible by my bursary. Most definitely made impossible without, shame on the Tories



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## Kevinna, Aberdeen

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I wouldn't be able to live and study here in Aberdeen. I am originally from Northern Ireland. I'm so angry about the changed because I will be undergoing 8750hrs of unpaid work (which I don't mind) as placement. I need to be able to travel to and from those places. If it wasn't for the bursaries I would be homeless, lost, confused. I'm one of the few 19year olds who wants to actually be a nurse. I want to make something of my life. I can't do that if the bursaries are taken away from us. All the government cares about is the size of their wage package!! They want to take the money off us for the junior docs. Fair play they do SOME work but over the last couple of years nurses have literally done doctors' jobs. If it wasn't for us then they wouldn't have healthy cooperative patients. It's us who builds the caring relationship. We are the compassionate ones. We won't be able to do that if we are stressed about loans and how to pay them back. It's debt that I certainly don't need: I'm working part-time but doing full-time hours just to help with travel and living. Please reconsider this!!!



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## Rachel, Stroud

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I receive over £5000 a year from the NHS bursary. The long hours on the course make it difficult to achieve an effective work life balance, let alone try to earn money to support myself. Without the bursary I would not have been able to retrain as a nurse as the debt would have been too much. It is effectively a pay cut for future nurses. Paying for the privilege of working 5months per year within the NHS for free is not an appealing option.



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## Holly, Hertfordshire

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I worked 60 hour weeks as a student nurse to be able to afford food and bills. Nursing is a hard enough profession as it is, if you take away the bursaries you will kill the profession and the dreams of all who want to do it. It is a VOCATION.



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## Phoebe, Merseyside

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The bursary is a fundamental part of me training to be an adult nurse; without it, I would be unable to afford various costs which are linked with attending university and placements. I am hugely disappointed and feel belittled that this is being taken away from nursing students as we contribute a large amount of time and effort into both our studies and placements. Having to complete a certain number of theory and practice hours over three years (2,300 of each) shows our dedication to the degree course and passion about becoming a nurse in the future. I am disgusted that we have been violated in such a way that potentially threatens our ability to afford to be trained in a profession which I feel is my vocation and also a necessity to the rest of the U.K. I understand the repayment rate once qualified is not overly expensive, however in the perspective that newly qualified nurses are on a salary of just over the repayment limit (£21,000) I strongly believe it is unfair as we will be expected to pay taxes and survive off a salary which is so close to the benchmark of the repayment rate. In addition to this, my belief that student nurses input a high level of dedication to the course is supported by the fact that other "non-professional" degree students do not have to attend university 5 days a week and complete 10 week placements twice a year. The bursary I receive is important with the notion that as a student nurse, my university annual term-time is 45 weeks a year whereas other university courses are merely 30 weeks a year, meaning that theoretically those students are only being educated for around 6.5 months a year. I am 100% positive that other nursing students across the country would agree with my beliefs and have additional views on the matter.

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### Caroline, Wales

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I live in Wales but study in England. I'm a Mum of two and WOULD NOT be able to finish my degree without the bursary! It is a necessity to me.

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### Claire, England

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I left a full time job as an HCA to train as a nurse. As a mature student with a family, mortgage and bills to pay, it would be impossible to do without the support of a bursary. As it is, I have to work part time alongside my studies to be able to afford to live. I would not have even applied for the course if a bursary was not available.

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### Anna, Nottingham

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I would not have started nursing knowing I would finish with a huge debt! The bursaries are key for students, as due to placements it's very difficult to work and therefore this money is vital!! I would have really struggled at university without this extra money, especially when paying up front for placement costs!!

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### Elizabeth, Plymouth

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My bursary cover's my rent my car tax and my phone bill. All other bills come out of my savings with took 6 years to raise before starting Uni it was £25000 either go for my nursing degree or deposit for a house. Don't take away our bursary. We need it

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### Jessica, Ormskirk

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You don't choose to be a nurse because of the salary, you choose the path because it's a career that will change your life and the people you have the privilege to care for. University is all about attending the odd lecture, freshers' week, drinking and being away from home. NOT for nursing students! Our degree consists of FULL TIME uni hours which means Monday-Friday 9-5 studying the fundamental skills and pathophysiology we need to ensure we are safe when going into practise. Placements consist of 12hr shifts day or night, weekday or weekend adding up to 37.5hours per week. If you are lucky enough to be young, free and single maybe you get to relax after a shift or even go out for a meal but the majority of nursing students are parents. I have to do juggle housework, washing, children's homework, assignments, placements, the list goes on. I didn't choose a paediatric nursing degree lightly being a mum of two. I miss out on lots of aspects of their lives. I kiss them goodnight and sometimes don't see them for 2-3days because of the early starts and late finishes. Not to mention the £1000 a month I have to pay for childcare. The bursary covers the bare minimum we need to survive but even then most people (like me) need a part time job to top up earnings. Try finding a job that is flexible enough to accommodate your ever changing shift patterns, it's not easy! The degree is incredibly difficult as it is and by taking away the little bursary us students get will have a detrimental effect on the next generation of nurses. Many people give up good jobs to study nursing with the end focus point being a rewarding career, that's not a decision that's made lightly. It's not just difficult for the student but their families as well. They need support through the academic pressures, the stress and strains of university, and the tears after you've had a bad day. How many people will be willing to do all that and put their families into mountains of debt? By making this decision the government is directly affecting the NHS we have worked so hard to keep. What's a hospital without nurses?



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## Kate, London

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Today I commuted a total of 5 hours to my placement for a 12 hour shift. I've hardly seen my daughter over the past 8 weeks because of this placement, she sleeps at my mum's while spending her waking hours at school or with her childminder because of my long hours. I worry, she's only 4, am I doing the right thing? But I need to give us a future - I'm a single mum, I need to provide for us both. My heart aches for her, but I know what I'm doing is not only vital for us but for the people around me who need someone with passion, dedication, understanding and genuine care for them and their lives. I'm 29, still young, but those years have been packed with experiences that I use every day to aid me in being the best nurse I can be. I'm a second year student now. At each placement I have been praised for my gentle nature, my hard work and strong knowledge, and have been thanked by staff and patients for the contributions I've made during my short placements. At university, so far, my grades are on track for me to graduate with a first and I intend to maintain that. I know I'm a good nurse. This placement I have been praised for supporting a patient with long-term anorexia and being the person to make a breakthrough with them in gaining weight after 20 years of their illness. Today that patient also gave me these words. "Dear Kate, I'm really sorry to have to say goodbye. I just wanted to thank you for all your support and friendship - I'm really going to miss you. I wish you all the best for the future. You'll be a brilliant nurse!" This isn't the first of this kind of feedback and I will ensure it will not be the last. I carry my title of student nurse with more pride than I have ever felt before. Each day I am honoured that people trust me to care for them and share with me the most painful parts of their lives. These kind words fill my heart purpose and my eyes with tears. And I will hold on tight to these feelings to carry me through my career to becoming an amazing nurse, for me, for my daughter and for YOU. I know I'm a good nurse, but without the bursary I couldn't have ever afforded to be. I don't want us to miss out on future amazing nurses because they couldn't have afford to be.



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## Claire, Bristol

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I decided to do nursing after finishing an undergraduate degree in Psychology. Many people doing nursing have already studied a previous degree and carry the debt that comes with that - not many people know what they want to do when leaving school and life experience and previous higher education really helped when undertaking something as challenging as nursing. I was fortunate enough to be supported financially by my family when studying nursing, not everyone has this luxury and without it I would have struggled greatly. I worked part time which was a huge struggle due to the demands of the nursing degree and flexibility needed when on placement. I have been told throughout my training that nursing is 'not what it used to be' and many qualified nurses suggested they wouldn't recommend nursing as a career. Unfortunately many people applying to nursing are aware of this reputation, and several people that I trained with stated one of the main reasons they chose to study nursing was because the fees were paid for. Sadly I think this implies many people will be reluctant to commit to such a challenging and dedicated undergraduate degree if it comes with the same debt as other degrees.



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## Lisa, Stockton on Tees

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I will not be able to complete my degree. Financially I will not be in a position to pay for my tuition as well as provide for my family this is going to put me in a position where I am going to have to decide whether I can continue my nurse training.



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## Sarah, Surrey

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I am a 28-year old Children's Nursing Student. I also have a previous degree with resulting student loan. I have supported myself financially throughout my time at university. I have had to move back home to cut the costs of rent, as no amount of part-time work can cover the London living wage. 40% of my academic year is spent at university- where I juggle lectures and seminars with my part time work as a teaching assistant. 60% of my academic year is spent on placement, where I work a rotation of 3 x 11.5 hour shifts and 4 x 11.5 hour shifts. My off duty requires me to work week days, weekends, as well as nights. During placement, I am unable to earn any extra income as this would break legislation for the working week. Therefore, I rely solely on my NHS bursary. I am happy to do this and accept that this is all part of the nursing experience. I know that in July 2016 I will have qualified as a registered nurse and will have job opportunities and income money to financially support myself. My massive concern is that if I had not received financial support from the bursary, I would not have been able to undertake a nursing degree. The nursing and other health related degrees are unlike any other degree: I can say this confidently from my own experience. The nursing degree is a full-on three year course; I had no idea how intense it would be! I need constant emotional and financial support to sustain myself. Being a nursing student is tough: you are constantly learning new skills, knowledge, policies. You are constantly being assessed on your motive and rationale in your practice; you may feel that you are at the bottom of the hospital hierarchy. But myself and my fellow peers do this because we believe that being a nurse is a noble career: caring for others and their families at times of great need. There is nothing that can compare to a 'thank you' or a card from a patient, knowing that you have made their time at hospital a little bit more bearable. To scrap the NHS bursary, I believe would discourage many nurses from entering the profession. I believe the government should be creating better prospects for access to healthcare professions. Taking away the bursary

is really disheartening and a degrading comment on the student nurse's worth.



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## Jodie, Sutton

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I am a 32 year old student nurse with my own home to keep. The bursary I receive is not enough to Cover my travel to Uni/ Placement and Cover my rent and bills. I try to work where possible but my placements are often 2 hrs away from where I live which Means I have to get up at 4am for a 7.30 Start which means I don't get home until 10.30/11 PM Most nights. This limits the amount of spare time I have, as I also have to study with what time I have left in my week. I work during all breaks from university which means I will not have had any time off for 3 years by the time I graduate. Taking away the bursary will severely limit the amount of Mature Students that will apply for nursing in the future when you consider that many women my age have children.



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## Emma, Brentwood

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I am absolutely devastated by this news! There is a limited amount of nurses as it is, this will most definitely cut even more. The health care system is one of the most important organisations within our society. Who is going to care for patients when there is a shortage for nurses? I will not be able to continue with my third year at uni if this takes effect to my current studies as there is no way I would be able to repay the debt. Why cut bursaries and tuition? Why not cut the thousands of pounds you unwittingly give to football players? Our professionals are the most important people for life and death! No other profession will save your life! Cut the tuition fees you pay for Scotland not ours. You are going to make a lot of people quit there course and future people won't apply. I'm truly disappointed in our government. You have just chucked my dream career away. Coming from a foster home and now supporting myself in every way, this was the only thing I wanted to achieve for myself!



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## Vicky, London

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It will be very unfair for such a drastic decision to take place. I travel from London to Kent for my study, as well as for my placement, and it is costing me fortune to commute from London to Kent on a daily basis. I have children who financially dependent on me and without a bursary, lots of students will terribly suffer to keep up with their learning. We have to pay rent, buy food for our children. I have to buy text books which you cannot borrow that long from the school library due to short loans on certain text books such as Anatomy and Physiology text books. All these problems also applicable to other students and not only myself. Students are really struggling to make ends meet. Some students can't afford to take up paid work due to the high demands of the course as well as the family and it's very difficult to combine work with studies and majority of students are only depending on the bursaries to keep up with their families. It will be so sad if the government decide to make such a decision as this will definitely affect students and their families. I will advise them to think again regarding this drastic decision that they are about to make. Every day NHS trusts are short-staffed due to the need for more trained nurses to take up the role and at the same time, they want to stop the bursaries. Honestly they can't eat their cake and have it as they need to consider our children which is the future.



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## Naomi, Bedford

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Because I studied in Wales at the time I received a non means tested bursary. This meant I could not get a student loan. It was fine to live off if you were a single 18 year old. However if you're a mature student with a family it must be harder. I was always in awe of the drive and love the mature students in my class had for nursing. Currently these bursaries are means tested and therefore the amount of loan you can get is reduced. The government propose to scrap it all together. Just Like other studies you can argue. Accept a student nurse spends 6 months of the year in placement (shift work normally) 37.5 hours a week, with assignments and test/portfolios to do. The rest of the year was spent in lectures. Working a job to gain enough money to study without a bursary will be almost undoable. The NHS will miss out on much needed skill.



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## Lucy, Cheltenham

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I am saddened by this change and I know that if this would have been the case when I started my course in 2013 I wouldn't be where I am today. I am a mature student with 2 children both in primary school, so without the bursary doing what I love would not be possible.



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## Melissa, Guildford

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Without the bursary I wouldn't have been able to do the pg dip mental health nursing course! Don't isolate the working class!



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## Liam, Brighton

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I'm a 2nd year Adult Nursing student. I receive £450 each month which does not cover my rent. I have bills, travel fares, food costs and other necessary expenses that I rely on a maintenance loan to cover: of which it barely does. I've accepted this fact. I'm one of the lucky ones, I don't have children and child-care costs, I'm not caring for some sick or disabled at home, and I'm granted the full bursary (or near enough). But while my bursary does not sufficiently cover me (like thousands of others) whilst I study and WORK without pay for up to 32 hours a week; in various health care settings completing job roles that fall under the health care assistant's, staff nurse's, coordinator's and domestic staff's duties: I WANT to be a nurse. I grit my teeth, study hard and wake up at ridiculous hours and go home at ridiculous hours with a smile on my face so that I can complete my degree- as do so many other student nurses. The Government has decided to strip new student nurses of the only financial support we get- which already is far below the minimal wage bracket. Their answer is that it'll ensure 10,000 more spaces for new student nurses? What student nurses? Please tell me what incentive one might have to complete an exhausting, emotionally laborious and advanced three year degree such as nursing, to graduate with as much as £50,000 worth of debt as their reward on a starting salary of perhaps £21,000pa to begin paying it back? It's nonsensical. It completely confounds me and it's a complete kick in the teeth for anyone who seeks to enter the profession. YES, there will be additional spaces- because people simply won't see the incentive to study nursing- it's totally impractical. Looking back now, I would have not been able to consider pursuing my desire to join the nursing profession without the tuition fee exemption and NHS bursary, how would I survive? Already as student nurses we work and study a ridiculous amount of hours, we find bank/flexi//zero-hour contract work just make ends meet. We're tired, we're stressed and we're pushed to care for people whose lives are in OUR

hands all the while developing a skill and knowledge base that will allow to provide advanced care. We laugh, we smile and we cry with our patients, we love what we do and that is why we do it. But we are still human too, if we're expected to provide high standards of care, under a phenomenal amount of pressures we deserve to be supported accordingly. If the Government has any interest in the care of the people that it serves, it should strongly reconsider this affront to the nursing profession. I also hope that as the largest representative for the nursing profession in England, the RCN makes a bold stand for those members it has promised to defend, whatever action that may mean.



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## Jo, Brighton

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I am currently studying an access course and have just sent in my UCAS application for a Children's Nursing degree this week, days before the budget was announced. I find the idea of that debt terrifying. The degree I am applying for is highly competitive with less places, but I would rather fight for fewer places and not have thousands of pounds of debt. I now face the prospect that if I do not get a place in the first intake of the degree (sept '16) and instead my intake is in 2017 that I may have £27k debt from tuition alone. I am a disabled student and I am unable to work whilst studying, the degree is going to be a massive challenge to me as it is, there is absolutely no way people that are undertaking a nursing degree, doing the equivalent of a full weeks work on top of a full weeks studying, helping to save lives should be put in the same category as someone studying history or art. All degrees are not equal, nursing degrees and other medical degrees like physiotherapy etc. all deserve special consideration and I think it is a slap in the face to those people willing to sacrifice to not only study for this profession but to then give their life to it afterwards, most likely to the NHS. You have an obligation to reconsider this move.



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## Shelley, rented accommodation

Without the bursary I cannot pay rent as I am only able to work a certain amount during placement time and do not qualify for a student loan as this is my second degree. Placements are 37.5 hours week and are UNPAID meaning I have to work as well as attend these hours, however placement limits me to how much I can work.



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## Helen, Aberdeen

It was be extremely wrong for the government to axe the student nurse bursary. I could not have gone to university if it was not for the financial support I received. My worry is that young adults will be discouraged from doing nursing since it's by no means the easiest or most paid job that people could go into. This will cause increased strain on wards with increased staff shortages. This will impact on patient care dramatically. I don't know why the government feel the need to make cuts on front line staff services. I'm sure there are cuts that can be made elsewhere that does not impact on patient care.



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## Faustina, London

Personally I think I'll really struggle financially and also will not have time to even study as I will use the little time left after placement to look for part time job to make ends meet which is really unfair.



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## Danni, London

I am a nursing student but I am also one of two children living at home with a single parent (who is unable to work due to disability and mental health problems). Us kids are expected to pay our mother "rent"; someone needs to support her (her benefits were cut when we started uni - as a result my sister and I bear the brunt of the financial worries). My sister, who is also in her final year of a "full time" degree has a life! She has time which she uses to socialise, have fun and most importantly hold down a part-time job! I on the other hand struggle to balance my life with my studies. This is true not just for me but for all my nursing colleagues! We are enrolled on a truly full time course, if we are not in uni we are working full-time unsociable hours and crazy shift patterns on placement with just a bursary as payment. A student bursary is barely enough to get by but it is a true lifesaver! To take that away from others like myself is unimaginable. Consider it a payment for the hard work we put in each day to enable us to become the nurses of the future. What good is it to offer more places on nursing degree programmes when nobody will be prepared or able to take those places? We do this job because we care and we want to be there for our patients but with this change we will have less nurses and less nurses means more work for us! I love what I do but with this change of government policy I fear for the future of nursing



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## Kelly, Leyland

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Student nurses, unlike other types of university students, work shifts over 24/7 and cannot commit to paired work to supplement their income. Student nurses are expected travel to multiple placements over a wide geographic area, in locations (community placements) which cannot be easily reached and are out of Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm hours. Therefore, fewer buses, especially in dual areas. While on placements, student nurses are expected to visit additional “spoke” placements.... more essential travel. Many students cannot drive. Those who can drive, can't afford the additional costs of travel which is the only realistic method of getting to placements. Student nurses are expected to purchase uniforms and smart clothing (RMN) suitable to maintain professional appearance, medical books, fob watches, NMC fees, on completion (before first pay). Student nurses are expected to pay for police checks,



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## Janna, Perth

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I am applying for uni for my nursing degree for next year. With these changes in mind I might have to reconsider as working full time placements makes it very impractical for finding a part time job when you're working different shifts on placement every week. I won't be able to afford to study so I may have to change my opinions about doing my nursing.



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## Alison, Wakefield

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I am a mature student studying postgraduate diploma (pre-reg) at Sheffield Hallam University. I have already studied for an undergraduate degree, and have £27,000 of debt from that. I worked for a few years as a translator following that, but have always felt drawn towards a career in healthcare and particularly nursing. I was lucky enough to get a place on the 2 year accelerated course; I would not have been able to take 3 years unpaid to do the undergraduate 3 year course, as I am not eligible for a government maintenance loan or tuition fee loan having already studied an UG degree in the UK. At the moment, I get £420 per month bursary. I have a mortgage, bills and travel fees to university and placement, which the bursary comes nowhere near to covering. However, without it I would have to work upwards of 20 hours a week on top of 40 hours placement/studying in order to afford the degree. I know that this would have had a huge impact on my personal relationships and my own mental and physical health. The course is stressful enough, without having to worry about finances as well. I worry for nursing students of the future. The NHS is something we should be proud of, something we should all stand together for and stand up for.



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## Geraldine, Chipping Norton

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I qualified as an RGN in 2014. I was a mature student. As at least 60% of students were on my cohort. I was not like most of the others with a family to look after. But for me I found it a struggle as I had not been in the education system for some time. This meant I struggled with the academic side of the course, I had to spend a lot more of my time on preparation for exams, essays and presentations. Along with this my health had taken a bad turn from living in low quality housing, full of black mould and it was always cold, damp etc. During this time I lost my grandmother suddenly, followed by my grandfather due to cancer. I spent the whole three years studying hard, with fluctuating poor health and stressed. I stuck it out, I passed the course. I even managed to get low honours (which I wasn't expecting). The maintenance loan was £2200 a year, this didn't even cover my rent. I couldn't have a student bank account, I had to borrow money from other sources to get by. My grant was £89 a month for the first year, to live off, eat off, and travel off. It wasn't calculated properly. I blasted through my small amount of savings to get by. By year two and three it was £350 per month. Which was just enough to get by. Without the maintenance loan... Grant... Free tuition fees... Backing from family when my savings ran dry, I never would have made it through. I would have quit in the second year. This course is longer, harder and more stressful than a standard university course. In comparison other courses are part time. Some students can get part time work round it. But most cannot due to clinical placements, family or other reasons. I honestly believe the amount of people choosing to become a nurse will drop after 2017 as now the idea of paying to work yourself to the bone would be in my opinion madness! I'm sure when I looked last there was still a shortage of nurses and the population is ageing so more will be needed. It seems odd to me personally that the government would want to put people off becoming a nurse. I certainly wouldn't have paid for

it. I believed all the grants and loans was to encourage more people to become a nurse? I find this change baffling. Looks more like discouraging to me. I love being a nurse, but if I had to go back and pay, I'd say no way!



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## Carole, Glasgow

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I spend 5 days a week at uni and I work 16+ hrs a week in a part time job just to pay my bills, as the bursary isn't enough not to work when you're a single person! I have barely any time to spend with my own father who has dementia, I'm lucky if I have one day off a week, and finding time to study is very hard. It's a very stressful course! My days are 15 hrs long on average, and that's not including placement. Four years ago I was made redundant From RBS and as a result I ended up in a trust deed in order to keep a roof over my head. If the bursary goes, I couldn't even take a loan as the trust deed would take a chunk of it. I worked very hard to get into my course as a mature student through night classes! With no bursary, I can't afford my bills, I'd be forced to give up the course and to make matters worse, there's no guarantee my current employer would be able to take me back full time. I'd be left in a position where I could very likely end up homeless! This is just Disgusting.



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## Karen, Hampshire

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I'm in my 40's with a husband and primary school aged child. Due to personal circumstances I had to leave a career in the police service after 23 years. I found myself fortunate to be employed as an HCA at a Doctor's surgery and that was the inspiration and motivation I needed to undertake a year's course with the Open University to gain the qualification I needed to apply to university. I had to pay for the Open University course and also take out student loans throughout my time at university, but without the bursary, albeit means tested, I would never have been able to fall headlong into a career I wish I had started many years ago. I am currently in my third year and although it's a tough year ahead I have no regrets. I love my job and the patients I come into contact with. I wouldn't want to work anywhere else. Making a difference to someone's life however small makes all the difference to me. I finish work realising I've made a meaningful contribution to my community. The government could have addressed this so differently, for example, by implementing a Training Contract (I had one in the police service) or an attendance policy at university. I really do hope that they change their decision - otherwise people won't get into thousands of pounds of debt to be paid a nurses wage. The NHS will have to employ more Agency Staff, miss targets, the nation's health will suffer, death rates may increase... but their term in office is transient - will they give a damn about this decision when the Office is changed in the next election? I doubt it, but millions of other people will!



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## Derek, Crewe

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How can a mature student progress without a bursary to support the cost of living if they have a family and a mortgage? How can a person who has worked in care settings for years afford to progress onto the nursing register and pay up to £9,000 a year in tuition fees? How can they succeed? This is discriminatory and elitist. Allowing only the affluent to access nursing as a career opportunity.



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## Megan, Fife

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Without my bursary I would not be able to do my training as I have very little spare time to fit in work and placement hours/course work. As a single mother of two I want to better myself and create a stable environment for my children to grow up in. I want them to grow up and see their mother as a role model. I think it will be devastating to nursing to take away bursaries. There will more than likely be a drop of nurses coming into a service which is already struggling to cope.



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## Helen, Gosport

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Since being a child I always wanted to be a nurse but because it meant going to university my parents always told me it was something I would never be able to do as they would not be able to support me financially during my studies. However, when I learnt that nursing studies were NHS funded I was over the moon that my dream was actually not beyond my reach. Years later after marrying and starting a family I finally found the courage to go for it and got a place at university. However, my family and I are in a constant financial struggle because of my wish to pursue this career. If it was not for the bursary there would be no way at all that I would be able to complete the course. Luckily for me I will be qualified before the changes take place but I see this as a disaster to the future of nursing in the UK. What the government don't seem to realise is that graduate nurses do not earn anywhere near the amounts that other university graduates earn, therefore to leave university in masses of debt would be a lifelong burden unless the government intend to bring about equality in the salaries of healthcare professionals. I dread to think what the future holds for nursing.



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## Jess, London

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Without the bursary I probably wouldn't be able to be on a nursing course. I live at home with my parents who are working class however I still pay them rent each month and my university doesn't allow me to work whilst on placement which means for half of the year I'm not allowed to work and I probably won't be able to keep my job anyway as it is a lot of time to ask to have off. Student loans would not help me at all with living it would just about cover the basics. As nursing students we are expected to work with patients and their families and give our all to them, which I personally love doing it can however be mentally exhausting as well as physically as working for 12.5 hours a day as well as doing night shifts. Without the bursary it would feel as if we were being used it's barely a minimum wage for us but it helps us get by and covers travel expenses as some of us have to travel a far greater distance to clinical practise than we would have to travel to university. Nurses are by far the hardest working people I think I have met but students work and try as best we can to follow their lead and help as much as we can as well as practical clinical placements we have theory work to do and we have to partake in plenty of self-directed learning. Now the bursaries are scrapped student nurses are going to have to put their future career and perhaps even their mentors on the line as they will work paid jobs to cover their financial needs, even with the bursaries I know of students who will work a paid day job and go on to do a clinical placement night shift where they are looking after and helping in the treatment of patients and helping their families, it is I feel putting patients at risk but also the students them self as they will end up running themselves into to ground and will become exhausted. If the student bursaries are not enough now then how would we survive without them?! Being a student nurse is by far the hardest thing I have ever done, that is without having to worry about my finances. I think the NHS and private sector will be losing out hugely on people who would make absolutely brilliant nurses due to this change and I think it's a massive shame that people who

want to become nurses may have to give up on their dream due to financial difficulty.



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## Laura, Chichester

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I am studying children's nursing in order to become a Health Visitor. I have worked as a nursery nurse in a health visiting team for the last 5 years and have been given an NHS secondment to complete my nursing studies. However, after my 3 year degree I will have a year public health top up in order to gain my health visitor status. I have 2 young children and my husband is a stay at home dad due to all the shift work I have to do as part of my placements and my secondment is the only money we have as a family to 'cover' my costs -of which it doesn't. Although the government are scrapping bursaries I am worried about the future of NHS secondments and how this will affect my future, of which I have worked extremely hard for and still have a further 3 years to go. Although I am committed to the profession, I wouldn't have been able to go to university and I think this will be the same for lots of students, particularly mature students (of which nursing has a significant amount of) which I feel may jeopardise the nursing career - can this, in the current nursing climate be right?



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## Jennifer, Glasgow

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My best friends currently studying nursing. She's works long hours, helping provide to our society and people with ill health. It is not only a mentally challenging role, but psychically exhausting. She never complains and gets on with life. The government's choice today will not only effect these hard workers but will affect other people wanting to join the nursing career.



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## Ellen, London

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I think it is a very big mistake that is being made, which could lead to a massive decline and deficit of nurses. The NHS is already short staffed as it is, so introducing this will only make matters worse.



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## Aiyana, Worthing

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I was very shocked to hear about the bursary cut because with such a dire need for more nurses already in the NHS making many wards unsafe to work on and putting patient care at risk there is already a huge need for recruitment of new nurses as it is. For the Government to make it an even harder route to become qualified many people will just not bother as we are not being respected for taking on such a difficult career simply because we care and want to help people. Why risk being litigated against for neglect when there aren't the staffing levels to give people good care as it is and then you get held responsible for it personally. I have talked to a number of HCA's who have said that they aren't going to bother becoming qualified because of the changes in the NHS that they have observed. These are knowledgeable people with experience of the role that would make brilliant nurses who will now not be applying. As a former graduate in £20,000 of debt already I would not have been able to do the course without the bursary and even with it, a reduced rate student loan and having to actually have my family help me as I still can't live on the bursary and loan to even cover my rent, food, bills and travel to and from placement it's still a struggle. I wouldn't be able to work on top of placement hours and independent study without affecting my knowledge for when I qualify and then putting my patients at risk as I wouldn't have the knowledge to carry out the role safely. I do however have friends that do work, have 4 children and other responsibilities and I honestly don't know how they are still standing. I think it is time for us to stand up as a group and say that as people who want to make a difference in the world and help people we should be respected by our Government and supported to reach our potential. We shouldn't be treated as doormats because we care too much about the people we are looking after to abandon them to protest, but if we did it would make it very clear that the NHS would not survive without us nurses working ourselves into the ground, barely able to walk home after our shifts

because of physical exhaustion. If it was a legitimate cut and we really were all in it together then maybe it would be a different story but this is not the case. I hope they will rethink these changes, as I feel that such a disastrous move could only be made to put the NHS into such a breaking point that they will "have to" privatise and this is not in the public's best interest, so recruiting more efficient knowledgeable nurses is the key to saving lives and creating a new NHS that is more cost effective and empowers people to engage in their own healthcare.



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## Lauren, Oxford

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The bursary is the only thing supporting my living expenses and is the only consistent monthly payment I get now I cannot work due to university. Taking away the bursary will mean I cannot afford to live here anymore and cannot afford to go to university and in turn costs you of another nurse to qualify and support the NHS.



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## Heidi, Cambridge

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It has changed my life in order to fulfil my dream of training to be a nurse. Cambridge is so expensive to live in as a student and it enables me to be able to pay my rent or I would not be able to do my course. My family haven't got any money to pay for me and as it is I have to have a part time job on top of placement to be able to do things like go home and see my family. If I had to work anymore I would not be able to be fully committed to this course.



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## Chloe, Manchester

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As a final year student nurse I feel deeply saddened at the impact that this will have on the future of my fellow student nurses! We work an incredible number of hours but that's okay because we care. In between university work and clinical practise there's little time for yourself let alone a job. I have personally found it impossible to juggle a job and the degree at the same time. Let's hope the government consider all of our stories



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## Becky, Silverstone

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I started my training in 1996 at Oxford Brooke's university doing a degree course and moved away from home. I had no bursary as it was a degree course and struggled financially to fit in work around lectures, seminars and placement. I left in 1995 and applied to do the diploma course at Northampton for which I received a bursary of around £400 per month. I also moved back home to my parents. The bursary enabled me to finish my course and qualify. For the last 15 yrs I have worked for the NHS and progressed to ward sister and now district nursing sister. Without the bursary I would probably not have been able to qualify. To remove the bursary is a huge mistake and will only deter people from applying to train as a nurse. It is hugely unfair and will result in the shortage of nurses worsening. Many of the students I now mentor would not be able to manage with no bursary.



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## Annonny, North East

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This is absolutely disgusting and outrageous. I did my fair share of whining about how little I got (for free which is pretty silly really but £105 per month didn't really touch the sides of having a flat to pay rent on, petrol to get to unpaid placements and being able to keep myself alive) but it helped a lot. I was working in a bar, on the nurse bank, whilst doing assignments and 37.5 hours of unpaid work a week whilst on placement. A lot of days working from 07.30 until 5 on placement and driving straight to a 06.00 till 11.00 job in a bar, I got quite unwell and run down at times. People with kids and mortgages to pay are incredible for being able to keep up a family. Had I not had incredible support from my parents I couldn't have coped with it financially. People dedicate three extremely hard years (some even more) to complete a course that leads to a career that is difficult, super stressful but the most amazing and rewarding experience to help other people in a time where they need it most. Shortages of staff are going to increase, and who is going to suffer? The people who need it most. I would urge any politician making decisions on the healthcare system to work on a ward or in the community for a month (around the amount of time a decent placement lasts) on a bursary with a loan of 700 every four month and see what we strive to do and how hard we work. I worry for the future of our healthcare system and the amazing people who will not follow their dreams due to financial worry.



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## Fiona, Scotland

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I would have been unable to change career and undertake my nursing degree without my bursary. I am a mature student with three young children and there is simply no way I could afford to take on a student debt. I already need to supplement my bursary by working part-time, just to cover childcare costs. Without the bursary I would not be a student nurse now.



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## Lisa, Southend

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I have been a nurse midwife health visitor and now family nurse for over 20 years. I trained in London and have worked in London and Essex with no breaks since qualifying. I would never have been able to train without a bursary. This change angers me so much when nursing morale is already at a low, I struggle to make ends meet on my salary how would I be able to pay back a loan too? We work hard during our training a large percentage on the wards and placements, what other degrees do that? We do not get the same holidays as other degree students. Believe me we earn our bursary! The government could have saved money by role modelling this year by taking a pay freeze like you push on the public sector workers and start paying for your own lenses like us nurses have to. It's a disgrace I am considering leaving nursing over this. We are clearly not appreciated. You will not fill the places and there will be a nurse shortage at hazardous levels by introducing loans and you will then be paying more money for agency nurses and bringing in more foreign nurses! Rip NHS the British government no longer want you



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## Madeline, London

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I simply would not be able to do a nursing degree without the bursary. My rent and bills alone are only just covered by a combination of loans and the bursary. I believe more degrees should be financially supported. People aren't able to spend £50,000 to earn £25,000 and the result will be a shortage in Nurses, OT's. Paramedics, Social workers etc. I believe it is a very bad decision and requires intervention.



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## Jennifer, Hemel Hempstead

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I live in Hemel Hempstead and train in Barnet, let alone does my bursary not even cover half my rent, it certainly does not stretch to support my expenses when training. I have just finish 3 nights and have an early shift to do and I have to work a job every weekend to be able to support myself. Please let's not forget I also have 2 assignment to write and an exam to study for all while on placement. I am emotionally, mentally and physically drained. I can barely afford to study as it is and making life harder for student nurses is just cruel. We nurse because we care, nursing is a way of life, we certainly don't do it for the money. To take away a bursary would see the end to a community of very dedicated and hardworking student nurses across the UK



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## Emma, Scotland

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I have been qualified for 5 years now and know that I would not have managed the course without the bursary. We do 50% of our course out in clinical practice learning but also working, student nurses earn that money it's not a hand out its payment for the work they do. It is also below minimum wage, some students work 12 hours, nights and weekends whilst out on placement. Do any other public sector workers such as police, firemen and paramedics pay for training? That's what we get at university is training, it's now been recognised that we need a university education to do the job. Surely this decision will cut further the volume of applicants we get to do nursing? Will that not leave us a deficit in the future? We are the highest volume of employees to the NHS. We also spend more time at university than other students we do not get 2 months off at summer and similar at Christmas. It was also a very inclusive course now it will make it harder for those mature or students with a family, those who have life experience to bring to the role. What current government is doing to the NHS is going to suffocate it. Hurting the NHS will set us back as a nation. Bring back the bursary.



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## Emma, Northampton

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I began my BSC Adult Nursing course in October 2014 at the mature age of 42. I rely on receiving a bursary in order to help my husband and I live on a daily basis. It pays for my car costs fuel, groceries and bills in order to be able to travel to my placements and university, enjoy a packed lunch and maintain good standards of hygiene (laundering of my uniform and ensuring I am able to have a hot shower!) My bursary is supported by a maintenance loan which pays for stationery and books, my Internet access and whatever is left also supports our general living costs. I would never have been able to study to become a Nurse and part of our future NHS if it had not been for the bursary. I will still have to re pay the loan when I qualify, as well as any other debts we accrue during my time as a student. It is unfair for health care students to be bearing the cost of the financial pledge to the NHS.



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## Susan, Scotland

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I am a single mum of three children I receive £890 a month for my bursary which is not enough for us to live on. I can't work due much due to placement and study hours bring more than a full time job and no help with childcare costs. If changes are implemented I will not be able to finish my degree and will end up on benefits until my children are grown up which doesn't benefit the government, me or my children. Please don't ruin the NHS, you will have nurse shortages as the changes would make studying nursing impossible for most people.



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## Tanja, Lincolnshire

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I lived on my own with a mortgage when I did my nurse training. I remortgaged the house to pay for the mortgage over 3 years, I joined an agency as a health care in order to pay for my bills. The bursary made this possible. Without that bursary, I would not have considered nursing, purely because I would not have been able to afford it. I cleaned offices during the week, either on my way to a shift or on my way home from a shift. In between that, I had to find time to complete my research and written studies. Fortunately, I did not have children at the time, as that would have been impossible. If the bursary is withdrawn, there will be a marked reduction in nursing applicants, fuelling an even worse nursing shortage.



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## Steph, Ormskirk

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When I began this course, I found that the help of the bursary was a good benefactor in helping to pay my accommodation along with student finance. My placements vary which means that I have to travel to placement every day and this means paying to get there out of my own pocket. Hearing that the bursary is going to change for future student nurses gives me thoughts that there are going to be less people applying to do nursing as they would struggle with living costs, students will struggle to help their families but also paying for travel to placement will mean that they are unable to go due to not being able to afford it. The government are complaining that there is not enough nurses and yet by stopping the bursary it is going to stop people applying for nursing and therefore there will be even fewer nurses. The student nurses barely manage to scrape by as it is with the bursary we receive, so by putting loans in is going to make it even worse. If the loans were in place before I began, I definitely would have had second thoughts about applying for university as I would have had to take into consideration the living costs as I live away from home.

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## Aron, Launceston

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I am on an access course and hopefully due to start university 2016/17 however if I can go until the following year I will struggle so much more. The extra stress is not fair on students with an already stressful work load.

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## Christie, Teesside

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I believe that by stopping bursaries and making it more difficult for anyone to become a nurse then health care will be affected dramatically. Dedication is drummed into us by our lecturers and if people have to pay they are more likely to think they're in charge and do what they like maybe not even turning up to study or go out on placement when really we have to learn. It's the future generations who I feel for they might think they can't afford to get loans or will not be able to financially manage so don't even bother trying and some really good nurses could be missed due to this. People are also saying its so the government can finally privatise the NHS and it's the end of it, if this is true well it just breaks my heart and the UK will never be as strong or the same again. It's just getting worse and it's scary if I'm honest.

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## Fiona, Lichfield

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I am a student children's nurse and I love my job. However, the bursary has been vital in me being able to complete my training. As a student nurse, we are expected to work full time hours as part as our practical side of our course as well as complete assignments. We are expected to fund our travel to and from placements which for myself is between 80 and 140 miles in a day. The amount of travel costs is crippling, of which I can claim a bare minimum back, making the bursary an important part of funding my course. If the bursary was not available, nursing would not be an option for me.

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## Sarah, Aberdeen

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I completed my nurse training in September 2014 and could not have done it without the student bursary. I was lucky enough to have a part time job throughout my training but the number of hours worked on placement meant I could not earn much from my job. The lack of holidays and time off partly being to blame. I even lived with my parents where possible and meant I did not need a loan. The rent in Aberdeen for students is extortionate and even when I travelled to areas like Shetland for placement to broaden my experience I had to pay for the ferry and student rent up there as well as the rent in Aberdeen leaving me very little to spare. My university did pay me back but not the full amount of my travel and rent after a few months which meant I needed to have the money available at the time which my bursary helped with.

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## Tom, Portsmouth

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This will probably mean me no longer being able to afford to begin a nursing degree. Devastating

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## Keren, Lancashire

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I am a mature mental health student nurse with a previous degree and student loan. Without the bursary I would never have been able to retrain into this fantastically rewarding career. The bursary should be protected in order that more mature students should be able to enter this precious profession in the future.



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## Sara, Hemel Hempstead

I am outraged by this decision. Luckily, I do get a student bursary but I don't know how future student nurses will cope with this. Some weeks I do up to 48 hours a week on placement and then work a part time job to get more income. Some weeks I work 70+ hours to get by. This is not easy. As student nurses we do not get paid for clinical practice even though we work just as hard as paid professionals. How will future student nurses ever be able to afford a mortgage after incurring so much debt?! This is not the solution to fixing the NHS. If anything, it has made it 10 times worse. A nursing degree is hard enough when it is funded let alone when it isn't. So student nurses more appreciation and respect.



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## Scriea, Norwich

I would have reconsidered. I already have had previous study at university level and I was worried even before joining the course about finances and if my fees will be paid and if I'm entitled to any more help from SFE and even the Bursary. I have just completed an 11 week placement and have spent nearly £1600 on transport and accommodation. Luckily for me I'll be reimbursed by the Bursary people but will future students? The cost is astronomical and even worse is that the salary for nurses are not even increasing either. So these loan debts are going to be saddled with nurses who won't even be able to pay them off. It'll get wiped and added to an ever increasing deficit. In which future generations will have to pay for it in taxes and working longer. Stupid and short sighted idea from a stupid and short sighted government.



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## Kinga, Colchester

I moved to England more than 3 years ago. I started to work in a nursing home with people who are living with dementia. After a few months I started my nvq 2. I finished it in a few months because I found it very interesting. I could not continue my studies as we changed location. I continued my work as a carer but in a residential home than I applied to the General Hospital where my application was accepted after the tests and interview. Meanwhile I applied for nursing in the local university they invited me for the interview but they were not doing part time course and I could not afford full time. My manager encouraged me with this bursary. When I read about the changes I became so upset. I am 27 and I would not like to pay debts in all my life. It is so disappointing that I was waiting for something what I really would like to do and they just take it away. I do not understand in a country which is so modern how can't they see they need nurses. Nurses can help everywhere and they are the basic of a society. They are there at the beginning of a life and at the end. They are with patients and family members, friends in tears and in happiness. Can we say the same about managers, bankers, etc.? Of course not. It is very sad that people are making final decisions without knowing how hard that job is. I really would like to show those people who decided not to help people with their studies how does it look like in a nursing home or a hospital. 14 hours shift and the extras. We are not looking after machines we are looking after human beings. Which is a joy and this is why I really wished to improve my knowledge because the more I know the more I can help. But as I can see on the top people already decided that I can choose to remain a carer or I can pay debt in my whole life.



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## Mandy, Wokingham

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I am very lucky to be a mature student with 4 sons. The reason I say I'm lucky is that I am fortunate to have a husband earning enough money to cover our household bills without my monetary input. This is the reason I chose to pursue a nursing career and in all honesty the bursary was a bonus I knew nothing about. However it has quickly become clear that I could not have come this far without it (in my 2nd yr). I hadn't accounted for the car I needed to buy to get to placement, the travel costs, books and for me the biggest impact is childcare. Although I can claim childcare costs, this only applies to ofsted registered childcare. The school my twin boys (6yrs) attend runs a morning and after school club but to keep costs low for working parents they charge £3 per hour. While this benefits most parents it does not me as they explained that if they were ofsted registered the minimum charge would be more than doubled! Therefore I cannot claim but incur charges which usually range from £200-£300 per month. I would be unable to do the degree required to become a nurse if I had no bursary. AND I consider myself one of the lucky ones, young people living away from home juggle jobs with doing a degree! Although this is difficult, the worst is yet to come as normally when people enter a career after their degree they earn decent wages but nurses in the future will have huge debts to clear with a minimal wage for a hugely responsible job! The only people who will be doing nursing degrees will be rich people but that doesn't necessarily make empathetic, caring, compassionate nurses!!!!



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## Sarah, Glasgow

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I have just completed a nursing degree. Without a bursary I would have found it impossible to support myself. This would have led me to leave the course as I would not have been able to afford working a full job as well as full time placement hours.



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## Dani, Nottingham

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I feel that my dream to become a nurse would not have been possible without the bursary. I feel cutting the bursary will have detrimental effects on healthcare, patients and the numbers of newly qualified nurses will significantly decrease therefore the shortage of nurses/midwives will become problematic even more so than at present time.



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## Katie, Nottingham

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Less students from poorer backgrounds, mature students who make up a large percentage of the cohorts being put off nursing due to no monthly support and also huge amounts of debt after qualifying. Working long hours when students have paid to do the training. Hcas/carers staying in their jobs due to the financial struggle they would face. This means less experienced students entering nurse training. Graduate entry student numbers falling due to the burden of taking on other loans. From personal experience, students drop out due to money problems. The extra pressure of debt at the end will push students away from nursing.



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## Fran, Bristol

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The bursary is what enables me to get to and from uni and placements, it allows me to know I will be able to survive whilst on placement doing 37.5 hours a week FREE, not able to work alongside these hours and earn money. It is not just a bursary, it is a lifeline given to us whilst we train to save lives.



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## Elaine, Scunthorpe

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I am a 36 year old mother of two pre-school children and I am in year one of my nursing degree. The financial support from the bursary has allowed me to start the degree. I would not have been able to take on student loans instead because I have a mortgage and four of us are stuck in a two bedroomed house because the recession put us into negative equity. I have to pay for childcare when I am at university and money is very tight but I know qualifying in 3 years will make it all worth it. I do not have the time or childcare to work as well as attend university - my husband works shifts so time management is complicated as it is. These changes are very sad because the nursing profession are going to lose out on so many mature students in the future who currently bring so many skills, so much knowledge and life experience to the profession. I can 100% say that had the bursary been scrapped starting this academic year I would not have started my degree because I cannot justify putting my family into that amount of debt for such a low starting wage - which is made even lower by the immediate loan repayments!



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## Brogan, Devon

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I struggle now living off the bursary I'm given. I've had to top it up with a student loan. Even though this won't affect me personally, it's going to affect my future career. I would not have done the nursing degree if it wasn't funded as I wouldn't have been able to cope, financially! The government go on about the shortage of nurses and the agency staff and this is not going to help this situation. I'm saddened to think that others are not going to be able to train to be a nurse due to this. We are going to lose potential excellent nurses.



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## Isobel, York

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As a current student nurse I already have to try and squeeze part work in to afford to live (this is with a bursary). Without the bursary the Masters in Nursing degree that I have been accepted onto would not have been a possibility. Without the bursary I simply would not have been able to afford to be a nurse. I am from a background that includes a disabled widowed mother, these proposals mean that people like me, who are not born into money will suffer, leaving them in a poor situation. Additionally 2,300 hours of work which the NMC requires students to do will now be PAID for by the student. I am sorry but I think paying to work is simply wrong. I am so angry for perspective students.



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## Jade, Abertillery

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I already work 13 hours a week to supplement my bursary so my family and I can survive financially whilst I'm in university. That means when I'm on placement I work over 50 hours a week. On top of this I have to find time to do university assignments as well as care for elderly family members and run my house. When I'm on theory time I also try to do extra bank shifts to maintain the car I need for placements, work and university. I live 30 miles from university as a result most of my placements are closer to home, therefore I'm not entitled to claim my mileage back. I struggle to manage with my income, bursary, loan and bank shifts. To stop this bursary would be a deterrent for people to attend university to become valuable members of the nursing profession. I would not have been able to afford to go to university without the bursary I receive. I think it is not fair to expect future generations to do placement hours with no pay. Currently on average we are already getting paid under minimum wage for the hours we work as students, when we are considered as valuable members of the teams we work with. To work these hours, a lot of them unsociable and have to experience the stressful situations faced each day in nursing, without pay is unethical and will add to the stress levels of student nurses.

### **Vicky, Staffordshire**

Per placement, I will spend an average of 500 pounds on travel which my bursary kindly covers. A bursary is also a great way to interest people into doing a nursing degree, and student nurses are our future. So if you take away our student nurses there will be an extreme shortage of nurses meaning higher death rates and lower standards of care for our patients.

### **Victoria, Wakefield**

I'm about to embark on my NHS degree/career and find it appalling that we no longer get grants and tuition paid. I can appreciate that other degrees don't get the same grace as we would but we practically work for the NHS in both hospitals and community UNPAID for 3 years of our lives. We have longer weeks and terms than any other degrees and only a few weeks off each year which will mainly be spent in training to get a better qualification out of it which means we can't financially support ourselves by working another job a few days or evenings a week. I have already had to move back home at the age of 25 to be able to save money for my degree and I'm thankful my father has let me do so but this doesn't mean I don't pay rent or contribute in my own way.

### **Beverly, Bishops Stortford**

It's sickening! For me it's a modern day slavery for student nurses, where you pay for travelling expenses for placement and work 37.5hrs/week and you are not getting paid – that's terrible. And also my concerns is the student nurses who is already in the course will it affect us as well?

### **Sophy, Newton Abbot**

I am a third year student nurse and I would not have started this course if I knew I'd be left with such a huge amount of debt. The sheer amount of hours my course requires me to do is so different to any other university degree. And even after my current loan and bursaries it still leaves me only a few pounds an hour - I cannot imagine if I had to pay to work these 2000+ hours over the three years. I would not survive and I would not be where I am now.

### **Robyn, Buckinghamshire**

I am a second year student nurse and although the changes to the bursary will not affect me directly, I am concerned for the future of my chosen career. My bursary only just covers the cost of the petrol that I use driving the 40+ miles to and from university and placement in Oxfordshire. Without the bursary, there is no way I could have done this course, even though I am fortunate enough to be able to still live at home with my parents. I have previous debts from a previous degree course and if I had to add to them with more tuition fees and maintenance loans I'm not sure I ever would have started the course. Being a student nurse is exhausting and there is no way I could manage to work alongside my studies - this semester I have had several assignments to submit and an exam to study for as well as having to work 40 hour weeks at placement. I am disgusted that the government thinks it is acceptable to expect student nurses to pay for their training when we are out there, on the frontline of the NHS, doing invaluable work and helping to take the pressure off of already overstretched services. The bursary not only provides financial support to hundreds of future nurses who otherwise would never be able to afford to train as a nurse, it also helps to make us student nurses feel valued, something I feel we definitely deserve.



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## Sarah, Leeds

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I'm a mature nursing student (the ripe old age of 26). I already have a degree so will have struggled affording this without the bursary. As a nursing student I am required to spend half of my degree working for the NHS. If I don't I don't become a qualified nurse, simple. We go on placement and work full time for the NHS. That's a lot of nurses at various skill levels bridging a very large gap that the NHS needs right now. When on placement, which is about 20-25 weeks of the year depending which year you're in; we work a minimum of 37.5 hours a week for our funding. The more astute will notice that as almost half of the year we are working for the NHS for no pay, and now no funding. During this we still have our studying, exams, assignments and other jobs (that pay us) so that we can afford to live. My first placement is coming up. It coincides with the Doctors strike, I'll be finishing a few days before Xmas, preparing for my January exams and completing my January assignments, while completing my placement booklet (lots of questions and essays to fill about various aspects of it!). All while still working weekends so I can pay for frivolous things like food and rent. Nurses aren't in it for the money. Student nurses didn't go down this path blindly, we didn't choose this because it's easy – it's not. It's hard work, we knew it would be and we love it. We have chosen a career where we help people. We are the people training to care for you and support you in some of the hardest moments of your life. Why is the government making this career all the more impossible for people to pursue when they've acknowledged there's already a lack of nurses. Is it any wonder you lose so many to other countries, who treat their medical staff with respect and reward them for their skills with decent pay and opportunities?



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## Pamela, Wigan

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As a mature student I left a full time job in order to pursue my passion and become a Nurse. Like all other student nurses I work hard providing care to sick and vulnerable people as well as spending time at home studying, writing essays, revising for exams and doing work to meet course requirements. I do all this because I care. I endeavour to be kind and compassionate to those I care for, I fill gaps where staffing is poor. I am the person who has the most contact with patients that day and nothing makes me happier than to see someone discharged home and nothing breaks my heart more than to see a patient return to hospital. I carry out basic nursing care, make beds, speak to patients, make sure patients in side wards don't feel alone, take ons, fetch water and make toast. All the while I'm working alongside my mentor to learn how to be the best nurse I can be. Without the pittance of a student bursary I get this work I do would not be possible and I would also be trapped in a job I hated. I am not a student nurse for what's been described as a 'free degree' I am a student nurse because I am compassionate, caring and kind. Ultimately I want to make a difference to people's lives and provide excellent nursing care. Which I feel is true for the majority of potential and already student nurses. Don't let out potential get lost in money and politics.



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## Ashling, Welwyn Garden City

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Being 25 when I started studying nursing me already had a bachelor's degree and one student loan so I would not have been able to go back to uni and would instead have stayed in marketing. I'm so grateful for my supportive family who encouraged me to apply to nursing before it was too late, healthcare needs to be invested in and this will drive graduates to look for better opportunities abroad.



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## Jennifer, South London

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My parents were unable to support me financially throughout my studies, which meant I relied entirely on the £449 per month from my bursary. My rent in student halls was £409 per month, which left me with £40 to travel to placement and to purchase food. I studied in Liverpool, and the cheapest way to get to placement was to buy a weekly bus pass, at a cost of £15 per week. As I'm sure you've already calculated, my bursary (which was surprisingly one of the highest monthly amounts amongst my peers who suffered due to their parents' household income) could not even cover my travel costs, never mind allowing me the luxury of eating. My placement weeks were 30 hours, alongside one day of uni per week, resulting in a full time week at 37.5 hours. On top of this, I had to study (it is a degree after all) leaving little room to work part time. Obviously I had no choice, and frequently pulled 60+ hour weeks in order to survive. On a community placement where the hours were 9-5, I would finish, go home and then would travel to the hospital and work a night shift from 8pm. If I was on placement on a ward on an early shift (7am-3pm) I would then ask to leave at 2.55pm, change my tunic to the Healthcare Assistant uniform and go to another ward to work a bank shift until 9.30pm. Somehow I survived, got my degree and I'm now a staff nurse in one of the best hospitals in London. That said, there were times when I was so low that I nearly quit - I missed out on birthdays, family events and for a large proportion of the course I felt utterly defeated. Nursing is hard, we do the job because it is a vocation; it is something inside of us that we cannot switch off. Whilst this is what drives to continue in a career where we are underpaid, undervalued and overstretched; it is also our downfall. Because of our innate desire to care for people in their most vulnerable moments, our government continues to exploit us. As if it wasn't hard enough to work such gruelling hours with the looming prospect of losing our unsociable hours pay, we now face the prospect of a serious shortage of nurses. I can say that with

certainty because I know I would not have undertaken the course had I have had to take out loans to cover the study costs. On a band 5 salary, I cannot even entertain the idea of paying such an extortionate amount back, it just isn't feasible. My dream was to become a nurse, my dream was to make a difference. By taking away the bursary funding, I fear that many other prospective nurses with the same dreams will find employment elsewhere.



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## Matthew, Teesside

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Without a student bursary I simply would not be able to manage financially to start let alone complete my mental health nursing studies. The fact that half of the course is practice based at full time hours means that I cannot work as well to support myself as few employers are willing to offer the flexibility in hours required to work around class room based learning and practice based studies as well as completing coursework and additional studies.



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## Lauren, Rhondda Cynon Taff

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If it wasn't for the bursary I probably would not have been able to afford to go to university at all let alone study a nursing degree. The bursary itself has given me the opportunity to study the course of my dreams and without it, it wouldn't be possible.



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## Iain, Sheffield

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If the Nursing Bursary changes came through I would have to quit my course as a Student Nurse as I would not be eligible for a student loan because of previous university education. I think there are many people in my situation and there are a large number of post graduate students who would not be able to afford to study without this bursary. We would have less nurses qualifying as a result and therefore the quality of care would be reduced or services would need to be cut due to low staffing levels.



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## Catherine, Haverhill

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I was finalising my application for 2016... These changes mean I will no longer be submitting my application. The benefits of having chosen a career path which so happens to provide such amazing support had assured me that my training as a working 23 year old would have been manageable... It would have been challenging on a £5,500 a year bursary, but do-able during my 3 years of full time education and work placements, seeing as many universities do not allow you to participate in paid work alongside... Tuition fees? Fair enough, make the course the same as every other... But don't whinge that the NHS has a nurse shortage when many now can't train because of these changes and the impacts to our lives it going to make.... Bursary? Foolish to remove it as students work 12.5hour shifts UNPAID and are completely unable to support themselves throughout the 3 years... Not all of us have other people who can support us... A lot of us would have struggled even with NHS' help... It is claimed to cost to the NHS £70,000 to train a nurse for 3 years, so taking that away from us now means we need to gather that money ourselves in order to get us trained, not to mention the loans and credit cards we will have to take out and then pay interest on, just for day to day living throughout that 3 years. This means taking out large loans, and then having to increase our amounts which I for one would not necessarily be approved for. We are expected to travel, but with what money and what car, now that running a car has been made impossible for us... How do we pay for course books and other things we will need? These changes mean that I will have to gather and save money for a few years before beginning training... Being a 23year old international student, I have followed the strict guidelines in order to get into nursing, going back to college to meet demands and having to wait 3 years of residency before they would allow me to enter... I have delayed crucial events in my life based on training, I have now wasted 4 years of my life waiting for something which has now been removed and my

training is impossible... They want 10,000 new nurses? Very unrealistic expectations whilst they do not give the slightest support to students... Many will not even apply because of financial implications, many current student nurses will be forced to drop out to return to work to support themselves or young families.... I don't think they properly considered the impacts of removing it... And have unrealistic expectations of the future of nursing, expecting people to still apply and commit to 3 years of big debts accumulating.... Obviously, a big statement, but to sum it up, I for one won't be doing my training anytime in the next 5 years.... My whole career is set well back by this decision and I am sure there will be 1,000s in the same boat. Good luck to those who are already in training and have just had their support to ensure the safety of their family removed.



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## Jayne, Haywards Heath

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I was hoping to retrain as an occupational therapist in the next few years. I've already struggled with the news that I will not be eligible for a student loan for the master's course I wanted to do, as I'm over 30, and now I learn that bursaries are going to be removed. I don't see how it will be possible for me to train. I have a mortgage; I have a disabled son; I have financial responsibilities. I can't afford to study without some help. The government's support of healthcare courses is vital if they wish people to consider entering the profession.



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## Claire, Highland region

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Student nurses' training is completely different to other university courses: students get few holidays throughout the year and are required to work long placements away from their living address near the university where they will not be able to work. Students have to travel for placements away from their base and have the cost of both permanent and placement accommodation including food and fuel. Such a raw deal to do this to them.

## Laura, Birmingham

I know for a fact that if I didn't have my bursary I wouldn't be studying nursing now if at all. It just about covers my rent, and ensures that in my free time I can concentrate on studying, instead of worrying about how I'm going to make money to be able to live and pay for transport to placement (for my current placement it's worked out over £250). I am extremely lucky in that my parents financially support me where possible, but I know that many student nurses don't have this kind of support. However, I have found it difficult to hold down a job so far in university particularly with the demands of placement hours (37.5 hrs per week, unsocial hours) and even private agencies find this difficult to work with as they would prefer someone that works regularly. Without my bursary I would be constantly tired from working on days off, which I think would lead to me making more mistakes and not fully engaging with placement. The stresses of the nursing degree course as it stands are a lot for one student to handle, never mind if I had to worry about my finances on top of that! Thank you for allowing me to have my say, I think this budget cut is unfair and I think that the government would do better to understand the level of commitment required to be a student nurse.

## Nicola, Derbyshire

I barely survive on the bursary as it stands. I run a home, have a child and I have to work alongside the degree course to survive me doing this degree. Working 50% on practice in placement is hard going with a family and other commitments. I would not become a nurse if I didn't have the minimal support of the bursary I already receive. It would be impossible and if I did I would kill myself working full time alongside a full time course. It's a disgrace for the future of nursing and what will become of the NHS. I'm scared.

## Laura, Newcastle

My current bursary means that when I'm on placement I get paid the equivalent of £1.12 an hour. That's for 12 hour shifts. That's 12 hour shifts including nights and weekends, that's including getting home and having one hour to make my dinner, wash my hair and pack my uniform and bag for the next day, to try and make sure that I still get enough sleep for the next shift. That's including whilst I have essays to write and books to read and research to study. We dedicate our lives to nursing. For the equivalent of £1.12 an hour. And they're going to take that away?! When we walk into placement and we hear how disheartened and demoralised some of the nurses are, through no fault of their own, we still continue. We dedicate our lives to save other people's. Live a day in our shoes and tell me you feel the same afterwards. Please.

## Amber, London

Living in London is expensive enough, but when neither of your parents can afford to help you out, and your bursary only just covers your rent, it can be a little tough at times. If I had not been eligible for the help I receive, or if it was not available, I would not be able to train as a nurse. Some may say it's easy enough to get a part time job, but try doing 12.5 hour shifts up to 4 times a week, assignments, revising for exams all whilst trying to ensure you have some glimmer of happiness and a social life. Getting a part time job to make up the downfall doesn't quite seem to fit with it all, and eventually other aspects will start to lose priority. It's hard enough training as a nurse and being massively undervalued, underappreciated and dealing with abuse, as well as now the worry of money. This decision just highlights how little nurses are thought of and how undervalued they are. I'd very much like to see some politicians to do a 12.5 shift to see how they can handle it, and whether they still think it's reasonable to treat us so unfairly.



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## Helen, Oxford

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I am appalled at the recent decision made by the government to stop the bursary. I am a first year nursing student, and within the first semester I can feel the huge amount of pressure that is felt by all nursing students across the country. We have intense weeks of lectures and seminars, and have assignments to be doing. Then we are put into placement; working 12 hour shifts with no pay, to return home needing to complete essays and reflections. I have the pressures of this as well as the pressures of needing to maintain a social life and find some time to contact my family. The bursary, however, makes this pressure easier; being able to pay for my transport to placement; I have to pay over thirty pounds a week, and I have had to buy a bicycle just so that I can attend placement and provide the care that is needed for my patients and their families. I have also had to buy some expensive textbooks to help with my studies. Nursing is often overlooked as a profession, but until you spend hours and hours nursing patients and their families, writing endless assignments, and reading constantly about a range of medical conditions, you will not understand how hard it is. We are confronted each day by something that many people could not deal with. This is a profession which needs support from the government, especially during a time when the NHS is facing pressures left, right and centre. Taking away the bursaries, which allow many people to continue with their training, will be detrimental for any future patients and their families. This will not just affect nurses, it will affect the whole of the NHS.



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## Samantha, Cornwall

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I am a student nurse and I am required to drive 90 miles to go placement and home again every day for placement for 37.5 hours a week, this is a requirement of my nursing degree. I am currently working in emergency care and start at 0730 am until 2000 pm, I leave home at 0600 am and get home at 2100 pm, therefore I have 15+ hour work day. I'm currently doing night shifts so I'm getting home at 1000 am after a 12.5 hour night shift as I get caught in the school and rush hour traffic. To park at the hospital I pay £8.30 a day. Without the NHS bursary and financial support there is no way I would ever be able to survive this course, the money I receive now is barely enough to cover my living and travel expenses as it is now. I have the student finance maintenance loan, a student overdraft and the NHS bursary, however since starting nursing I have had to make many sacrifices and changes to my lifestyle, social life and financial expenses. There is no doubt in my mind that without the NHS bursary I would not be able to cope with the financial burden the nursing degree imposes on me and I would of sadly not gone into nursing or finish the degree.



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## Elizabeth, Dorset

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If the cuts go ahead, less people are going to be willing to become a student nurse. By having our NHS bursaries, means that we actually in some sense get paid for the placement hours we do. Nobody is going to be willing to undergo 2500+ hours over 3 years to not get paid a penny and for the NHS trusts to actually use us for free labour. Yes the placements give us the experiences we need to become nurses, however it will be less appealing if we don't get any money for working 37 and half hour weeks. We already struggle with money as it is and the majority of us have to work jobs on the side in order to receive enough money to pay for us to go to university, let alone the amount of hours we might have to do on top of a full time university course if the cuts go ahead.



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## Nina, the North West

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Working 37.5 hours for 26 weeks of the year and studying full time for 45 weeks of the year for less than apprentices wage means that my children cannot go on school residential trips due to me not having the money. My bursary doesn't even cover my travel to uni but without it I could not have afforded to stay on the course. This is yet another barrier to increasing nursing numbers to the needed levels.



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## Jessica, Exeter

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I would not have applied to study nursing if I needed loans. That is the truth. I already had (and still have) loans from a previous degree. I was not ready to study nursing after school as I needed life experience and would not have been committed. This will lead to less nurses. The reason there are so many bank and foreign nurses is due to a retention issue. I would rather leave nursing than work on a busy acute medical ward again, it's the most stressful job I have ever done and not worth the money.



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## Penny, West Yorkshire

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I would not be able to afford to do the course. Travel expenses and living expenses are at a high as it is, add to being unable to take another job due to placements it is unfair. I understand the need for more nurses, but to train more nurses you need the ability to support the students in placements. Mentors are vital to ensure students get the right support, and learning experiences, without an increase in mentors then universities won't be able to take extra students despite the changes in funding.



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## Chelsea, Kendal

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If the NHS bursary stopped before I started my training I would not be able to afford to live and study as I studied away from home. The bursary helped me to pay for travel expenses to placement. The bursary also helped me to pay my rent at my student accommodation flat. The bursary helped me to buy food, meals and drinks. My bursary helped me to pay to go home and visit my family. Without my bursary my time at university would have been very different if not non-existent.



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## Zoe, Aberdeen

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I qualified in March '99 and throughout my training received a bursary. I still needed to have two other jobs that meant working all night doing night shifts after finishing late / early shifts as a student in a ward, cleaning offices at 11pm after late shifts and working in bars. Some days I left home to go to university/ placement with a change of clothes and a toothbrush in a bag to return two days later. I struggled to juggle working to pay bill, studying and clinical practice and I had a bursary. You are making a grave mistake as it will be virtually impossible for these poor students to make ends meet or complete their course. The quality of life as a nurse is already appalling and I have finally left to start my own business after 21yrs in caring as that is way less stressful. You are setting these guys up to fail before they have even begun and will put a huge number off even trying!

## Charlotte, Winchester

It is no more complicated than simply stating that if I did not have the NHS bursary, I would not be able to even consider doing this degree. I live with my partner and my 3 year old daughter. Nursery fees are more than our rent. Placements are very hard work and we are often an extra pair of hands even if we are meant to be supernumerary. Not only that but we have to travel considerable distances to do them. I feel extremely lucky that my degree finishes before these changes take place as I would have to leave university. I honestly just think it is really sad that this is now happening. It is a mess.

## Nicole, Lowestoft

I have just began my degree to become an adult nurse at the age of 18. I live at home, with my mother who is a single parent with a younger sibling. If I did not have a bursary it would be impossible for me to survive and to put petrol in my car to travel from home to university or the hospital every day. I would also be unable to pay for books and resources of any kind let alone the normal finances of everyday life. It would be impossible for me to become a nurse.

## Lisa, Wallasey

As a mature student with a family, I have taken the long awaited step into nursing. Having worked in the NHS for 9 years I fully committed and proud to be training as a paediatric nurse. However without a bursary I would be unable to apply. I have a previous degree and still have outstanding debt from this. The cut to bursaries I feel will alienate people with financial commitments. The line that is given from government regarding the move to loan system will increasing training places is unsustainable there is not enough placements and mentors to provide more students with support needed during their training plus the fact many people will be put off given that the bursary system supported so many. I am due to start training in April 2016.

## Kayleigh, Plymouth

If you take away my bursary I will not be able to finish my degree, I got my passion for nursing whilst fighting out in Afghanistan and when leaving the army I wanted to pursue my next career which is extremely rewarding. I care about nursing and care about my patients and my future, you take my bursary you take my future and a future nurse away from future patients! Normal student loans don't cover the costs of living as we work longer than any other student and also do a full time unpaid job! You try keeping a house running on no money! Give us a chance!

## Teresa, London

Without the bursary it would have been impossible for me to even consider a future in nursing. Without the monthly support of the bursary I would not be able to JUST about afford travel, my bills and food. The main reason that the bursary is so effective is that, after working long hard days on the wards, I feel that even though it's not a lot, the bursary is worth the copious amount of hard work I PUT IN TO THE NHS. You are in effect segregating those of us who, without the bursary would not be able to afford the course and the debt we would incur after our course has finished. The NMC states that we are supernumerary but I can assure you we work JUST AS HARD as the qualified nurses and we put 200% into our patients and roles as nurses. The change has already put a lot of future nursing students off and the NHS need them!!



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## Fiona, North Lincolnshire

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As a mature student (45) with children I can say with confidence that there is absolutely no way at all that I would have been able to undertake my degree in adult nursing without a bursary. Having a student loan is not an option for me but I will be an excellent nurse and will provide patient centred care to thousands of people in my remaining working life. Who will our nurses of the future be if the bursary is removed? Has any consideration been given to the fact that we only have a total of 6 weeks a year when we are not either at university or on placement? We are not able to take a summer job to enable us to feed our families! Is this just another way of the government taking a step closer to the demise of the NHS? Is the only way to study a degree in nursing in the future going to be by sponsorship from private healthcare companies? I am sickened and appalled, the decision is short sighted and typical of a conservative government who have no regard for the working class!



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## Suzanne, Dover

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I am part of a standard family, my husband and I work long hours and somehow I am trying to do my GCSE'S in the evenings in order to attend university next year training as a mental health nurse. I feel I would make a positive contribution in this field and that all nurses/student nurses are a key asset and need all the help and encouragement to succeed. I pay taxes and NI contributions on my wages as does my husband. I cannot afford to study without a bursary as we like many others are juggling rising consumer costs. Mortgage and childcare plus daily living... This action stopping the bursary will increase student debts to out of control putting too many under unnecessary pressure. It will eventually discourage students from learning as financially unable. I am really disappointed, I'm half way through my GCSE'S and what for now, I can't afford Uni.



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## Claire, London

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Nursing already struggles to recruit and retain the right candidates for study. The bursary system has allowed me (a single mother and mature student) the opportunity to utilise my compassion, empathy and intellect to gain the knowledge and skills required to provide high quality care to patients of the NHS. This will also provide a better future for my family (though I still required a student loan!). As a final year student I presume I will be one of the last "Lucky ones" but I am deeply upset and concerned about the future of a profession that is already so demanding emotionally, mentally and financially pre and post qualification. I would not have been able to have undertaken the degree without such support, we will lose so many great potential nurses and the loyalty to the NHS that comes with.



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## Stephanie, Fife

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When I was training I received a bursary that didn't even cover my rent let alone any food/bills/petrol etc. For half of the year we are on placement working full time hours and not getting paid for it (nights and weekends included). We are counted in the numbers and working as nurses with no salary. We only get 4/5 weeks holiday a year unlike all other courses. On top of working 37.5 hours a week I had essays to do and had to work my own job in order to make money for my bills so ended up working 50-60 hour weeks. To cut this bursary is totally unacceptable and very naive and selfish!! The NHS is crumbling and you Mr Osborne are making it worse by disrespecting the work of nursing staff and discouraging anyone from enrolling. A disgusting move from a money hungry man and government.

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## Laura, Northern Ireland

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Without a bursary I could never have started training as a nurse - I am a mature student with a degree already which is still to be paid off and looms over me. Another point I think the government and universities have failed to consider is that it is a juggling act already to find a suitable mentor for the current number of students - if they are going to get around this by assigning mentors multiple students how will this impact the quality of education and an already strained workforce? Additionally, there is a concern about 'watering down' the intake process when students are seen as income. It was something to be very proud of that out of thousands of applicants we were selected for the qualities and experience we can bring to the profession. Both of these points could have a significant impact on patient care and safety. The idea that having your loans paid off, or paid off quicker, if you join the NHS is not an incentive to join - it's simply a punishment if you don't. Yet another blow to the nursing profession which, I'm realising, is becoming more eroded all the time as they find cheaper ways to replace us - and I'm not even part of the work force yet. Sad and disheartening.

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## Lydia, Oxford

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I have applied to start a nursing degree in the next year and have my interviews coming up. I and many others on my access to nursing course are concerned about taking it up now. The amount of hours we will already work underpaid whilst having to study and due to our term times have less time to work and earn money and now on top of this I am going to have to pay back the fee for doing so. The pay rates for graduate nurses are not very high I want to do this because I love my job as a Carer and feel I have more to give. The country needs nurses and I feel that taking away the bursary will make many others choose a different career path.

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## Sian, Cardiff

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To get by I need to cram in paid shifts where I can to try to have something resembling a life, although not much of one since working placement hours then bank shifts on top does not leave much time but I do it because I value the profession. However as a mature student if the course was not funded I would like to think I may find a way to do it but the reality of trying to make ends meet and still come out in considerable debt with less time on my side to pay debt back I simply would not have logically chosen a nursing degree.

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## James, Sheffield

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I am a mature student and have 2 step children and have to travel between Sheffield and Doncaster most days. The cost for living alone is already expensive enough without then adding on fuel and parking charges. And for anyone that says save money by using the train, this costs 7.50 a day for a day ticket. That gets expensive 5 days a week! This all hasn't even included the cost for shoes for placement, text books, equipment and having to feed yourself never mind your family. Added to all this I work part time as an estate agent and also part time as a healthcare assistant and without the bursary I still wouldn't stand a chance!

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## Shelley, London

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Disgusting. The cost of living on London is ridiculous and although the bursary nowhere covered the costs it helped and was very much an incentive into studying for this vocational qualification. I think if I was to be applying for university now nursing would not be a career I would choose because the whole NHS is in disrepute and making us repay a loan on an already minuscule wage is ridiculous



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## Candice, Liverpool

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I am a Registered Nurse. I feel ashamed of the British Government for doing this to student Nurses. I see how hard they work when on student placement and nursing is unlike other degrees in terms of hours spent at University and time on clinical placements. If I was asked would I recommend doing a Nursing degree, at this point in time I would say no. Nurses work extremely hard, long hours, caring for unwell and vulnerable people and their families. We are not paid anywhere near what we are worth. We are highly trained and have to be adaptable to an ever changing environment with times of high stress. Would I have completed my Nursing degree if I had to have taken a loan out when my days on clinical placement are spent helping others and the NHS? No! I suggest Jeremy Hunt spends a week out on the 'shop floor' with a mix of days, nights and afternoon shifts to see what it actually like to work as a nurse.



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## Nicola, Somerset

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As a mature student there is no way I would have been able to start this course and pursue the career without the bursary. We study for 37.5 hours a week for 45 weeks out of the year compared to other subjects who on average study for 13.9 hours a week for 36 weeks, leaving us very little time to engage in paid employment. Many of us have families to support and houses to pay for and this bursary allows us to spend time with our loved ones in the home we pay for. I feel this change would put off many new students thinking of training in this career and this will eventually lead to a shortage of nurses.



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## Clare, London

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I am appalled to hear the government's decision to scrap the student nursing bursary. I am a newly qualified nurse and scrimped and saved as much as I could before starting university in 2012. I used all my savings within my first term on rent, travel and books! I then relied totally on my monthly bursary for travel, food and books. My tri-yearly maintenance loan was solely for rent, which didn't cover it. I thought many times if I should give up my dreams of becoming a nurse simply due to financial problems. Somehow with thanks to my parents and partner helped me when I was in desperate need, which in turn left them short. The government clearly do not have a clue what this means for the future generation of student nurses. My understanding was that UK nursing training was the best in the world - why are they determined to change this? Unfortunately many people sit back and will watch the government destroy the NHS and the future nursing students' dreams. It will mean only those sitting above middle class will afford to go to university and that will have a tremendous impact on the amount of nurses qualifying yearly. Maybe if the government used the NHS rather than private they will have a greater understanding of many patients experience and see first-hand what nurses go through within a 12.5 hour shift. Without the bursary I would not of been able to qualify, my parents alone would not have been able to fund me and I would have been put off by the approximate £50,000 debt I would have eagerly waiting for me to finish my three year degree.

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## Diane, Hull

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I did my nurse training 9 years ago following being made redundant. I had three young children. Without the bursary I would never have been able to afford to do my nurse training. I struggled doing my nurse training running a home and trying to work in between. I know all of my colleagues who also trained with me would not have been able to train without the bursary. The bursary is a must. Without this the shortage of nurses will continue and our loving caring profession will be gone

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## Alana, Hertfordshire

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I am in my final year of my nursing degree. I cannot imagine just how hard if not impossible for future students to manage to complete their course without the bursary. It was a hard enough decision for me to do it with the bursary as it had financial implications. The course is very intense, working 37.5 or more hours a week in clinical placements with multiple essays to complete at a high standard at the same time is very hard. When in theory we have a lot of work, learning that needs concentration. The idea of having to work full time to support myself is impossible to achieve. The course is unlike any other degree, longer, placements and theory to manage whilst learning to look after critically ill patients, experience death and providing support to families is emotionally challenging. It's a very hard profession and nurses are not thought high enough of it is very sad that a profession that works so hard to provide such a brilliant service to the public is treated this way. Nurses work harder than any profession I know, they put their own lives and families on hold to deal with others. In my experience it is under staffed already which puts patients at risk, and nurses get blamed for it as a result when it is not their fault. Experience has shown me the struggles they face, many have expressed their wish to leave the profession as a result of the stress they face. With this change in bursaries all I can

see happening is further understaffing and all the hard work that has been put into making patients care safer recently will be put at further risk

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## Lucy, Maidstone

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There are already fewer potential nurses able to afford to study since the diploma option was replaced with an all degree programme. Removing the funding completely will result in less people even considering nursing as a future career. Ultimately leaving a huge short fall and massive staff shortages in the years to come. When will the politicians actually listen and pay attention to what they are being told!

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## Annika, Scotland

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Everything I currently do is only possible due to the Bursary I receive. The money covers everything from stationary for classes to transport to placement to helping out with the rent to stay in my home. If I had known that my last year of being a Student Nurse would be overshadowed with the burden of a lone and how I would have to repay it, I probably wouldn't have applied to study in the first place. Even though the bursary isn't enough to start out with and properly support living with it, I have just managed to carefully plan out my spending. With this change coming into effect, it will ruin my dream job of being able to help people get better.

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## Annette, Radstock

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I have been qualified as an adult nurse for nearly ten years, I currently work as an emergency nurse practitioner. When I started my pre-registration training in 2004, like most of the other students on my course at that time, I was a mature student with a young family. I could not of considered nurse training if I had had to pay tuition fees, I had to sacrifice a lot during those undergraduate years (as did my children) and if I had been faced with the prospect of registering as nurse with a large amount of debt to repay from tuition fees, I would never have considered nursing as a possible career - it just would not have been financially viable. I enjoy my job, I have worked continuously in the NHS since qualification and fully intend to stay working at the frontline of care until I retire in approximately twenty years. The introduction of tuition fees for nurses and midwives will deter mature students with dependents from applying for courses and have a huge detrimental effect on nursing recruitment in the UK. Please fight for this RCN or there will be significantly less future nurses.

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## Anne-Marie, Rugby

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I'm a mature student adult nurse at De Montfort University. Without the bursary I would have not had the opportunity to choose to do my nursing degree. With a mortgage, 2 children and child care fees I would not be able to afford to do this, even with support from a very supportive husband, I would have continued as a carer. With the bursary I have been given a chance to follow my dreams and help to continue the great work nurses within the NHS make.

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## Nicole, Aberdeen

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I personally would not be able to afford travel into uni without the help I gain from my bursary, it would make the experience of gaining my degree a lot more stressful and would potentially harden my chances of reaching my full potential if I needed to work long hours around my studying, as the course is pretty full on and a lot Of hours part time work is hard to fit in. In previous years with a different degree I had to work 3 jobs and full time and evenings during summer to be able to afford to support myself.

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## Stephanie, Norwich

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Saddling me with debt would make me think long and hard about Nursing. I absolutely adore Nursing, and with one year left of my training I'm absolutely bursting for the day that I can call myself a qualified Nurse and can provide high quality care for those in their hour of need. However, whilst Nursing is still very much a calling, if students are saddled with debt, whilst entering what is still a poorly paid profession, you're actually more likely to see a decline in those taking up nursing student places. Government must appreciate that our degree is not like many others- we have much longer years, spend half our time on placement UNPAID, and many people including myself have had to pay out from our much-needed loans so we can attend placements that our not in our immediate locality (not our choice, may I add). We work unsociable hours and live up to the 24/7 nature of the NHS, all whilst having assessments to complete. From personal experience, enough Nursing students struggle with both physical and mental health problems due to the sheer stress we endure, which is often hidden and we simply do not have time to seek treatment for, particularly during our stints on placement. It would be absolutely wrong for us to be saddled with yet another worry on our shoulders. Please government, accept that our degree is a world away from many other degrees, and give us back the bursaries we deserve!

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## Kellyann, Bolton

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By taking the bursary away mature people like myself would not be able to apply. I do not have a previous degree but work in the lowest banding of jobs, a hospital cleaner. Without the bursary I would not be able to feed my children let alone travel to uni and placement. I am trying to better my family and the government are trying to stop people like me from achieving our life long goals!

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## Carys, Wales

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Without the bursary, I would be unable to live. Considering I have 3/4 weeks off during the summer holidays only when my friends and normal degrees have 2/3 months. I am unable to make enough money to get by the next academic year let alone get out of the debt that the year before already brought. Unfortunately much of this money is spent trying to get to placements and university. Unlike other students of my age I do not go out parting 3 times a week and drinking away my bursary. I am unable due to me having to wake up 5.30 in the morning to get ready and travel to placement to do a 37.5 hours a week. This is not including writing essays, exams and other shifts I try to include to make money. I am also aware that many of my fellow students who have children and have valuable HCSW experience wouldn't have applied for the course without the bursary. A number of my fellow nursing students would also not have applied to do Nursing. This is upsetting to me as here we lose many experienced, knowledgeable, and string individuals who have taught me how to be a nurse. I hope that this decision changes to encourage these individuals to do the course. But I don't think this will be true and I believe that the number of applicants will decrease. Otherwise I pity the future nurses who will one day look after me, my family and friends.

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## Jane, Cardiff

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I simply would not have undertaken my nursing degree if it did not have the bursary. I already had a student loan from a previous degree and it would have been impossible to afford this too. As it was, I had to do bar work to top up the bursary to survive. Finishing work sometimes at 1 or 2 am and then having to get up at 5.30 am to do a long shift on the ward. Nursing is a career that a lot of people come to later on in life, as experience of life and maturity are invaluable for coping with the intensely challenging situations we often face. I know that I personally would not have made it through the course as a fresh faced 18 year old with no experience of life. In addition to this there was a very high proportion of students with children and mortgages in my cohort, many of whom have gone on to management and specialist positions due to the qualities that their life experience has given them. These girls would never be able to afford to take on such a course without a bursary to support them. To saddle people with thousands of pounds of debt before they even start a career in nursing will only make the recruitment crisis far, far worse. But I think the government know this, and it will ultimately make it far easier to break up and privatise an under resourced, under staffed, floundering NHS.

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## Kelli, Ipswich

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I feel saddened the government have done this, fortunately I graduate in the New Year, however I would never have coped without my bursary. As students we work 750 hours a year in placement, all of which is unpaid, so working on top of this (which I have had to do throughout my degree, is a tiresome ordeal) with university studies on top of this. To stop the bursary would mean that a significant number of people will not be in a financial state, meaning Britain are going to lose out on some potentially brilliant nurses that we so desperately need! On top of this we get only a total of 9 weeks in time off throughout our degree making a normal job near enough impossible to undertake!



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## Nathan, Bristol

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I've been a nurse for several years now, and during this time I have seen many demoralised colleagues either leave the profession or forced to take long-term sickness due to the pressures of targets, paperwork and shift patterns. These are dedicated individuals who have been downtrodden for too long, and I can no longer sit back idly and witness the profession I admire and proud to be a part of crushed by government targets and pressures that are filtering down to our wonderful doctors and nurses. For me personally, had it not been for the financial support like the NHS bursary I wouldn't have been able to undertake my degree. Whilst incredibly modest, the bursary acted as a life line throughout my training. Nursing is like no other degree. You don't get the long summer and Christmas holidays like most other undergraduates. Half the time is spent on placement to gain exposure and the skills required to become a nurse, whilst the rest of the time at university writing assignments and studying for exams. This leaves very little time for part-time work meaning the bursary acts as a huge lifeline for many. Speaking to many colleagues this week and judging the mood from various forums, nurses are angry and have had enough. We currently aren't training enough nurses, this is a very short sighted policy by this government. Years of pay freezes, long working hours and deteriorating working conditions really does leave a sour taste in your mouth. Also this hardly makes the nursing attractive to young people or mature students with families who may be thinking about joining the profession. As far as salaries go, nursing is already lagging behind that of other graduates. As mentioned above, what with pay freezes/cuts, increase in NMC fees, and the general cost of living, is it fair that a newly qualified nurse should be left to shoulder a debt of over 30k giving that our earning potential and starting salaries are being eroded. Therefore as my union and representative, I am asking you for the good of the profession and our patients, do something to stop this reckless behaviour by the government



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## Daniel, Cornwall

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I decided to train to be a nurse late in life at 29. I had previously studied for a degree accruing a large student loan. Whilst nursing is a passion the bursary made it possible for myself to become a Nurse. A second loan would have left me with a huge lifetime debt. Now five years later I'm a nurse on a busy MAU. I and fellow colleagues dedicate ourselves day and night to ensure the NHS keeps running when some nights I'm not sure it can. The NHS is crying out for more nurses the cancelling of bursaries is a short term answer. The NHS needs vision and long-term planning something seriously lacking within this government.



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## Helen, York

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I Study nursing at university of York, what's my dream job and I physically wouldn't be able to afford to be a nurse without it. It costs me approximately 1/3 more than it cost my brother to live at university purely as I have to buy more food so I can eat properly on shifts and not make errors at work and have enough energy to do the job. Some of my fellow student nurses at university have families that rely on their student bursaries, so taking this away just stops people from trying to make a better more comfortable situation for themselves. I don't think people realise how crushing it is when your profession is constantly being slated for shortness of staff and unsafe practise on wards mainly due to the huge workloads we're expected to do. Do the people who have made his change in bursary really think that student nurses are too stupid to realise that now this change has come about, future students will have to pay to potentially be just used as one of the numbers on the ward and be giving basic care for free instead of training with their mentors to become nurses who will be ready to qualify instead of nurses who qualify feeling that they know nothing.



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### Fiona, Swansea

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If the bursary is scrapped in favour of loans, then not only will this mean a huge debt on top of an existing debt for me but possibly losing more money because it will be means tested. I have a maintenance loan already that doesn't give me enough to pay my rent, pay for basic food and for basic essential bills, which hasn't gone up to make up the shortfall I have suffered from losing £2000 of the NHS bursary. Why should a vocational and civil service job be classed as the same as an archaeology degree?! Maybe Mr Osbourne should spend time on a ward with a student nurse then spend time in lectures, 47 weeks out of 52. Would loans be paid for that long or will they be spread out over those extra 13 weeks? Give student nurses the equivalent to the living wage instead of less than under 18's get per hour!



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### Emma, York

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With the NHS bursary I am currently in receipt of, I am able to just about financially support myself and my son whilst I study for a nursing degree as a single parent. If I wasn't in receipt of an NHS bursary I wouldn't be able to study and better my life for myself and my son and show him that no matter your financial background you are capable of great things and can better the life for yourself.



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### Emma, Chesterfield

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I had a bursary when I did my nurse training and am now 33 and have been qualified 12 years I have more than paid back to the NHS the money that was invested in me. This will have such a negative impact on recruitment into nursing it won't be the cash saving that it is made out to be. Can we really afford not to train nurses? Because if you stop the bursary the nursing profession will miss out on mature nurses with stacks of life experience who simply cannot afford to train to be a nurse. Sad times.



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### Caroline, London

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I started my nursing education in King's College London back in 2007 as a mature student. I had financial commitments that a younger student may not have. I knew that it was going to be gruelling and hard but I have made up my mind that I wanted to follow in my mother's footsteps and also become a nurse. The NHS bursary was means-tested and because my parents were theoretically able to help me I received very little if not next to nothing. In order to save money I decided to stay home and commute instead. The first year was not too bad. I was still able to work part-time which helped in my day-to-day cost of living. However, in the second year it was becoming very very hard to study full-time, attend placements and work part-time at the same time. Something had to give. I am very lucky that my family was able to offer me financial just to tide me over as I finish my studies. But I am very aware of some of my classmates dropping out because the financial support is not enough. Some have kids to support and they would have made very good nurses if they manage to continue. It was a very tough last year because I had placements and studies to do. It was impossible to work safely without dangerously harming yourself. If it wasn't for the bursary it would have meant that I wouldn't be able to continue my nursing studies. I have been a nurse for 5 years now and it is something that I enjoy very much. There has been some high and lows but it remains a very rewarding career. At least for now. I want to encourage everyone to see nursing as a good career option but if stumbling blocks are out up even before you become a nurse then the future for the profession looks very bleak indeed.

### **Madeleine, South Wales**

I'm newly married with a young baby and an extremely hard working husband! Without a bursary I would never have thought I could become a nurse, my dream job. It has enabled me to have a car to get back and forth university and it also funds my daughter's childcare. My husband and I don't go out, we can barely afford to put shoes on my daughter's feet. This is all for the future I hope to have with the NHS and provide for my family.

### **Lee, Portsmouth**

I have five children. I am ex Royal Navy as well as an ex ODP student. I had to leave my ODP course due to injury and decided nursing is more suited to me. I'm only three months in to this adult nursing degree. I quite literally would have to walk away from my dream new career if this new decision went ahead whilst I was a nursing student.

### **Samantha, Bristol**

Without this bursary, people who want to complete a nursing degree will simply not be able to afford it. This will increase the deficit of nurses.

### **Pauline, Perth**

I am nurse 2 yr qualified I could not have survived without a bursary and I now could not pay a loan back if I had had one. As a student I would get up at 0500 hrs to go to placement pa for public transport to work 37.5 a week for the NHS for no wage. Students are valuable to NHS and the future of NHS. We need do recruit more nurses. Leave the bursary alone it's not fair and it will not save £ students are the cheapest form of labour the NHS can get often doing back work to survive the gruelling 3 yr of study.

### **Jessica, Bristol**

I'm young and live alone, it's hard enough to get by with the bursary let alone if you take that away, leaving people that want to care in more debt...I certainly wouldn't of been able to do the course without the bursary.... you tell me who is going to be looking after the most vulnerable people if we're not here????

### **Stephanie, Runcorn**

I am a wife, mother of four and in a few months I will also be a nurse, a brilliant nurse. Without the student bursary there is no way I would be able to have done this course! Even though I get a bursary, I still have to try and fit in one 12.5 hour shift a week ( alongside my 37.5 hours I work as a student nurse on placement) without a bursary I would have to work at least 30 hrs a week! How would this be possible whilst working 37.5 as a student, whilst also completing all of the academic work that is required? This is going to deter so many 'would be' fantastic nurses from applying.

### **Chloë, Stratford upon Avon**

Being a carer for my disabled mother I'm unable to live away at uni so commute to and from uni and placement. The spare time I have, which is little, when not caring for her, in placement or uni I have a part time job. Of which I get around £100 a month. If I didn't have my student bursary this would be the only income I'd have. £100 a month is nothing. With the NHS calling out for more nurses the government are not supporting them. More nurses are needed but the government cuts are going to put everyone off applying for the degree.



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## Jessica, Liverpool

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I am a second year nursing student and literally wouldn't be where I am now without the NHS bursary. It pays for my rent and ensures I have enough money to travel to and from placement, which in itself is an expense. I work 37.5 hours a week on placement and a further 12 hours at the weekend in my part time job, which I need to keep just to pay for basic amenities which I wouldn't be able to afford otherwise. I believe if doctors, nurses and students continue to be set upon by the government there will be a significant drop in the number of applicants applying for these degrees, which in turn is lowering the number of healthcare workers for future patients. Put your faith in the healthcare professionals of the future, the bursary is our lifeline.



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## Kirsty, Eastbourne

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If the bursary change were to affect me as a third year paediatric student nurse I would have to potentially quit my course in order to support myself. I currently rent a one bedroom flat by myself, and don't really have any other options to decrease my outgoing spends on bills. I currently receive £400 a month as a bursary and still have to work part time on top of my placement hours to afford my bills. The prospects of job security is no longer present when we qualify due to potential cuts in nursing jobs, and no pay rise or inflation rose leaves a job with high expectation of education with a small salary. To then come out with high debits too would cause devastating effects.



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## Louise, Stockport

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It wouldn't be possible for me to do my nursing degree without the help from the NHS bursary. I am a single parent, and trying to better my children's and my future by securing a good job as a nurse which I have wanted to do for many years, having access to the bursary means I can put my children in to child care while I read for my degree and do clinical placements in hospital. I know many parents on my course who like myself wouldn't be able to complete the degree if the bursary is stopped. Please re consider this proposal.



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## Chelsea, Sheffield

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Without the NHS bursary I wouldn't be at university now. Even with the NHS bursary I am having to work two long days at the weekend as well as 5 day week at university to be able to support myself whilst at university by cutting the NHS bursary it is ruining peoples dreams therefore leaving the option for higher education for the working class a rarity and only leaving higher education open to the rich! A nursing course takes hard work and dedication if the bursaries are cut it will limit the amount of people able to go to university therefore the demand for nursing staff in British hospitals will not be met



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## David, Grimsby

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Nursing needs people who are dedicated and doing the course because it's something they know they want to do. I chose to change my job at 32, I started doing nurse training because it was something I was always passionate about but had never taken the leap, I had a kick up the arse when my brother died of a heart attack at 34 years old, I found motivation and belief to grab hold of a career I'd always wanted. I had a mortgage and car payments and the knowledge that completing the degree without being saddled by huge debt was a big part of me being able to do it. If I was to do my nursing under the new changes I would qualify with around £50,000 of debt. Most people already work alongside the course to supplement the money they get in a bursary, working 15-20 on top of the 37.5 weekly hours the course demands. The type of people these changes will effect is people like me. Older with a mortgage, single parents and anyone who has responsibility to other people and anyone isn't financially that well off. Personally paying for the course would have never stopped me from wanting to be a nurse, of course not and anyone who says it would probably shouldn't be one, however it massively effects the feasibility of taking on the course, the debt is just too much. This job needs people who have lived a life and made the choice to care for people when they are at their most vulnerable, some will have a previous career, and some may have completed other degrees. Nursing needs experienced and analytical people, it needs people from every background and money should never be an obstacle to that. By removing the bursary the government will be putting an obstacle in the way of some of the most brightest and dedicated people my course has.



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## Alice, Bournemouth

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Having had a previous degree and taken the loan out for that I was not entitled to another load. The only way I've been able to complete my training is the bursary alone. By scrapping the bursary means many mature students (myself being 26) will be unable to complete their training. I love what I do and more importantly I am good at what I do. It's a huge disappointment that the bursary will be scrapped and will ultimately reduce the about of great people going into nursing.



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## Jasmine, Southampton

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I understand that the National budget is stretched and that the NHS need to make savings but I don't think that Osborne actually understands the impact this will have on real people; this annual year I have travelled over a thousand miles to get to placement, to work full time for no pay, to literally save people's lives. I believe that this cut is preying on the compassion student nurses have, because nursing is not something you'd do for the money or the hours, nursing is something you do when you have the calling to help people. Landing us in debt for helping others, saving lives and working hard seems, frankly, cruel. Removing the cap on health care places also feels like a terrible idea, placement areas are already pushed for places, sometimes the support we receive is not enough anyway and this is before adding a bunch of other students into the mix.



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## Claire, Glasgow

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I received this message through social media. It is very upsetting and disappointing. £506 a month bursary is an extremely generous bursary and student nurses couldn't be more grateful. We put our hearts and souls into this course and our practical placements. Having the bursary removed just shows that we are not thanked for our hard work. I would like to thank the RCN for fighting to save this for us.



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## Senna, Thorpe-le-Soken

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As a lone parent I depend on my bursary whilst doing my degree as it is I still struggle and the thought of having a huge debt when I leave uni is placing me in the position to question is it actually worth it. I love what I do and the impact I make on others' lives it means the world to me!! But with this huge burden to come I'm starting to think should I continue!!!



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## Karen, South Tyneside

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As a wife and mother to 3 beautiful children of my own, I attended university as a mature student in March 2013 and am now only months from qualifying. The hours on placement are long and tiring, I simply couldn't continue with my previous career and raise my family, so we ended up relying on my husband's wage. The measly sum of an NHS student bursary, while nowhere near enough, helped us survive as we all cut back on luxuries to allow me to gain my dream job of becoming a registered sick children's nurse. Aside from that, when I began my degree, the university I attended were quite clear in dissuading us from any type of part-time job, as it would interfere with placement and study. My previous life experience brings a wealth of benefits to the NHS as I become a nurse; by discontinuing the bursary, the government is essentially preventing mature students with families from joining the workforce. Our patients will lose out, and the NHS will crumble as a result.



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## Ceri, Leicester

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Without the bursary I would not be a student nurse right now - as I already have a degree would not have been given a student loan for another one!



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## Hannah, Grimsby

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Holding back my tears I sit next to an elderly patient in the early hours of the morning during her final hours of life, holding her hand and stroking her head trying to comfort her through her fear. Hoping that if ever I or any of my family are facing death in such a way that a nurse will be doing the same. The bursary I receive has enabled me to be in the position to do this, to offer comfort in times of loneliness, pain and illness. I have 3 children, a mortgage and a part time job yet still want to fulfil my desire to become a compassionate, caring and professional nurse. There is not a chance without this bursary I would be in the financial position to enter this career, to follow this dream and provide for my family whilst doing so. I want to be an asset to this professional and encourage future nursing students to follow their dreams too. Without the bursary the financial commitment before even starting this journey would be a very big burden. For the future of care this decision must be upturned.



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## Sharon, Newcastle upon Tyne

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I was a mature student and my husband had to support myself and 4 children who were all in education when I trained as a nurse. I was a degree student so only received a small bursary. I would NOT have been able to afford to become a nurse (qualified now for 13years) had I not received a bursary. If I was completing the training now I would be too afraid to take on the debt as we had a large family and a large mortgage. This is a disgrace. I am a nurse manager and I am constantly trying to recruit into a never ending ageing population of district nurses. This will seriously affect our trusts ability to recruit new, enthusiastic nurses of the future.

## Student nurse, Scotland

With this change it is going to affect me greatly. I have started a nursing degree and have previous student loans from another course so adding this onto that is going to impact on me. A lot of people are going to struggle, myself included staying on this course now that the bursary has been taken away from us. So many hours go into working full time on placement and leave no time for paid work elsewhere. It's going to do a lot more harm than good. My placement is in the community and at the moment there are few nurses there to actually manage the workload of one town. By taking the bursary away fewer nurses will be graduating and can apply for these roles which are needed.

## Iris, London

I'm a first year midwifery student and in the first few month of my course I have already found it incredibly financially difficult. I live in London so accommodation costs take up most of my money and so my bursary is essential for me to have enough for food and travel. I don't get much - the bare minimum but it keeps me going. Without my bursary I couldn't do this course as I simply wouldn't have enough money, travel costs are very high but there's no alternative as 50% of my course is placement. I love my course and midwifery but it's not easy and without enough financial support I would not be able to do it.

## Rosanna, Dorset

I completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Adult Nursing in 2005. I can honestly say I would never have started this without the financial support of the bursary. At the time I had freshly graduated and, having grown up a little at university, decided a healthcare career was for me. I already had debt from my first degree (actually I still have do) so the funding for a postgraduate entrant such as myself was invaluable. Since 2005 I've had a long and varied career within the NHS; working in intensive care, infection control, cardiology and most recently as a specialist heart failure nurse. My training was effectively work. I was on the wards caring for patients and taking responsibility from day one. It cannot compare to other degrees. The bursary should be kept. I for one would not have entered the profession without it.

## Reva, Margate

I'm a second year adult nursing student and I definitely wouldn't have been able to do this course without the bursary. I'm a single mum to a toddler and life is complex enough with childcare issues whilst on placement without having to try and earn/accept that whilst trying to better myself and give myself and my son a solid future I am in fact putting us back and with huge amounts of debt. This course is extremely hard both mentally and physically if you're a single person but with children and without any family support removing the bursary would make this course impossible. Patients are obviously the focus but by removing the bursary from students you are removing the focus from them. It's possible that younger students may be able to complete this course with the support of their parents but older student nurses bring a wealth of life experience to the mix which can't be taught, this decision to remove bursaries is morally and ethically wrong, it's prejudicial and discriminatory.

## Jennifer, Scotland

The small amount of remuneration that the bursary gives me has allowed me to focus 100% on my studies without having to work to fund it. This could also mean the difference between me qualifying and not. I am already £14000 in debt from a previous honours degree. I doubt I could continue my studies if it was a loan instead of a bursary.

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## Harriet, Liverpool

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I am a second year student thoroughly enjoying my nursing degree. The student loan that is provided each term for all us nursing students doesn't even cover two months of my rent. I pay £95 a week which isn't overly expensive for a student. The bursary I get each month is £80 due to my parents' income. That gives me £20 a week to live off and it costs me £16 a week to get to placement... So I'm expected to live off £4 a week? How? My mother and father have to pay for the rest of my rent after the loan is contributed and have to give me £120 a month so I can afford to live. I see it very unfair that my mum and dad should struggle (also have another two children at home) just to make sure I can live. Without even this short £80 bursary I would not have been able to come to university as I simply couldn't have lived. Therefore there is going to be a massive drop in students applying for these courses. I have experienced first-hand how short wards are of staff and cutting these bursaries is going to dramatically affect the health care that's provided for you and everyone else.

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## Clare, Worksop

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Even though it will not affect me as I am in my last year, I would not be able to afford to do my degree without NHS bursary. As a mature student I already have a mortgage and I am a single mum with a six year old daughter. I had to give up my full time job to go to university and if I had to pay back all the money owed from loans and not had the bursary, I would be worse off than before I started. We are in need of nurses now as we have a shortage and by not helping financially people who inspire to become nurses a whole generation of nurses will be lost and may become worse. We need to encourage more people to want to become nurses, but by taking the incentive away and telling them instead that they will be thousands more in debt. The pay is not fantastic to start with, even though the rewards are worth it, people need to live.

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## Neil, Glasgow

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I am a qualified nurse, and I can say that studying Nursing is a full time undertaking both on placement and while at uni which does not allow time for any other meaningful employment and income. While I studied the bursary was barely enough to live on. Removing the bursary will stop people applying for nursing

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## Naomi, Wiltshire

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I would not be able to this degree if I did not have the bursary. When I started, my eldest son was in University, my middle child was attending a specialist college for young people with Asperger's Syndrome and my youngest child was attending a special school for children with Autism. I am a single parent with no support from my children's father who chose to go back to Spain when we split up. He has never paid any money to help support our children. Without the bursary, it would have been impossible to do my degree. I am in my final year now and can't help wonder how other people in a similar situation to mine would manage to complete a nursing degree when it is impossible to work part time, study, complete assignments, work on placement and continue to raise a family. There is already a shortage of nurses in the UK and the Government will only make this shortage bigger by withdrawing the bursary. After all, no-one goes into nursing for the money, but for the desire to help those who are in need of care.



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## Kathi, Scotland

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I left school at 15 with no qualifications. I come from a socially deprived area where job prospects are poor and university attendance is the exception, rather than the norm! I started my training at the age of 29, with a 6 month old and a 3 yr old child. I come from a family that has had many nurses over the years - I was the first one to attend a university. I could ONLY do this thanks to the NHS bursary. It was a struggle, juggling child care, placements, assignments and family life - but I persevered and gave every day at placement and every assignment my all! As I spent a 13 week placement away from my children ( unable to afford the fares to get back home to see them), crying every night when I put the phone down after speaking to them - all I could think was - I'm improving their lives - I'm doing it for them. I eventually (proudly) graduated with a BSc in nursing and carried on studying and working full time as a nurse. Over the years since I qualified - I worked full time at the same time as doing a further BA and MSc in nursing and specialist qualification in pain management. I wanted to train to be a nurse as I had suffered from a long period of being unwell and I wanted to give people good care and to make them feel safe and well cared for. I could not and would not have entertained doing my training without the bursary! I would not have been able to give more than the 37.5 hrs I worked on placement, the 30 odd hours researching conditions, interventions and medications and the time spent on assignments, to get the extra paid work I would have needed in order to fund university - I just couldn't justify my children losing out this much! I physically wouldn't have been able to manage and neither my children nor I could live on 'the feeling you are making a difference!'. The NHS would have lost a dedicated, highly qualified and caring nurse and countless hundreds of thousands like her - because nobody on earth wants to pay to work - which is essentially what 30 odd hours on placements will be without bursaries!. At

a time when nurses are the beating heart of the NHS - the government are creating a peri arrest situation where no amount of defibrillation will be able to rectify the ischaemic changes to student nurse numbers that withdrawal of bursaries will cause!



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## Natalie, Brighton

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I have worked for the NHS for 19 years, in which 16 have been as a qualified nurse. I would not have been able to pursue my dream of being a nurse if it hadn't been through receiving the bursary. I know without doubt my career path would have not been nursing. Nursing is such a hard job both physically and mentally. We need to attract student nurses that have the core skills needed. If the bursary is withdrawn I fear we will have no nurses left as it just won't be a desirable profession! We can't recruit and retain nurses now!!



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## Victoria, Manchester

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I use my bursary combined with my student loan to pay my rent just so I can afford to study this vocation. I have to rely on my parents to support my financially each month just to afford other essentials such as food. Without this bursary I would not have been able to afford to do the job I love so much. I've been let go from many part time jobs and had to miss family events as I'm unable to guarantee shifts due to being on placement all year round which we don't get paid for. We work just as hard as qualified nurses if not harder as we have assignments and exams to revise for after doing a 12 hour shift, and the bursary is something that helps me get through each year.



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## Cassandra, Bedford

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I was able to start the course because, as a mature student, single parent of two (requiring childcare both ends of the school day and school holidays), non-driver (I'm epileptic), private-renting, bill-paying female, the bursary gave me a chance to start a career I was passionate about. My heart goes out to the next 36-year-old, single parent that wants to turn their life around and really make a difference...



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## Aimee, Glasgow

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I simply wouldn't be able to study to become a nurse. I have a previous degree and wouldn't be allowed to take out another loan meaning an amount of debt even if I wanted to. I understand this currently doesn't affect me but if this is to be the next step for Scotland too I know there will be a serious shortage of student nurses in the years to come.



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## Carolyn, Manchester

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I am a mental health nurse and I have a prior degree in psychology if the bursary had not been in place I would not have chosen to saddle myself with an extra 60,000 pounds extra debt when I was in a job earning the same amount of money that a nurse does. For the money a nurse earns the responsibilities we have is immense the removal of a bursary to be put in mountains of debt on a pitiful wage for the stress we have would be enough to put off most people. Many on my course had prior degrees also and families to support I know this will put many mature students off. Being on placement is like having a job so basically working for less than minimal wage when we do the same things as a support worker does such as taking patients on leave etc. You are meant to be supernumerary which goes out of the window when understaffed and you end up having to help on the ward. Charging people to do this is like slave labour.



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## Alice, Sheffield

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I support myself alone because my mother died from cancer as a teenager, which is one of the reasons I'm doing nursing and I am estranged from my father. As a result I live independently. The bursary is an absolute essential as this ensures I don't have to work additional shifts at the 2 jobs I already have to make ends meet. Working more would impact greatly on my studies and I feel so sorry for future nursing students in my position. I know single mothers on my course rely on the bursary for childcare support and have said they would not afford to do the course without the bursary. Many of my course friends are mature students and already struggle financially as it is. As a result of this I think it will definitely deter older students who often have more experience in the health and social care field who would make brilliant nurses, but would not do a nursing degree due to the financial strains. I would hope the government observes the impact the cuts will make and change their minds as the NHS is struggling and needs people who don't feel let down by the government. Where is the incentive for student nurses working unpaid helping to keep the National Health Service afloat?



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## Emma, Pembrokeshire

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I have waited many years and the decision to train as a nurse has taken a great deal of courage. I am fully committed to my family and their wellbeing is my priority hence why I am doing this, this opportunity to improve my family's Lifestyle would not have been feasible if it was not for the bursary it may only be a small amount but it all adds up, without this I would not be able to train in a career I know I am born to do and there goes yet another nurse who could make a difference in someone's life, someone who cares for those who are strangers who chose to impact their lives, surely we should be supported? Such a bad bad decision, really am in utter shock, patient care will be compromised and the NHS will be in ruins due to this very irrational decision.



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## Deborah, London

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I am currently in my first year of a PG Dip adult nursing course. I was not eligible for a student loan because this is my second degree, so there is no way I would have been able to enrol on the course without the bursary. Even if they changed the loan system so that postgraduates were eligible the thought of being saddled with extra debt would definitely put me off, especially in light of the fact that nursing is a notoriously underpaid profession.



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## Michelle, Aberdeen

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Well, losing the bursary have a huge impact on my life as it means I cannot afford the accommodation and my daily expenses. The worst of is I need to stress and worried that I will not able to pay for the loan after graduation! I am very disappointed and strongly against this decision. Not only it will cause troubles, it will force others to drop out the course. Which is very cruel that they are not able to study the course and graduate.



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## Julie, London

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Without a bursary I would not have been able to complete my nursing course. Nursing is a vocation not just a job. It needs students dedicated to learning to be the best nurses they can be and not worrying about debt. This will greatly impact the future of the nursing profession.



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## Amanda, Manchester

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I did my nursing degree supported by a bursary. I came from an underprivileged background and so I was self-supported. The bursary and nurse training offered me social mobility and I am now contributing back as I am now a nurse lecturer and unfortunately will see first hand the impacts such a decision will have. Nurses need to represent the communities they serve and again inequalities in wealth may disadvantage the very nurses we need to be the heart of the NHS?



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## Kate, Leeds

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I did an English degree and wrote before training as a mental health nurse, amongst various other courses and work experience. We are increasingly undertaking written assessments and being told that our documentation is not good enough, and even though it's something I love it's still such a challenge to find the right words to really capture a person's mental state and presentation. I therefore feel that this is a really valuable skill I can bring to the team every day that isn't taught on the nursing programme. Indeed, the government wants the best nurses, but very little of what makes an amazing nurse can be taught on the nursing course; be it personal qualities, skills or life experience. This is why the mixture of staff from different backgrounds is so important to our teams, and the best nurses I have met have done all sorts since coming into the career - from philosophy degrees to factory work to starting a family. Nursing is not a degree for the standard school-leaver - it takes maturity and commitment; it's not a glamorous or well-paid enough career to stick out unpaid 5am starts for a lot of kids who've yet to experience the brutal world of work. We need confidence, empathy and wisdom. I have finally just started my first month of work as a registered nurse. If I had not received a bursary I simply could not have lasted the past 3 years of study, and I was far too shy and anxious aged 18 to have been ready for the course back then. I love my job and know that this is what I was made to do. My heart breaks for the people in my position, and those with such valuable life experiences (including their own mental health backgrounds - something we were making real progress with), who will no longer have the opportunity I did.



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## Abi, Yorkshire

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Although this change won't directly affect me as I near the end of my training, I can't help but feel thoroughly disappointed in the decision that has been made to remove the bursaries. The placement hours that student nurses are expected to work in addition to the masses of academic work that is now required to qualify means for many that additional paid work to supplement what is frankly often a pitiful bursary contribution is sadly out of the question. The removal of what financial help we do get and replacing it with yet more debt to face on qualification I am sure will act as further discouragement to prospective student nurses - something that as the NHS falls further into shortages and despair appears massively counterproductive. It seems to me that the government ought to start thinking realistically and valuing their own trained and training staff instead of paying the astronomical rates of pay for agency nurses at every available opportunity.



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## Louisa, Great Yarmouth

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I am currently on a placement in a general hospital having to do 37.5 hours a week practice, around that I have an assessment to be carried out during my practice and an essay due for the end of this placement, around all of this I also have to work between 16-24 hours a week in order to be able to afford to get to and from university/ placement even with my bursary, without the bursary I would have to work even more, this would involve running myself into the ground and more than likely ending up failing and never achieving my dream to become a nurse. A nursing degree is very different to other degrees, we get 6 official weeks off in a whole year, this year I will be working Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day in order to get some money together and various other days. If I had not already started my degree and knew I was going to end up in debt I would not bother, I would find a different career as I'm sure many others will now.



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## Jasmine, Oldham

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I am currently in the process of applying to start children's nursing in September 2016. I am 22 years old and a single mother of a 2 year old son. I have spent the last couple of years building up my confidence and I simply want to make a better life for me and my son. I currently work part time as it's financially better for me than working full time. I want to throw myself back into working life in the best possible way I can, by caring for children. So this announcement has come as a devastating blow in my hopes, my dreams and my confidence. I cannot support us when I will have so much debt and I will end up stuck working two days a week. Surely that seems madness! Thank you



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## Louise, Newcastle upon Tyne

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I have just started my nurse training in September 2015 at Northumbria University. I am a mature student with two children to care for on my own after getting divorced. My degree is hard and takes up all of my time therefore I have had to give up work. A nursing degree is not like any other degree when students are rarely at uni and don't really have that much work. We are bombarded with constant articles to read and things to research. Our lectures, seminars and practicals are not optional, we must attend all of them. Without the NHS bursary I could not afford to feed, clothe or provide a home for my children due to the demands of the course. As a student nurse I have to dedicate all of my time to my studies. I would not like a healthcare professional treating me or my child if there training was compromised due to not being able to dedicate their time fully to their training, it is a dangerous road to go down in my opinion.

## Anna, London

Without a bursary I would be unable to study nursing. My family member is in hospital at the moment, they have attempted suicide a number of times and live with a debilitating mental illness. To pay for food and my rent I already work as a care assistant. I am worried that in the future, if nurses are forced to take out loans of £9k a year tuition fees plus cost of livings, there will be no way of paying off the loans. Less people will enter the profession. Already, my family member's care has been affected by cuts to mental health services. I'm am scared of the future. How can I care for my patients when there will be less nurses? How will my family member manage when there will be less nurses for their care?

## Beth, Huddersfield

I am in my second year of nursing studies and honestly I don't know how I would have afforded anything without my student bursary! It is unfair on new students having to start a very demanding course which leaves you with very little time to yourself. We basically work for free now whilst on placement, which is like a full-time job, yet we have assignments and home life to contend to on top of that, with scrapping the bursary and paying for nurse training, then you will basically be paying to work, which is ridiculous! It is extremely unfair what they have done as so many nursing students rely on their bursary to see them through and with travel costs to placement, they help greatly! They should have a long, hard think about what they have just done and how they have, potentially, put people off from starting a nursing degree as they will be saddled with debt for a long time after! This has made me very angry, as I signed the petition, and I wish the best to all the new nursing degree starters in 2017, I hope they change their minds for you!

## Rachel, Northamptonshire

I commuted to university and therefore to placement. Without my bursary, I wouldn't have been able to afford to travel and therefore wouldn't have been able to participate in the course. If I had been offered a loan instead of a bursary, I would have felt underappreciated in my chosen career before I had even started. Our academic years are longer, and we spend 50% of our time in unpaid practice meaning that our university experience is incredibly different to that of your average student. I definitely would not have chosen the course without the bursary!

## Charlotte, Leeds

I am a postgraduate adult nursing student at Leeds University, with a previous undergraduate degree. I am not entitled to a student loan as my course is postgraduate - if it wasn't for the bursary, I would not be entitled to ANY funding. As nursing courses are so full time with university and clinical hours, it is not feasible to work the hours I would need to in order to pay my rent and bills - if it wasn't for the bursary, I simply would not be on this course. The prediction by summer 2016 is that there will be 65,000 nursing vacancies nationwide; we are already in a nurse shortage and staffing levels crisis - cutting the bursary will mean a decrease of individuals applying for courses, therefore EVEN LESS nurses. This really will have a profound effect on the amount of nurses applying and the NHS.

## Hayley, Scotland

Without the bursary I would never be financially able to do my degree in nursing. We are discouraged from having part time jobs in case they interfere with placements or course work. While on placement we work just as hard and as anyone else within the ward for 37.5 hours a week. That's doesn't leave you a lot of time to fit in family life and a job etc. Currently the bursary I receive is around £500 a month. While on placement that works out as around £3.00 an hour – we don't train to be nurses for the money! We train because we care about people! The bursary helps people from disadvantaged backgrounds have the ability to meet their career goals! Osborne's cuts will see student nurses graduating university with a total student debt of up to £50,000 to only see an initial salary of £21,692 – you have to have love for the job and the people because it's certainly not the money that draws candidates in!

## Annie, Aberdeenshire

I am 26 years old, I started my training when I was 23, and prior to my training I was in full time employment. I could have not done my training without the help of the bursary. Whilst I was on my clinical placements I could not work due to course commitments, I had to rely on my bursary. I certainly would not want the stress of paying back loans when I had just qualified, our wages are poor enough as it is. How can the NHS invest in future nurses if the government are taking away out bursary? It's going to result in a poor turnover of student nurses within the future. A lot of the findings within the Mid-Staff report were related to poor staffing, what's to say this isn't going to happen again in the future?

## Sarah, Cambridge

I would not have survived without my bursary. The nurse's salary is poor and to have debt on top is terrible. I presume student nurses are no longer expected to work weekends or nights and have long summer breaks and Christmas off? Good luck with the shortage in a few years and even worse quality care.

## Kevin, Dundee

We work 37.5 hours per week for 20 weeks a year with no pay. We work weekdays, weekends and nights with no pay. Sorry we get £500 a month, £3.33 an hour - less than half of minimum wage. We are not supposed to be counted as a member of staff but we help our patients wash, feed and listen to them in their hour of need from the very beginning. We hold our patient's hand when they are upset, broken and sadly when they are away to die. We provide them dignity in their most undignified hour. We support their families when they need someone to talk to. We are that extra pair of hands when nurses struggle with an already crippling workload. Finding a job that is flexible enough so we can do the job we love is so hard to come by as our placements can be miles away and our hours are unsociable. We get up at 5 and don't get home to 9 so we can do the job we love. We pay a heavy burden emotional to help those we care for. We are expected to pay for accommodation, bills, food and travel with this £500 we get as a bursary. We struggle as it is and you want to take away our only source of income to replace it with loans? The average salary for a newly qualified nurse is £21,000 and we are lucky to get up £30,000 in 20 years. We don't do the job for a huge pay check, we do the job to make a difference. There are nursing shortages in most region in the country, and your answer is to cut the bursary? Fewer people will go into nursing, as you make it incredibly difficult to do so. Nurses come from all different backgrounds, you want to destroy that diversity? Congratulations on destroying the health service that most of the world envy.

## Laura, London

With my bursary and student loan it only covers 1/3s of my rent. Let alone bills and travel. I had 3 jobs and a £2000 student overdraft which I'm still paying off. I would have never have decided to do nursing if I'd have had to pay fees as well. What about the nursing profession is attractive? No education development, working for free for hundreds of hours- weekends, nights, bank holidays. For what? No pay increase, developmental opportunities? Enough is enough!!!

## Anonymous, England

I do understand that this nation has to save money in order to maintain its financial stability. However the proposed changes that would affect health care professionals such as doctors, nurses and allied health professionals may have a long term negative impact on our nation. Student nurse bursary gives a lifeline to nursing student whom have to spend 4600hours studying, in which approximately half the time is spent in clinical placements. Furthermore the fact nursing students have a longer academic year reduces the opportunities to work and make money for essentials. Although all the nursing students I have met are extremely caring and compassionate, most cannot afford to maintain a healthy standard of living without the current student bursaries. Moreover, is essential that social institutions work together to achieve an ultimate goal of functional stability. Healthcare has an extremely important role in maintaining this functional stability, at it ensures this nation is healthy and economically stable. Putting pressure on Doctors, Nurses and AHP will inevitably demoralize them, in turn can reduce the quality of care and treatment provided due to overworking and exhaustion. Therefore there can be an increase in the amount of time people are unwell, which can result in a reduction of national productivity. Consequently economic growth may slow down due to an unhealthy nation because of the proposed changes.

## Charlotte, London

Working nearly 1000hours a year on placement for a bursary of £1000....the monthly bursary instalment nearby covers my transport to university/placement. It's not much but it helps especially when I very rarely have the time for paid work. I gave up a job I had for 7 years (including through my first degree) as I didn't have enough time to continue working. As a student midwife I am incredibly privileged to be part of a miraculous life event for many families. I knew it would be hard to afford living and studying in London but I also know I make a positive difference every day I go to placement. I am a human...I need money to live. Taking away the bursary for midwifery and nursing students will cause huge impacts on healthcare students and in turn...impact on patients care.

## Samantha, Gateshead

I qualified as a staff nurse in 2012. Throughout my training I received a monthly bursary of £560. I am thankful for receiving this bursary and I would have struggled without it. The course alone is a full time I worked 37 hrs alone in placement whilst managing academic work. I was unable to work part time as my shifts were different each week to enable me to work with my mentor. Even if I were to work part time I wouldn't have coped. Working on the wards is physically and mentally demanding. Even as a student we too are required to manage our own workload. As a staff nurse on a busy ward I value the student nurses ethic for work. To be totally honest we would be lost without them. I feel that they need recognition and praise. Especially as some of them already have families to look after. Nursing unlike a lot of other courses. Well in fact in most courses students get paid for their placements. How is nursing any different. We are caring and compassionate by nature. It seems as though our government lacks this.



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## Deanna, Southampton

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When I began considering a degree in Nursing I was not aware of the bursary and believed that, like every student, we were provided funds via a student loan. At the time I was unaware of the importance of our bursary, much like our politicians. It wasn't until I began my first placement that I really understood why the bursary was one of the most valuable tools under a student nurses belt. My drive to and from placement was 48 miles and I was only able to make the journey using the money from my bursary, and later on my travel claims provided via the NHS bursary. I have colleagues on my course who do not drive, and the cost of public transport and on occasion taxis can reach within the hundreds. Without the bursary they are left with little support, and face working 36 hours on placement alongside a part time job just to make it to placement areas. Placing student nurses in a position that requires them to work between 40-70 hours a week is not only dangerous for the student but also their patients. Many cases of incidents and near misses within clinical areas are caused by overworked professionals who are experiencing fatigue. Reading further into the changes, I notice that the parts which the government has highlighted are in regards to the increased amount of money student nurses will receive during their course. I fear this is a desperate attempt to justify a change to our support which has disappointed many of us in the country. Make no mistake - we are not receiving more money. When we take into account the cost of travel to our placement areas I am certain we will not be better off. And even if we are a certain percentage wealthier, this is a debt which we are forcibly reminded of when we begin practice. I fear for our future student nurses who will quite rightly become anxious of their increasing debt rather than having the opportunity to maximise their learning and development throughout their course. The burden of debt is something I doubt many politicians could understand, let alone having the gift of empathy many nurses use every day.



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## Sian, Worcester

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Without my student bursary, I would not have been able to pay for repairs on my car and replace tyres etc. to ensure I was able to travel to university and to my practice placements. Without this bursary I would not be able to help financially at home consistently each month in comparison to receiving my loan every 4 months. This bursary has helped me buy books as and when I have needed them and also put petrol in my car. I definitely could not have got through university without my bursary.



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## Holly, Bristol

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I want to study nursing and was going to apply next year. However, I already have a degree and this change to the bursaries would mean taking out a second student loan, which I am simply not prepared to do. Any increase in wage due to retraining will be lost to student loan repayments and will probably never be fully paid off. I am really upset that retraining will now not be possible for me because of financial restrictions.



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## Stacey, Bedfordshire

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I lived forty minutes away from the university and so I had to pay to travel there. Without the bursary there is no way that I would have been able to pay for my travel expenses, let alone books and other essentials I needed for nursing. The bursary saved me from having to struggle to pay for petrol and car parking every month.



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## Catherin, Manchester

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I am a first year Adult Nursing student at the University of Manchester. I, like many people on my course, would not have been able to study nursing without the bursary and help with tuition fees. This morning we did a straw poll in our lecture on who would not have been able to study nursing without the bursary - at least 90% of the room raised their hand. I am 27 years old and after many years of wanting to nurse, I finally summoned the courage to apply earlier this year - not an easy decision when it means giving up a stable career and a good salary. I knew that I wanted to care for others and having grown up as a carer for my mum, I'd seen first-hand the pivotal role nurses play. As an independent student I receive £350 a month as a bursary and my course fees are paid for - I am extremely grateful for this help, however as you can imagine, it's not enough to live on. My bursary covers my rent, then I have two jobs to cover food etc. - which is ok for now, but I worry about how I will survive when on placement next year. Anyway - I knew the course would be tough, probably the most difficult thing I've ever done, however the fact that course fees are paid for and the bursary made it possible. Like many of my peers, I already have a degree and despite making repayments for the past 6 years, I still owe £25,000+. If I'd had to take a loan for course fees and living costs there is absolutely no way I could have chosen to do nursing. Similarly, having done another degree (English and Sociology at the University of Birmingham) I can confirm that nursing is completely unique - we are being taught to be 'nursing scientists' with high levels of understanding in anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, microbiology, sociology, clinical skills, history, ethics, law - all the while remembering that care and compassion for our patients is at the centre of everything we do. We're in university almost every day of the week and have had assessment deadlines every week - our attendance is also expected to be 100% (rightly so). I'm loving the challenge, but the bar has been set high - and we haven't even started placements yet, when we'll be expected to work many long hours on

top (35+ a week when on block placement). Now that I've started, I can't imagine wanting to do anything else - but it's surreal to think that without the bursary, my whole future would be different. Nursing is a privileged career and I feel so lucky to have been given this opportunity - something I fear that others will miss out on. It makes me so sad to think that a potentially wonderful nurse could be deterred in the future because they can't take the risk financially. I feel these cuts are short-sighted - we need nurses from all walks of life, who bring skills, experience and understanding from whatever they have done in the past. Now is the time to invest in good nurses because with an ageing population living with increasingly complex health conditions, we are guaranteed to need them.



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## Stacey, Adrossan

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I am a mature nursing student, in order for me to study at university the bursary is extremely important as this gives me the ability to travel to university and clinical placements which can be very expensive. It also allows me to buy the books which are needed for this course which I love studying for. I work part time in order to pay my bills but without the bursary there is no way I would be able to study for this profession that I am so passionate about. Being a nursing student is physically and mentally draining at times so why do they wish to make it financially draining for us too. At a time where the NHS are crying out for nurses why are they going to scrap the bursary which we so need. This is such a worthwhile career and we should be encouraging and supporting those who know that this is their vocation in life! I fear this may put potential student nurses off and may make them choose a different career path.



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## Lauren, Lincoln

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Nursing is one of the most challenging degrees in all aspects of the word. Physically, mentally and also financially. The NMC requires the degree to be split into half practical and theory hours which also includes being on placement for 37.5 hours a week. This includes weekends and night shifts when required which is a gruelling task in itself. Therefore with these antisocial hours being required from students, it leaves little or no opportunity to have any other job while perusing a degree in nursing. Many students also have families to support meaning that without the bursary the degree becomes simply unfeasible. I myself am lucky enough to have parents who are able to support me financially however if this were to change at any point (which is always a possibility in this financial climate) I would no longer be able to carry on my studies and pursue my end goal of becoming a nurse. The fact that we work the same shifts and do mostly the same work as qualified nurses which includes being let off late and missing breaks is a challenge in itself knowing that it is unpaid, however the one saving grace is knowing that we will not be in debt for doing so. Therefore I think the movement to abolish student nurse bursaries will leave student nurses feeling disheartened and they will lack the motivation to pursue the course or carry on with it. I think the problem is that the people making these decisions have no idea of the repercussions it will cause, and more importantly they have no idea how it feels to be in our shoes, working gruelling shifts for free. I challenge the people who have made this decision to spend a day in our shoes, spend a 12 and a half hour shift on a busy ward where you don't even have time to go to the toilet, or sit down for a few minutes, then come back and tell us that it is right to put students in debt for undertaking this career. Nursing is the one of the most respected, admirable and selfless careers a person could choose for themselves and nurses are necessary for the survival of the healthcare system for this country, so why risk jeopardising that?



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## Philippa, East Sussex

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Without the bursaries available, I wouldn't have started my course as adult nurse as it's impossible to work full time alongside the course requirements which include weeks of unpaid and often expensive (travel/parking/etc.) placement training. I am a single mum to two and if doing the course meant I'd be saddled with massive debt before I'd even qualified there is no way I would've done it. The changes that have been put in place will mean that thousands of potential students won't sign up for the degree leaving the NHS with no new recruits. When I found out about the bursaries available, it gave me hope that I could achieve my dream of nursing and afford to do it. No bursaries = financial ruin



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## Samantha, Oldham

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I am a mum to 3 young children. At 32 I am older than all but one of my CYP cohort. I came into the profession now because I was able to keep up my mortgage payments and feed and clothe my children with help from the bursary. Without it I could simply not afford to follow my dream to be a children's nurse. I work a full time week on placement. I attend university all year round, with no long holiday like most students. I study to ensure I practice safely and competently. It is not fair to expect student nurses to live off a loan, we are making a genuine contribution to the NHS from day 1



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## Tracey, Northwich

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I am a mature student nurse at the end of my 2 new year. I have 2 children and have already done one degree, which I owe a loan for. I wouldn't be able to do this if I didn't have my bursary. I wouldn't have time to work, with placement and assignments.

## Kam, Letchworth Garden City

Being a mature student with one 6 year old and doing all those hours on placements and full time uni with loads of assignments takes up all my time. I have no time left at all to have a part time job, and I know many of my colleagues still have to have part time jobs to support them and their family even with the bursary, so how my future fellow student nurses are going to cope without no bursary at all. When on placements we are used as extra pair of end when there is shortage of staff which is often and on each shift, so we work 37-5 hours of work like work force unpaid, and I am sure that does help NHS. As a student nurse now I am ok but my heart goes to my future colleagues who will be so demotivated and heartbroken, and if they managed to train they will be under huge debt for the rest of their life!!! We care for each and every one, we show compassion to each and everyone but what about us nurses?? Are we not part of NHS constitution? Do we not deserve to be looked after by people, who are going to be cared and looked after by us at some part of their life? I am very passionate about NHS and going to work for NHS but are my future colleagues would want to work for NHS or agency where they would be able to have more money and less hours and pay their debt?? Would they not want to migrate somewhere else like Australia for better money?? Has George Osborne tried to weigh up the consequences of stopping bursary on students and more importantly on the NHS?? Or does he not mind the fact of recruiting even more nurses from abroad?? Nothing wrong in doing that but people need to know what are his plans when the number of student nurses goes down even after increasing the places ??? I am disgusted with their demotivating strategies towards student nurses and junior doctors!!

## Madeleine, Newcastle upon Tyne

Without the bursary I could not train to be a nurse. I am 31 and have already had a student loan earlier in my life. I couldn't get another. I am very experienced in my field and am dedicated to my client group and feel I bring a lot to the role of a LD nurse due to my age and life experience. To stop the bursary would be to prohibit people like me from becoming nurses. This would be a huge mistake. Older more experienced people make excellent nurses and the average age of a student nurse is 29.

## Emma, Scunthorpe

I am a single mum who decided to make a massive step and follow my dream the thing that inspired me to follow my dream is to set an example to my kids and let them know if you work hard you can achieve any dream. I didn't realise just how hard the degree would be most of my time is spent attending lectures for a number of weeks followed straight into placement followed straight into university again although we get 6 allocated weeks off a year I find that the high demand of the course I end up studying further me and my children have scarifying our annular holidays due to low income and very little time I love my training even though it's high demand and can't wait to graduate however the thing that has been a massive lifeline in all this has been my bursary without it I couldn't have done this! All nurses work extremely hard that includes student nurses! With a shortage of nurses already the axing of bursaries is going to deter people from applying. You argue that it is going to create more places at universities however there aren't enough large lecture theatres not mention an already decreasing staff of nurses who are not all mentors so therefore you won't have enough practice places to put all the new so called student nurses!!



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## Charlotte, Stafford

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Here's my story. Three years ago my dad was diagnosed with cancer and after caring for him with my mum for a year, I felt that my place in the world was in nursing. I felt like I wanted to make a difference and to care for patients and also their families when they are at their most vulnerable. I was granted a place on a nursing degree. I was over the moon! My family were over the moon. I had already completed a degree so when I applied for my nursing course, I did so knowing that I wouldn't be entitled to a student loan and would solely rely on the student bursary. I had to make many financial changes. I receive approximately £360 per month and that is it. My outgoings are essential to my being able to carry on with my degree such as petrol, car insurance, car payments, parking costs at placement and university etc. I really struggle on the amount of money that I get but I am incredibly thankful for it. Without the bursary, I would not be able to continue with my course. I fear for taking part time work alongside my nursing course as I feel I wouldn't have the time to carry out my coursework to the best of my ability and also working too many hours and committing bursary fraud. The option of trying to earn extra money is difficult. Training to become a nurse has been the best thing I have ever done. I feel that the bursary is such a low amount of money for the amount of work that we have to do as student nurses. We work full time and then have to go home to assignments that need completing. Student nurses are so important to the NHS on their own. Student nurses have the time to sit with patients and have a chat. The patient with no family to visit, the confused patient, the relative who has received the news that their closest has passed away, those that have passed are those that student nurses have a little extra time for. Remembering how a patient takes their tea and surprising them with a cuppa and a chat, making sure someone's hair is combed the way they like, singing to the unconscious patient the songs that they like (yes, I really did that) are things that

student nurses can do and are what makes us special. Student nurses are the future of the NHS and need more support from the government. We need our bursary. We need to be heard.



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## Lorraine, Salisbury

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As an independent student with a young child, there is absolutely no way I would have been able to pursue nursing had these changes already happened. I would not be able to support my household; afford bills, childcare, travel and general life! I have no time to work during term time as well as balancing the work load, placement, schooling and household chores. Holidays (those that we get) of course coincide with my sons (the rest of them I have to pay for holiday clubs) and is just about the only time I'm lucky enough to spend actual time with him. I am not the only independent student with a child on my course, the rest have similar experience to me. These changes take away the opportunity for people like us; people who have cared for patients and their relatives, who have seen tears and happiness and known that is what we want to be part of. Instead, we will find a higher dropout rate of those who didn't realise the workload that is expected to be performed by our nurses, the hours that need to be put in, and the standards that need to be met. How can those who know none of this possibly make this decision.



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## Gemma, Edinburgh

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I am a 4th year student nurse and I have heavily relied on my student bursary. Without my bursary I would not be able to pay my rent, get to placement or pay my bills. We are often sent to placements which are so far away that we are required to move nearer to where we have been placed. This often involves paying both our own rent as well as the rent for our accommodation for the duration of our placement. The loss of our bursary will cause us to finish with an unimaginable level of debt. The level of pay we receive will be insufficient to subsidise the debt we will accumulate. We have very little room to earn more money. While a medical student can look forward to a substantial increase in pay following their foundation years, we as nurses aren't worth enough to the government to be afforded the same respect or luxury. As part of my course, I work 37.5 hours per week on a ward as a member of staff. Although we are supposed to be supernumerary, this is very rarely the case and are heavily depended on to create safe numbers on highly understaffed wards and enable good care to be delivered. While on placement I also have to juggle multiple assignments and exam revision, as well as a part time job. With the loss of the bursary, we will HAVE to go to placement full time, work a paid job full time and study full time. There is not a single profession that would be expected to do this, but as we are 'just nurses' we are expected to. We normally have 6 weeks at the most for summer, not enough time to save up enough money to pay tuition fees and save enough to supplement a minuscule loan. I adore my job. My patients and their families are the reason I get out of bed at 4.30am and go to bed at midnight. We do, however, need to be able to afford to live. As a profession, nurses work tirelessly to care for patients and their families with little to no respect or appreciation and bearing the brunt of all cuts. Stopping the bursary is short sighted and poorly thought out! It will not lead to 10,000 extra nurses because no one will be able to financially survive. I

would love to see members of parliament come and work alongside us and get their hands dirty and spend one month living on the amount of money we have to live on and paying all the expenses we have to pay with no outside help. I also beg the government to rethink this decision. You are now targeting nurses before they have even began their career, showing how little you respect and care for the people that will treat and care for you and your families with no questions asked.



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## Ethel, Doncaster

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I finished my studies two months ago. I am single mom with two teenagers, therefore I had to travel to my university which is an hour away and the practice placement were even further. Therefore that meant I had no time to work to support my children. The bursary was my living, which included my fuel, my rent, food, kids' uniforms and their travel to school and dinners. To be honest the bursary didn't cover all of it but you have to try. Without the bursary I don't think I will be a nurse now as I would have been forced to quit so I can work to support my kids, therefore the bursary did get me to where I am. I am one of the people who are so lucky to be where I am just because I had the help, but what about the next applying candidates – they won't have this privilege. Student nurses work 37.5 hours on placement like a full time employed person, so why should they not be rewarded for that work? To be honest the work they do is more than what they get on bursary.



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## Anna, Newcastle upon Tyne

I qualified as a nurse 2 years ago when at the time I only received a bursary for my fees due to me completing a degree. I am a lady in my late thirties and a mother of 2 children with a husband and a mortgage. I can honestly say working placements and also working part time as often as I could as well as completing my studies successfully was extremely difficult, and I feel it will make it impossible for people at my time of life with family and home commitments to even consider completing the nursing degree by making the nursing degree completely self-funded. The only way around this would be to pay a student nurse for working placements but I feel this would impact dramatically upon patient care. At the moment student nurses while on placement are supernumery, but if the NHS trust is paying the student then it would limit a student nurse's opportunity to thoroughly nurse a patient and to learn how to nurse effectively without the pressures of working as an employee. The nursing degree is no normal degree, once we qualify we do not have the option to earn enough to pay those fees back unless we all leave the NHS and work for private firms. I am very proud to be a NHS nurse and would be very sad to think that was the only option financially for any newly qualified nurse.



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## Susanna, Fyfe

To say this is disappointing would be an understatement. I am 39, a single parent and a mature student. I have just commenced my first year and love what I have learnt so far. I know without any doubt that this is the career for me and whilst it's difficult managing on the bursary we get I am so grateful for it as I would not manage otherwise. This is mainly from the point that as a student nurse we cannot have a part time job with set regular hours at weekends or evenings. We don't know from one placement to the next what shifts or even what days we will be working. I need to be able to be able to support my son and the only way that's possible and a guaranteed income is the bursary. If it comes to the scenario whereby it's take a student loan out to live or leave the course then I will have to leave as I cannot afford to take a student loan of thousands of pounds. I'm not saying I'm pursuing a career in nursing because I am receiving a bursary but what I am saying is that there is no possible way to work part time to support myself throughout the course and a bursary is a safety net to allow people to commit 100% to the programme.

## Ellie, Oxford

I was one of a small number of students who took an MSc in Nursing the first year my university offered it. I already did a four year previous degree and have close to 30 thousand pounds in debt. Even with the bursary I still had to work. This meant I was doing approx 30-40 hours of clinical practice per week alongside my part time work which I had to manage a minimum of ten hours a week and still I find my first pay checks as a nurse simply paying off my overdraft etc. This also does not take into account the huge amount of time dedicated to academic study, especially at MSc level. I was not frivolous while doing my course and was in fact the opposite, sacrificing my social life and personal luxuries only to find that I have entered a profession that the government seems to want to demonise and destroy. There is only so much we can take and this latest assault on student nurses is another nail in the coffin for a profession that already cannot attract enough applicants because of the way it is portrayed by the government and the media.

## Claire, Stoke-on-Trent

I am a newly qualified nurse I completed my degree in September. If not the Bursary I wouldn't have been in a financial position to study as a mature person with children. As a student nurse I had placements working as hard as employed staff completing 37.5 hours a week this made it impossible for me to find work that would fit around this and my children's needs. I also needed to find time to have quality time to complete all the theoretical work to ensure I could complete with a good grade. So I ask whom ever has decided this to reconsider as without the financial support the health service are losing many people who have the best potential of becoming Caring and compassionate nurses. People are working in care services currently who would love to be nurses and have the skills and attributes that would make a great contribution to the NHS however they won't take the leap into university in fear of debt and not being able to manage. Therefore they may be drawn away from a profession in desperate need for more good quality staff.

## Amy, Leicester

I feel that the change the NHS Bursary is very unfair, I have wanted to be a nurse since I could remember and rely very heavily on my student bursary. I may have re considered going to uni to become a nurse if I hadn't had a bursary as there would have been no way I could afford to live. Being a student nurse makes it almost impossible to earn money outside of university and placement, however I have a part time job and work all hours possible to help me live more comfortably, however this leaves me with very little time to myself. I feel myself and other student nurses work extremely hard, and if it meant we had no financial reward I would be disgusted. I feel very upset for future student nurses who will have to pay huge debts off with a £21000 salary.

## Emma, Middlesbrough

I qualified two years ago in January, if it wasn't for the bursary I would not have been able to complete my degree. During first year I managed to do agency work here and there but was very difficult due to the hours worked on placement and the amount theory there is to cram in. During second year my brother suffered a devastating accident leaving him paralysed from the neck down and in hospital for one year, thus making it impossible to work anything extra to my already very busy nurse training schedule. I am proud to say I earned an upper 2:1 degree but feel that if student nurses are forced to work whilst studying it will mean more will leave the course and stress levels will increase and grades will drop! The newspapers are always reporting on the shortage of nurses, but the changes to the funding will put many prospective nurse off even applying!  
BRING BACK THE BURSARY MR OSBORNE

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### Michael, Grimsby

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I qualified under the old bursary scheme and had it not existed I would not have been able to afford to become a nurse, nursing students work a full 40 hour week before they have even begun to do study and essays so there is no time to work a part time job as other degree students do - this will leave nurses with a far greater debt when leaving university than they would have if they did a non-vocational degree. The government has cut nursing wages over the last eight years (when you factor in the increase in interest rates and living expenses you see that the 1% pay rise is not a pay rise) so nurses are far less able to pay off degree loans than they should be

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### Stephanie, Nottinghamshire

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As a mature student I wouldn't have been able to do nursing the huge debt of a student loan would have made it impossible. I'm now qualified community nurse love every aspect of my job.

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### Jennifer, Alnwick

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Without the NHS bursary, I would not have been able to make the move from Nursing Assistant to Student Nurse as I have a family to support and live more than 30 miles from the university. How would I pay for my fuel to university and to placements? How would I support and pay for childcare? I already have a student loan from a previous degree and would not have entered into a nursing degree if it was not for the bursary. The nursing degree is very different from other degrees. We only have 8 weeks holiday and when on placement have to work 37.5 hours a week. It's hard enough working full time and only getting the bursary. I am worse off now than when I was working part time.

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### Katherine, Stevenage

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Although these changes do not affect my training directly, if I were applying for the 2017/18 intake I would not have been able to do my nurse training. I work 37.5 hours a week on placement for 50% of my university year, with assignments on top. Furthermore, I work a minimum of 15 hours per week every week in a part time job, leaving me with total working hours of at least 50 hours per week. This has been exhausting for me, and I have only just been able to afford my studies with the bursary in place. This leads me to believe that those in my position (no parental input, minimal help from others) will no longer be able to realistically complete their training; indeed I know many that have abandoned their nursing training due to funding issues WITH the bursary in place. These changes will limit nurse training uptake rather than increase, as Osborne is suggesting. I cannot imagine a good outcome from this change when nursing shortages are already dire.

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### Melissa, Ferryhill

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I would not have done the course if there was not a bursary. The course and what it entails makes it impossible to work alongside to support yourself. Doing a 37.5 hours a week placement. Not only have that but having previously had a student loaned before I wouldn't have got the funding to do a second degree. Nursing is my passion. I feel this is going to hit mature students very hard. I am also a single mam so it is a struggle as it is without bursaries being taken away.

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### Wendy, South Wales

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Without the bursary I would never have been able to support my family whilst training - I am saddened by this news as we already experience a shortage of nursing staff - this impacts on patient care - I am so afraid for the future of nursing in the UK



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## Lesley, Newcastle upon Tyne

Without the bursary I would not have been able to apply for university. I am a mature student who has worked for 30 years. I had to give up employment to attend the full time course. It is full time and I couldn't work to fund it so I would not have applied without the additional support.



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## Alison, Norfolk

Without the bursary I would not have been able to do a degree in mental health nursing. I have family to care and provide for. My placements are 37.5 hrs a week and additional to that on top of these hours we have academic work to complete to evidence base our practice. No caring person with family would have time to pursue a nursing degree and be able to work to provide for their family at the same time. Especially when after qualifying the wages paid would not reflect the debts that we would have accumulated over the three years.



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## Gail, Glasgow

I am a single parent of three children who has always wanted to enter the nursing profession. Now is the right time as the last child has gone to school. I couldn't study nursing and work and care responsibly for my three young children. The nursing bursary allows me to concentrate on my studies without feeling guilty of accruing debt in the form of a student loan. I would never have considered nursing a viable option had it not been for the bursary and peace of mind that I wasn't entering into debt. I would have continued to work as a care assistant on minimum wage, unpaid holidays and no pension which would have given myself and my children no future!



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## Victoria, West Wales

I receive £380 a months in bursaries. During my 3rd year I will spend 14 weeks in university, and 28 weeks out in practice, caring for patients who suffer with poor mental health. £380 x 11 months of the year, this comes to £4180. Divide £4180 by the 42weeks I spend on my course means I receive £99.52 a week. Divide this by the 37 1/2 hours for the time I spend on placement, and I get paid £2.65 for every hour I spend on the ward. I have to work at least 15hrs per week (equivalent to 2x7 1/2 hour shifts), this means when in clinical placement I work 7 days a week in order to support myself through university. I am lucky enough to have a good support system around me who endeavour to help me in the best way they can. However not every student has that luxury. Cutting the bursary would mean people who would make good nurses may not be financially able to complete their nurse training. This would lead to the course becoming one only suitable for people in good financial positions. In order to solve the problem of staffing levels within the NHS I believe the government should pay for nurses to train, but in turn nurses should have to provide a certain amount of service for the NHS, to ensure the government's money was well spent. I hope you reconsider, as without the bursary I would not be benefitting patients in the way they benefit me.

## Rebecca, Teesside

The whole picture is that without my bursary I wouldn't have been able to attend university, I would have no means to use transport and I would certainly not have been able to attend critical placements - by that I means 50% of my course. The smaller picture is, in the past 10 weeks I have been completing my final placement. I've spent up to 45 hours a week in the hospital, adding half hour travel time either side, I'm pushing 50 hours. I'm also a human being and require rest and sleep. So in between my placement (aka working as a nurse for an extremely pitiful wage called my bursary) and sleeping, I've only been able to work two shifts this month at my paid employment. Not exactly a living wage. Without my bursary I would have literally no income, I would be unable to attend university, I would fail in my duty of care. I can't imagine the impact this could have on nurses in training that have individuals depending on them. Let me emphasize NURSES IN TRAINING. Not typical students, living off pot noodles and spending their days watching Netflix in their student digs. Although maybe without the bursary, most of our student nurses WILL be living off pot noodles.

## Gail, West Yorkshire

I would have been put off doing my nurses degree if I didn't have my bursary. As it was it didn't even cover my rent and had to work every holiday and take out 2 half student loans to be able to live whilst training (that was all I was allowed to take out as I had a bursary to live on, I would also note that I was on the maximum bursary amount). I have a friend whose dream it is to be a midwife but if the bursary disappears she may well have to give up on her dream as she would struggle to afford to train. I was told during my training that you had to have 3 times as many nurses into training than predicted jobs available by the end of training due to trainees dropping out, retirements and people leaving nursing. This change is going to put people off training and we will have major staff shortages.

## Jennifer, Altrincham

If I had not received the bursary I would not have been on the programme and in my final year. I am 27 on my own and have 3 young children. I cannot work extra hours on top of uni and placement as the course and certainly placements are too intense. Some other students work because they have to and don't have kids. I would not have the option. Like many others. This is very disappointing and I feel will limit individuals coming into nursing as well as making more financially difficult during training.

## Mega, Hertfordshire

As a student nurse, wards are crying out for nurses. Constantly short staff, putting the public at danger! Why hinder yourselves more, by decreasing the intake of student nurses by scaring them off with the lingering doom of a huge debt! After 3 years of hard grind, blood, sweat, tears and various other bodily fluids, the last thing WE need is to pay off a student loan. We work hard for long gruelling hours, we cry with our patients, we laugh with them, we share their fear and their grief and in some joyful experiences, also their happiness! These are your people! They deserve the best care and the best nurse in the world, may be put off by the idea of a loan. That is the main redeeming feature for entering a degree in nursing. We are going into a noble and hardworking profession. You sit behind a computer and say 'I know! We'll cut bursaries they can use a loan' we'll, then the feeling of oppression and anxiety kicks in for us and have to think financially this will cripple us. We work hard for our little money, potentially caring for you or a family member of yours... And the thanks we get is a massive hurdle before we even start the race. Well congratulations, if your plan was to exploit an already drained resource, you've succeeded! When you have no nurses coming through... The only people who will suffer is the public.



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## Megan, Scotland

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I am deeply saddened to hear that the bursary will no longer be available to future student nurses. The bursary isn't great but I find comfort in the fact that I am not accumulating future debt. I'm in a fortunate position living with my mum at home, I manage my finances quite well. I currently do not work but due to demands of placement hours and study hours I would struggle significantly with this. I didn't come from a privileged background, I only have myself to depend on financially. I am the first in my family to attend university. When I started nursing, I had no idea a bursary would be made available to me but it was a relief knowing that my income would not be dependent on other factors and that I would not accumulate debt after university. This has not been the case though, as I was dependent on a loan from previous college courses to get me where I am today and I have struggled at times on my bursary and had to use my student overdraft. I am in a fortunate position with saas, my tuition is paid for me. But going back to the point that I only have myself to depend on, I hear horror stories of nurses struggling to get jobs after university, I witness the struggles of continuous cuts to funding for essential services while out on placement and the effects this has on staff and patient wellbeing. I am terrified of what life after university holds for me. I am working 40 hours p/w in placement, sometimes more. I am not treated as a student, I provide just as much care and support as staff do as that's the role I am aiming for. Having the bursary to me, and not building up more debt, means that I can strive to perhaps study further after university. I have big aims, I will never have financial support from anyone other than myself and saas can only afford to pay so much to me. I would love to do my honours, I would love to study further and to be able to afford to do so. Having the bursary gives students like me an equal opportunity to find more ambition, I feel equal to my peers. I find comfort in the fact that we all struggle equally, with a loan I believe there will be variations in

what others are entitled to? I believe this will deter others. There are arguments that it will benefit university places preventing "time wasters" and dropout rates, but the reality is that there is already a significant drop out rate even with a bursary. Being a student nurse changed me, so much. I am a better person in my professional and personal life. I work so very hard. I don't get as many holidays or weekends to myself and it does affect my ability to self-care. If I applied to university when this takes place I would apply for a loan of course but I wouldn't know how I was going to pay that back, I'd be dead before I was able to pay it all off. A nurse's salary is already low as it is, I don't need a loan to cut that further for me.



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## Carol, Northamptonshire

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I am a married mother of four, and currently in the final weeks of year two (of three). My bursary is the only reason fulfilling my ambition to become a registered nurse has been possible. Without it it simply wouldn't have been possible. How are future nurses to support themselves? How are we to repay these heightened loans in a non-existent salary? Where are the clinical mentors, who are also unpaid, going to materialise from to train all these extra nurses? When will this government realise that retention of experienced staff is the primary concern and that penalising future student nurses is only going to serve to exacerbate the staffing crisis and increasing locum Bill??



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## Rheagan, Preston

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I started out my training as a single Mum of a beautiful 3 year old who was in nursery school. Without that funding I wouldn't have been able to have started my nurse training. To now take that away from so many others in the same position is so disheartening.



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## Sophie, Brighton

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I am a third year adult nursing student and finishing my course in January next year. Thankfully the changes won't affect me. Having bursaries throughout my course was critical for me as I am a foreign student coming from another EU country. I had no parental support and despite the fact the course was very demanding time wise I still had to have a job as well to be able to pay my rent. Without the student bursary I would have never been able to complete this course. I love what I do as a student and I cannot wait to start nursing even if I know that nurses are often unfairly criticised for their work. I am also aware that it is not greatly paid compare to the responsibilities nurses have. I still want to DO it. I believe keeping the bursary is vital and essential for students like me. Plenty of us have jobs alongside university because the cost of living is so expensive and some have no financial support from family. Cutting the bursary would definitely lead to a fall in the number of students applying as people won't be able to work enough next the demanding hours hence they won't have money to sponsor their studies.



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## Megan, Gloucestershire

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Disappointed, the bursary gives me just enough finances to get to and from placements, allowing me to work effectively as a student nurse. Without it I'd have to work longer hours as well as studying in order to pay for fuel costs, this would be extremely tiring. My learning would be compromised as well as my work. A huge burden of debts would then be on my shoulders as well as the stress of the student nursing life. The nursing degree isn't like other university degrees, its demanding physically, emotionally and mentally. The bursary is a life saver, literally!



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## Sophie, Glasgow

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I live in Glasgow and study in Edinburgh as I believe that the Uni I attend is better for nursing and will have a greater impact on my future career as a nurse. This is a choice that I have made and am funding with my bursary which will ultimately benefit the general public when I am fully qualified. As you can imagine it is not cheap to travel every day, however my bursary covers this and gives me just enough money to get by on. When I am on placement it is very difficult to have a job as we work silly hours, often 4 day weeks to keep our hours up which we need to register, and not many jobs are understanding with this. Not to mention the European laws which state we shouldn't be working more than 48 hours. This means we could only work 10 hours elsewhere. As student nurses we need to take care of our bodies and working more than 48 hours simply would knacker us which will later effect our careers. Now I know the bursary isn't much but it generally enough to live on so why should students who work full time hours (and are often NOT supernumerary) not get paid for the work they do? We are essentially cheap labour for the NHS and to cut the bursary is simply unacceptable. I challenge George Osborne and other politicians who have cut our bursary to try and live for a month on £506.48 a month and do the job that we do. It isn't just physically tough it is mentally draining. Students who are committing themselves to work to improve the health and wellbeing of the nation should NOT be forced into debt.



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## Danny, Brighton

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Without a nursing bursary, living in one of the most expensive parts of the UK, I would not have been able to financially get through this course. Well I get £425 a month bursary which I am very pleased about but doesn't even pay my rent. In a years' time I would be getting paid just over £350 per week (after tax) for doing exactly the same job I currently do for free on placement. Therefore in the same 4 week period I should technically have earned over £1400. I still have a full bay of patients, administer medications, do all paperwork etc. I find it sickening that you have so much contempt for those of us who are doing our best to help those in need and you won't even help us out. You say this will help put a stop to agency nurses. I guarantee that there will be a new nursing crisis when this cohort of students finish before your changes are brought in.



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## Hannah, North Allerton

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The bursary allows student nurses to work 36hrs a week on placement (technically a free pair of hands) plus the degree work they have to do to gain a nursing qualification. Student nurses are told that they should not work during studies as it will affect the quality of their work. How are we supposed to survive if we don't?? If the government take away our bursary also and we need to pay tuition fees and live from a student loan how are we meant to live. Keep in mind a percentage of the nursing students are mature students which I myself am with homes to run and a family to care for. How do the government expect the country to be cared for in the future if there is no one to care for them because they could not afford to get the qualification to allow this???



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## Hazel, Biggleswade

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If it wasn't for the bursary I would not be able to afford to live, not only do I have myself to support but my 10 year old, with all the cuts being made to my income already it would make it impossible, as I am unable to study do my placement, run a house look after my daughter and then work on top of that. I it more than unfair. Making nursing a rich person's trade you will be missing out on great nurses



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## Alison, Truro

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I was 28 when I started my training. I sold everything and moved in with my sister for 3 years. She was newly married with a small child and I paid her half my bursary in rent, the other half I used for text book, travel expenses. Plus I worked all the hours I could with an agency. I could never have answered my calling without a bursary and so many other people won't now and that's a real shame for the profession.



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## Pauline, Edinburgh

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I am a single parent and have worked incredibly hard over the past 2 1/2 years, working on top of studying to support my family to make sure they have a secure future. If I knew I would have finished my degree with huge debt I definitely would not have started it, as I feel I am already giving up a lot to do the course. I live on the bread line, I don't see my son as much as I used to, I haven't seen my friends in months etc. my life has been put on hold!



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## Ryan, Dundee

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I have a previous degree in Bio-medical Sciences which wasn't worth anything because it didn't actually qualify me for anything as it was not accredited. I still have to pay this back. Nursing seemed a logical choice because I could apply knowledge from my previous degree to benefit patients. I currently receive £506 a month. This leaves me with £175 a month to live on. We are expected to pay £5 a day towards travel to placement. Which leaves me with £75 to buy food, clothing, energy, let alone attempt to contemplate a personal life. Luckily I managed to secure a zero hour contract with an NHS bank which means I can top up my bursary, and for the last 18 months, I have working 48 hour weeks every week. My meagre 6 week holiday allows me to work full time but at the sacrifice of my time off, the money used last summer to pay off my credit card I couldn't have eaten without at the start of my studies. How can we logically expect 60,000 nursing students to do this, excel in studies and become competent? The simple fact that we are on placement 50% of the year means we're simply not attractive to part time employers, and changing the system to loans based support wouldn't change end this limitation. It is argued that we should get support in the same form as other students, but we're simply not like other students. A starting salary of £21,000, with responsibilities far beyond the wage bracket, is not an attractive enough incentive to take out yet another loan, only to have to pay it back from such a meagre salary. I believe I will be an asset to the profession but I am lucky I applied when I did or nursing would not have been an option.



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## Donna, Bury

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I have now qualified as a nurse and provide dedicated care to a heavy caseload of patients within the community. I commenced my nurse training at 27 years old. I achieved high grades throughout my degree course and worked extremely hard on numerous practice placements, undertaking all shift patterns and even working beyond my required hours. Student nurses do not have long summer holidays or even Christmas holidays! Other students are able to work during those down times to earn extra money to assist them during term time. Student nurses simply cannot do that. Student nurses already work many hours in physically and mentally difficult placements whilst completing assignments, self-study and exams. My partner has completed a PhD (he received £12k per year for 3 years!) and could not believe the commitment required of a student nurse. I was also a mother to two young children. I firmly believe that having had life experiences, including my children, I was better equipped to undertake nurse training and indeed being a qualified nurse. I'm a good nurse. However, had I not received the student bursary, I simply would not have been able to apply for the course. It would not have been possible for me. Nurses pay is already very low, with the added impact of having our NMC payments each year that have been raised to a ridiculous amount and now each nurse will have loans to pay back?! It's insane. This action will prevent individuals like myself from even considering undertaking nurse training... and that will be a great loss on every level.



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## Joanne, Dagenham

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I am a mum of six children, ranging from 14yrs to 22yrs all living at home with myself and husband. We thought very hard about me entering my degree this year due to the financial sacrifice. My husband works incredibly hard as a pharmacy dispenser and is on minimum wage. We are struggling even with the bursary in place but have the bigger picture in sight. I would not have even considered going into nursing without the bursary, being 41 and having family responsibilities it would have not been financially possible. We as nursing students are unable to work whilst studying due to the demands this course has, and in some universities you actually sign a contract to say you will not work or are limited to 16 hrs a week. This course is like no other, we have a huge academic work load along with working a full week in a demanding and highly responsible job. We have no room for errors so trying to work to subsidise the bursary loss would not even be possible. This is a huge blow for nursing students, and this will indeed have a huge impact on future students. I consider myself very lucky, I have a family who supports me and gives me the courage and confidence to fulfil a lifelong ambition to become a nurse, along with some financial help from the NHS to see me through my 3 yrs or at least that's what I thought when I started this September! The government need to sit back and listen, the response to these cuts is tremendous, the future students have no idea where they stand, all that hard work to even get a place into uni could have been an utter waste of time. So sad and upsetting.



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## Marielle, Southampton

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I think it is absolutely awful cutting the bursary, student nurses work so hard and they are unpaid for their efforts because they are there to learn but primarily because they care and want to help people. Why should they have to PAY to WORK?! Nursing is an entirely different course to the average degree program, 50% of our study time we are in practice, learning and working! People go into nursing as they are caring people, but you can obtain another caring profession without having to have to pay for the privilege! I believe that the cut in bursary will definitely affect the amount of trained nurses, it will decrease the amount, and more people will become HCSWs because they can do a similar job without the debt! This is a mistake, when you're in hospital and you need personal care would you expect a nurse to give you a fiver for wiping your back side? It makes no sense at all.



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## Leanne, Cheshire

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I'm a student nurse. I have just finished my last week of a 10 week placement working full time 37.5 hours a week. Alongside this, I've been working 24 hours a week to top up my bursary so I can live. I am exhausted. I work bloody hard on placement, sometimes even harder than the paid staff and the one thing I get to keep my head above water is that bursary. Without it I would have to quit my training. The government are saying they're in desperate need of nurses, yet they're going to cut the help we need to actually be able to finish one of the most difficult degrees to actually become a qualified nurse. The government take advantage of such a caring and giving profession already. We give so much already so why take more?



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## Louise, Liverpool

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As a student nurse, I have seen the struggles of the NHS with regards to funding and staff shortages, I therefore understand the need for more money to be put into the NHS in order to rectify this and enable it to continue being the high standard service it always has been. What I do not understand is the choice that has been made to take this money away from student healthcare professionals. Students in the healthcare professions have worked, with minimal complains, 37.5 hours a week on 8-12 week placements without pay, as the main reason they are there is to care for others, rather than for the money. During this time, it is vital that these students are supported in their studies, as it is impractical for them to get their own jobs, and if they do, it usually means working around 70 hours a week while on placement. This means the choice to make healthcare students pay to work is taking advantage of the situation. These students do the same jobs as others who get paid. They may not have the degree, but they definitely work just as hard as those around them, and for this to continue for years with no one really demanding more money, even basic minimum wage for their time shows extreme commitment. However, telling these students that in the future, not only will they have to continue working for free, but will finish with around £50,000 worth of debt, that they will probably be paying off for the rest of their lives is just too much. The idea to take money from students and give it to the NHS seems like quick fix of a current problem, that will cause more serious problems in the future, including an even greater shortage of nurses. I have had discussions with other students, especially mature ones, and they have told me that they would not have been able to study nursing and other healthcare professions if it wasn't for the NHS bursary. This is because many of them leave full time jobs to pursue healthcare, and the bursary is what helped them manage their loss of income. More than one second degree student has also told me that if they only had student

finance, they would not have chosen to go back to university, as they are already aware of the massive debt the gained from their first degree, and the thought of adding another one to it is just too much for them



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## Danielle, Birmingham

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If I hadn't of had my bursary during my training I wouldn't have survived. As it was I had to supplement my bursary with additional work that was sporadic and only able to do during academic blocks (which weren't very long). And then worked all the same shifts the qualified nurses did for free! The same patients, the same horror stories, the same difficult situations that all the qualified nurses knowing they would get paid for their troubles as students they faced it all for free! Trying to make nursing into a uni degree treating it the same as Maths English and Geography is ridiculous. We started term about a month before everyone else, we finished term about a month after everyone else. 2 weeks a Christmas a week at Easter and 3 weeks in summer off! WEEKS! Not months off like the average 'student' gets! Nursing isn't a degree that you learn in a class room! It's a vocation that you learn on the job! Yeah the background is great, but seriously until you see it, witness it and feel the pace and heartbeat of a hospital you have no idea what really goes on in the NHS! Taking away the bursary for nurses is the stupidest thing you could have done, you're having to cap agency and pull in nurses from other countries to cope with the short fall! Watch the uptake of nursing drop off when people calculate that to get a nursing degree you'll land yourself in upwards of £40,000 debt! On a nurse's wage, that will never get paid off! You've got a short fall of nurses, why are you trying to make it worse? Trying to put patients' safety at risk? Putting the nurses on the ground under more stress equating to more sickness? Poor move!



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## Doreen, Glasgow

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Only a mug would undertake nurse training under these circumstances. The government want nurses' to work as part of their training and get into debt for that privilege and get paid a low wage at the end and a huge amount of stress and pressure. Lidl pays the living wage a far better option



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## Emma, Leicester

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I started my adult nursing course in January 2014, my rent is £303.33 a month! And I get £240 a month from my NHS bursary this obviously is not enough considering as nursing students we also have to work full time in placement to pass the course. On top of this we do not get long breaks like all students, taking away this bursary is devastating news for the future of nursing. If I didn't have the bursary I wouldn't have done nursing as I simply would not be able to afford it. The way I saw it they are investing in our future in the NHS, by giving us a bursary and supporting us through our training we then work for them in the future and by taking this away people will not be able to follow their dreams of becoming a nurse as it will be unachievable and unaffordable.



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## Jack, Southampton

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I was planning to be starting my Adult Nursing degree in 2017. I will not be doing it now due to the large debts that I will build up. What a great shame



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## Charlotte, London

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Nursing isn't an easy career, it's not just our job it's our life. You can't learn the qualities of nursing through a book, is unique, nursing has to come from the heart. It's not like any other job in the world or like any other degree in the world, when we are put face to face with a patient, our needs don't exist anymore, our minds, heart and souls have to be committed to thinking about the health and wellbeing of our patients, everything else has to become irrelevant. We go into our day knowing that our patients' health can deteriorate in a split second, and we are the ones who have to be there for them. I was recently placed on a haematology ward where most of my patients had cancer, it was the most heart-breaking but most fulfilling experience I've had to this date, we are the ones who sit with them, hold their hands, and listen to them at the most crucial time of their lives, however nurses have the ability to give them hope and strength during the most vulnerable time of their lives. Without a bursary I wouldn't have been able to complete this course, either would many of my friends, if anything the bursary should be increased, not taken away from us. We juggle placements, home life, assignments and exams because we have too, we committed ourselves to the course so that we could gain the required skills and knowledge, because one day we want to be the nurses that make a difference to the quality of care that is provided by the NHS. We want to give patients, service users and their families the care that they deserve. However without this bursary not enough people would be able to do nursing, our NHS is already in desperate need, please don't let it suffer anymore than it already is.



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## Helen, Grimsby

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I trained back in 1990 on a paid student nurse salary, my training costs were met by the NHS. Since I qualified in 1993 I have spent just 4 years in non NHS employment. My salary during my training covered the cost of child care and the car I needed to travel backwards and forwards to work. I managed to contribute a small amount towards the household bills and paid my tax and national insurance. I have been lucky to experience life as a qualified nurse and have further training paid for by the NHS so that in the next year I hope to attain a master's degree to match the advanced nursing role I currently hold. I estimate it's cost around £200,000 in salary, training fees etc. to give me over 25 years in the nursing profession, however, in the past 5 years I have helped to save the NHS millions of pounds by providing patients with high level care out of a hospital setting. Looking back, there was no way I could afford to undertake any other degree program or further education course because I had no money to pursue those options. I was shocked to hear that bursaries will end, in no other degree programme do students work experience for no pay. I thought it was a bad step when they stopped paying student nurses a salary, ending the bursary will sound the death knell for nursing. You have to speculate to accumulate, invest to get returns. Retirement can't come quick enough now, but I hate to think who will be looking after me when I get sick, it won't be a highly skilled nurse, that's for sure.



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## Ella, Manchester

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I am a third year Child field Nurse and whilst receiving the highest bursary available, I still have to rely on a part-time job and financial help from my parents. Without the bursary, I would be down by £13,448.88 over the three years and be facing a debt of £27,000 for my tuition. I could not have entertained the fantasy of entering my dream job, which the NHS bursary has allowed me to pursue.



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## Victoria, Staffordshire

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I am a student nurse, I have just started my first year of training and am lucky to be receiving a bursary. I receive £448 a month. I have a mortgage, I have bills, and I need to eat. My placement is 37.5hrs a week and I get up at 5.45am to travel the hour to placement. I start at 7.15am. I also work a 12hr shift once a week as a HCA to make ends meet, on top of this I study for my assignments and tests. Last year I worked a 40hr week and studied full time at college so that I could apply for the nursing course. When I qualify I will be proud to work for the NHS. I am very lucky that the cuts won't affect my training. Please don't make it any more difficult for people to become nurses. We need them.



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## Kay, Brighton

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After finishing my degree in another subject this has now put me off searching for a new career path in nursing which I was very keen for. I cannot have two student loans, this will also affect my ability to have a living whilst studying.



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## Cameron, Aberdeen

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I think it would put people off. I have been a student on wards that are understaffed and appreciate all the help a student gives. We work full time hours on weekends and nights miss out on social events with friends and events with our families so we can care for other peoples. We don't do it for the money but at the same time we can't survive without a bursary and some of the best student nurses out there have children and would be put off by having to take out a loan. The bursary we get may be little but we appreciate it.



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## Keira, Plymouth

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I am a 3rd year student nurse and all I have received from peers, mentors, colleagues, lecturers and patients is praise for my compassion and my practice. Everywhere I go, it is reiterated to me that I will make for a very competent and caring staff nurse when I qualify. I have no parents to support me financially and so I have relied on my bursary of £350 per month to put food on my table, pay for my travel to placements and pay for my bills and rent. On a weekly basis, I spend between £50 and £100 travelling to placement and my most recent placement is a 120 mile round trip per day. With a student loan, I would not have this money reimbursed which would leave me short of money for my rent and basic necessities. I would not have been able to afford the course to fulfil my dreams of becoming a trained nurse if the fees were not paid for and there was no bursary from the NHS. With the miles and the hours that I put in for my placements on top of the normal degree workload (which is equivalent to other degree subjects), I feel that I cannot commit to work a paid job on the side because I know that this would have an impact on my grades and I want to become the best nurse that I possibly can be. I feel that my practice would not be safe nor effective if I were required to work alongside my placements. Without the bursary or fee cover, many other individuals who are committed to their dreams of becoming a hardworking and passionate trained nurse will be deterred from completing the training and so, despite having the ability to offer more university places, I doubt that there will be as much of an interest in the course and so there will still remain to be a shortage of nurses.



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## Francesca, Chelmsford

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I would never have been able to do my diploma without a bursary, especially when if I had to get a loan in today's current situation, Nurses pay being frozen for years and only getting a 1% pay raise this year, with threats of cutting banding and supplemental pay, as it would leave me feeling that I would be in huge debt. The bursary helped towards my rent as working part time was hard to fit around placement and student nurse shifts, and gave me peace of mind that I could afford it each month. A shift as a student nurse is hard, and even though you are not meant to be counted in staffing numbers, more often than not you are, including weekends, bank holidays and nights. Having to pay for travel costs to get to the hospital as the university had put me in placements half an hour to up to an hour's drive away from home. You should not be expected to work all these for free, other training programs, such as apprenticeships get paid for the work they do, this should be no different.



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## Tom, Rolleston-on-Dove

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I am a mature student having served in the army for ten years before deciding to train as a mental health nurse. I have a mortgage and bills to pay and my bursary helps towards this although it does not fully meet the cost and I still struggle financially. Mature students bring a lot of skills to the profession especially in mental health nursing where life experience is essential to emphasise and understand people's experiences. Without an NHS bursary becoming a nurse would have been financially unimaginable. The debt would have quite simply taken decades upon decades to pay off. Nursing is not like a normal degree it demands working long unpaid hours on placement and does not afford the time to take out a second job. I do not understand why any government would choose to punish such an altruistic pursuit although of course after cutting inheritance tax for the very richest the axe needs to fall somewhere.



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## Anna, Derby

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I worked hard for three years for a degree, and when I finished, realised that I wanted more out of life. And so, with one BA (Hons) in Fine Art under my belt already, I embarked on my BSc (Hons) in Mental Health Nursing. I had always loved helping people, and I'd always loved art, so I felt that I was getting the best out of both worlds, with plans to eventually take a Master's degree in Art Therapy (though this is a much longer term goal). I have only been doing my nursing course since September, and every day at university, I am both proud of how far I have come, yet exhausted by the work load. I struggle to balance uni life and a part time job to keep me afloat, as I only receive the lowest bursary possible, but I get by, knowing that, by the end, it will all be worth it to see my patients smile. I am incredibly lucky; I enrolled on my first degree in 2011, dodging the bullet of the £9,000 per year fees, and this time, again, I have been lucky, to be one of the last cohorts to receive the NHS bursary and tuition fee payments. But just because I am lucky, does not mean that these changes do not affect me; with the safety net of bursaries gone, and the thought of student debt, many who would previously have started the incredible journey to become a nurse will be dissuaded, putting the strain onto my cohort when we finally go out into the working world. Taking away the bursary is taking away the chance of thousands of prospective nurses, thousands of women and men who want to help make the world a better, safer place. In nursing, we abide by a set of rules called the six 6s; compassion, care, competence, communication, commitment, and courage. Right now, we need courage more than anything, to stand up and fight for what we believe in, and fight for the future of nursing.



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## Kiri, Southampton

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Nursing is my passion, my student loan wouldn't cover two months of rent let alone my living costs for myself and my daughter. I couldn't imagine my life without my bursary, I genuinely could not afford to live, that would mean that I couldn't even get to university, let alone placements that could be up to 20 miles away.



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## Carla, Dundee

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I have just submitted my UCAS form to study a nursing degree following studying a media degree and graduating this summer. I am deeply upset by this, and the decision has led me to give up my hopes on becoming a nurse as not only will I not be able to afford it, but my debt will mount up and leave me in a bad position. I have so much to give, yet it is taken from me.



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## David, Brighton

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19 years ago I decided to change careers and become a nurse. I gave up a well-paid career as a systems analyst. I had a supportive wife, a young daughter and a mortgage. It was and still is difficult financially. With no bursary and tuition fees today I would not be able to afford to do it. This will prevent many mature students from entering nursing and rob the NHS of valuable life experience. And likely put off many younger applicants. Whilst people don't generally enter nursing for the money it will make nursing far less attractive compared to other graduate professions where lifetime earnings are usually much much higher. This is a remarkably short sighted decision. Students will essentially have to pay for the privilege of working on placements. Unbelievable!

## Jay, Brighton

Without the bursary I definitely wouldn't be able to afford my course, in the very little spare time I have, I work a part time job (the time I should be spending on academic work). During my last placement I worked 5 days a week there and also worked my part time job 2 days a week. If this bursary is taken away I will have to drop out. That's one less nurse for the UK, and I'm almost certain the story will be the same for many student nurses out there. You sure you're making the right call?

## Prash, Oxfordshire

I am mature student and it is hard to finance all the bills and rent as it is and taking away this bursary would make it extremely hard for us to finance accommodation, travel and food cost while studying and during placement, which won't get paid for. This would also mean when I do come out of education I would end up with a much larger sum of debt. Absolutely outrageous.

## Rachel, London

I qualified as a nurse in April 2015 at the age of 29. I have a previous degree and didn't decide I wanted to become a nurse until I was 26 as I had wanted more life experience knowing it is a stressful and emotionally challenging profession. Due to my previous degree qualification I would not be eligible for tuition fee or living cost loans, therefore the new scheme is entirely excluding people like me who decide after their first undergraduate degree to retrain as a healthcare professional. Should I have to make the decision again now regarding my career path, I would have had to leave nursing behind as a dream. It makes me sad that so many other aspiring healthcare professionals who don't go into healthcare straight from college will never be able to fulfil their ambitions and make a difference in healthcare.

## Leanne, Lewisham

Nursing is on the job training, no different from an apprenticeship, which the government are happy to pay for. I studied hard for three years as a mature student. Many mature students, which make up the majority of nursing students have homes and children, and the risk of being unsupported and losing their homes will have a huge impact on the number of applicants. Even the meagre £300 a month that I was entitled to paid some of my bills, with nothing, I would never have been able to become a nurse, and neither would many of my colleagues. The government is putting nursing and the NHS in jeopardy.

## Daniella, Reading

I feel as though student nurses are taken for granted, those whom are seconded get it easy (money wise) however others like me who depend on bursaries aren't paid enough as it is let alone when it changes to a loans other will be completely put off. We work full time hours whilst on placement which is always meant to be supernumerary however we always do the extra work, like giving a grieving family a cup of tea, spending an extra 5 minutes to settle a confused patient because others don't have time. We do more than a healthcare assistant whilst in practice yet we aren't even paid half of a part time workers pay. Maybe if the government made nurses and other public services priorities and not letting our NHS just disappear then we would have someone worth investing in! Until then we are just health care professionals who get slated due to poor decisions of the government.



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## Carol, Liverpool

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I am currently a mature 3rd year nursing student due to finish in spring 2016. I currently get a bursary although it is not much per month it is preferable to facing enormous financial debt. I have a conditional offer of a post and will have only minimum student finance loans to pay back when I start. If I did not have the bursary and had to rely on student loans only this would have prevented me from taking up nursing as a career. I could not afford the debt of student loans and tuition fees on top, on a nurses starting salary. I work 37.5 hours for roughly £100 a wk on clinical placement and work just as hard as the paid staff including unsociable hours, I have had to make my income up working part time. I don't begrudge this as once qualified and in post I will have earned my reward. I feel this change will have a huge impact on student nurses in the future and create a deepening crisis in staffing levels. Student nurses should be paid as a band 3 as this is the level of work carried out on placement. I would have been happier with no bursary or loans and paid the current band 3 rate of pay for the work I actually do. This seems a much fairer way for student nurses to be paid!



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## Laura, Dumfries and Galloway

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I had planned on pursuing a career in nursing but now that the bursary has been lifted there is no possible way I can afford to go through university without a part time job to support me which would make my university years even more stressful than they already would have been.



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## Gemma, Wales

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I am a third year student nurse (child). I am in a cohort with a lot of mature students like myself and I gave up a full time job to study. If it was not for the bursaries, I would never be able to afford to complete my training. There are often times on placement where I have to either pay to put petrol in my car or buy food. I, like many others would simply not be able to live without my bursary.



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## Jade, Pittenweem

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Nursing has always been a dream of mine and being able to chase and fulfil a dream is something really special. I have enjoyed my course and love my clinical placements more despite the fact they are practically unpaid for the long hours you do. My degree has entailed a lot of hard work and long hours. When I am not at clinical placement I'm doing course work and when I am at uni I am doing course work on top of attending classes. Days can be very long and tiring and often stressful wondering if your small monthly student bursary will see you out until the end of the month. Long placement hours makes you unreliable for a part time job as so much time has to be dedicated to placement time so I rely on my bursary as my sole income. I live 45 minutes away from most of my placement areas so a large chunk of my bursary is spent on fuel as I am unable to get public transport to get me to work on time for my shifts. I was unable to move closer to uni as I could not afford it and did not want to take out a student loan and end up in debt in a bid to gain a profession. Please do not take our bursary away, we rely very much on it to live even though it's such a small amount I believe we all work very hard for what we are given. Not providing a bursary for student will result in a shortage of new student nurses because in this day and age going to university is a very expensive thing to do. If anything our bursary should be increased as living off £506 a month is so very difficult especially when you are working full time hours in a week and are unable to hold down a part time job.



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## Louise, Liverpool

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For many other courses, mature students are few and far between, but in healthcare subjects, they are a lot more prevalent, as many choose to work as an Health Care Assistant, before later deciding to progress to be a Registered Nurse, and many other people don't make up their mind about what they want to do until they are much older. It is incredibly common, and these mature students need to be supported in their decisions to enter a healthcare profession, rather than being faced with a lifetime of debt that they will probably never be able to pay back. What seems to have been forgotten is why NHS bursaries were created in the first place. I first became aware of them when the change was made that to study Nursing, you had to go to University. When this change was made, there was a massive debate around it, as people were worried that the cost of University would deter those from lower income backgrounds from studying Nursing, leading to a shortage. This is why student nurses get the NHS bursary, so that those from lower income backgrounds get the same opportunities as everyone else, in an attempt to deal with the shortage of nurses. Getting rid of the NHS bursary now just creates the same problems now that we were trying to avoid when the degree first became compulsory. There is also the importance of the placement reimbursement that is offered with the NHS bursary, which allows universities to choose placements all around the prospective areas, without having to worry about students not being able to afford to go there, for example they may need to pay for accommodation in a different city while they are studying there, the NHS bursary makes this possible. I know this is incredibly prevalent in Radiotherapy, as many of their placements are in different cities than the ones they choose to study in, so if the NHS bursary is cut, and no placement reimbursement is offered, the amount of places people can be sent out to is greatly decreased. Finally, George Osborne's opinion that because getting rid of the bursary will get

rid of the cap on the number of students able to study healthcare subjects, that there will be more students. I feel like this idea is flawed, because, as stated above, if students can't afford to go far for placements, then that will limit the amount of students that can study. Also, just because they can afford to have more students, doesn't necessarily mean that the University will be able to provide appropriate staff to maintain a high level of education, meaning we may be swapping quality for quantity. I know there are already cases of this happening across the UK, but the amount of students that can be brought in each year shouldn't cause a sacrifice to their level of education, as this impacts on the level of care that they will be able to give.



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## Dearbhaile, Glasgow

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I am from the north of Ireland and studying in a different country already puts a huge amount of strain on me financially due to the price of living, especially in a city centre. The bursary is something that can give back to student nurses, after all, half of the course is clinical practice (unpaid work). Also there are many mature students that study nursing. Taking away the bursary causes implications on being able to provide for families and due to universities heavy work load, they may not be able to keep jobs to do this. Taking away the student bursary could also hinder the general morale of future nurses, as working within healthcare can sometimes be stressful, but adding to this by causing debt from student loans could bring down the spirits of the workforce further. I didn't choose to do nursing because of a bursary. I chose to become a nurse because of my love of caring for people. However, somebody with the same intentions as myself in the future may not be able to fulfil their dream to be a nurse if they cannot afford it, another reason not to take away the nursing bursary.



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## Emma, Scotland

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I understand that costs within the NHS and public services need to be better managed. However cutting something that funds a studying healthcare professional's living not only puts the future profession at risk, but also the healthcare system and thus the health of the nation. If the bursary cuts go ahead as has been proposed, student nurses will be expected to pay to go to placement and essentially work on the NHS. With gaps in nursing staff in the NHS already evident, student nurses are picking up the pieces and helping services to run as efficiently as possible. Although this is not ideal, this is already a reality and one that student nurses will not tolerate if they have to pay in excess of £35k for a so called quality education. Student nurses if paying such sums would expect much higher quality training which would mean further pressure on our NHS to deliver a gold standard of training. Furthermore with the creation of more student places comes the dilemma of facilitating for adequate placements for each of the 'extra' students being taken on. This elicits further demand on the NHS. Another point that needs to be raised is that with the greater openness to international students, a significant proportion of students may only study in the UK and never contribute to the gaps in the NHS. It is also likely that with the British nurse's starting salary being ~£21,000 many British students will move to practice in other western countries (where the salary is often a great deal better) to pay off their considerable debts. This again would mean that this method may produce a further nursing crisis or not fill the need in the NHS for nursing staff. For the nurses that take on this debt and stay to work on the NHS their future seems bleak. The nurse's already underpaid profession will see individuals paying off student loans for their entire working life and living a poor quality of life. Thus I reckon this will deter many prospective student nurses from applying to do nursing. The profession is already underpaid, under supported, short staffed, slandered by the media and

government and already struggling to try and best manage resources with existing NHS cuts. Do you really think many people will take on substantial debt with all the added pressures of becoming a nurse?



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## Alexis, England

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You will have few people training and the people that will be training will come out with huge debt, which will increase stress and put an enormous burden on welfare due to ill health



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## Ferzana, Aylesbury

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After hearing such sad news I am extremely worried as this is nearly the end of my 1st year as a student nurse. I myself very much depend on the bursary to pay my rent as I am a single mother of 6 children and do not receive any social benefit except my bursary to support myself and my children to give my patients and my children a better future. I am very disgusted with this decision taking place as I will not be able to carry on with my course if this is to go ahead. Please save our bursary. Thank you.



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## Jack, Wales

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I wouldn't have been able to even look at the course without the bursary. And nursing is all I've ever wanted to do

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## Paul, Liverpool

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During a long day on placement that I had to spend £60 in travel expenses for the month to get to I heard the devastating news that the government had decided to scrap bursaries for future student nurses. I went home and I cried. Without a bursary my dream of becoming a nurse would have most certainly remained a dream forever. I am a mature student who is married. With that comes all the financial responsibilities of being a mature student which means I have sacrificed a lot to follow my dreams. Being a nursing student means I don't have the time to work part time and complete my degree to my full potential. I work on placement all year round with only 7 weeks a year in annual leave. No Easter, summer or Christmas break. In fact the only days of the year we are guaranteed off are Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. My shifts on placements can be any time any day. I genuinely fear for the profession I love if we move forward with these plans by the government. If I knew that I would leave university with £52000 of debt to enter a profession that is already under a 1% pay freeze I don't think it would be financially viable for me or my family. My hopes of buying a home and starting a family would not be possible with that amount of debt. My current bursary only covers 50% of our household bills. Thankfully my partner can work part time during his degree so it provides us some stability. Even apprentices are provided with a small wage, why are we now expecting nurses to pay to work for the three years during training? I love nursing, please allow others the privilege I have had and allow them to train as an NHS funded nurse before the current shortage of nurses turns into a crisis.

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## Laura, Plymouth

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The shift from a bursary to a loan could mean the difference between graduating or not which in turn is the difference between having a qualified nurse on a ward, or not.

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## Fi, Penzance

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I'm a mature age student nurse (49) who would never have been able to consider retraining without the bursary assistance. A single parent of four grown up children, with no savings to rely on, last year was my first year as a full time student again. My youngest son was living at home for some of that time, and dependent on me financially. The bursary covered nine months of my rent. I also had to take out a student loan to help bridge the difference, not to mention help pay for everyday living expenses and the high cost of travel. Where I live is 30 miles from the University campus I study at, as well as being where the majority of our ward based placements are offered. In addition to the bursary and the loan, I also worked part-time when I could, restricted by the weeks when I was on placement working 37.5 hrs as there is a blanket ban on paid work. It was still a financial struggle, and I am absolutely devastated to hear that the government has decided to take this short-sighted, punitive measure. Last year I had my father commit suicide, my eldest son still in treatment from having suffered a brain haemorrhage the previous year, and my ex-husband, father of my four kids die. This year I have intermitted as I needed to recover from what was an extremely stressful year. I will be returning as a second year in September 2016, but as it stands, I'm not sure whether I will be able to afford to complete my degree in 2017. I can't believe they have taken this decision when we as student nurses work so hard :(

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## Rachel, Stockport

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It will have a massive impact on those applying for nursing. This is a full time course, I wouldn't have got through my training without the help of a bursary. Students don't have the luxury of a part time job, there's hospital placements to go to, assignments and exams. I know that anyone applying who has a family will struggle!



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## Jing Ting, London

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I have been looking after bone marrow transplant paediatric patients for two years as a staff nurse, one of 24 nurses. We are their last chance of survival, and one of the best units internationally for one particular disease. Approximately a third of the staff are British trained nurses, bursary supported in the past 4 years, another third British trained, another third international. I did a postgraduate nursing diploma, and had a science degree which I had a loan for. I would never have started a career in nursing if I had to take another loan, having just paid off the previous one. After a number of years, you cannot take out a student loan to cover both your first degree and a nursing degree, so I would not have been able to take a loan to cover the duration of my studies. As the average age of a student nurse is 29, this issue would deter a large chunk of applicants for nursing with relevant life and academic skills. Some of my previous students were biochemists and healthcare assistants before becoming nurses. They have the added maturity required for professional study, and mature students should be encouraged, not deterred, from applying. A third of my unit (not mature students, but who did nursing as a first degree) may have gotten out the loan for the full duration, but may never have started nursing. Many students at university take out a loan and also work part time. But with an unpaid shift rota (taking up 50% of all studies) that includes 10pm on a Saturday and 2am on a Sunday, this prevents part time work that students could otherwise undertake to financially support themselves. We give the best care we can to our patients, but unfortunately, students on my ward face the same patient deaths, traumatic cases, abuse, blood, vomit, excreta, manual handling conundrums, sporadic food breaks, and exposure to cancer causing drugs, as the paid staff, yet are not paid for it. Students are given a lot of responsibility for the lives of (sometimes dying) children, as early as 8 weeks into their nurse training, some of whom are only 18 year olds themselves. We are asking a lot of them right now,

and it would be a slap in the face if in the future we asked them to pay for it. It would be wonderful to think that they would still want to be nurses enough, but inevitably, some would be deterred. They would consider alternative options, and with an overall difficulty in recruitment in nursing overall, we can't afford to lose student nurses for any reasons. I am delighted that mental health had received better funding, and tax credits have not been changed, but please reconsider the future of those looking after the physical and mental health of the population as importantly as these issues.



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## Ubah, Manchester

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I believe those changes are a disgrace, a lot of people who could become great nurses are been put to disadvantage because changes like this would put extra financial difficulties in our future pre-registered nurses. If this change was applied before starting my degree I would have given up the dream of being a nurse.



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## Adrian, Coventry

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It's not so much the huge debt I would be left with after qualifying (even though this would be difficult but most students no matter what they study end up with debts), but before commencing my nurse training I had already been at university for 2 years on a course I didn't have the passion and energy to finish. My passion lay within caring and helping others. I realized this because I was spending most of my time not on coursework but volunteering and working alongside the students union with many different student welfare activities. Shortly into my second year started to seriously think of a career in nursing. I also run in my family as my Mum and aunt are both nurses. Due to already having 2 years' worth of loans I wouldn't qualify for funding to complete a 3 year degree and there was no way I would be able to fund a year myself with a £9000 price tag especially knowing that the demands of the course would make it near impossible to work and earn enough money so sustain myself. The NHS bursary has given me the chance to follow my passion and one day soon be out there, fully qualified, caring, teaching, laughing and crying with people, families, communities and giving back to the NHS for giving me the chance to follow this amazing journey that may never have been possible. I do understand a few of the reasons for considering axing the NHS bursary. One being that not all will work for the NHS when qualified and not all complete the course due to voluntarily dropping out, raising the question, could the money be used more productively elsewhere? A way to get around this would be to put a minimum commitment to work for the NHS when qualified and pay back if you drop out of your own accord (with no extenuating circumstances). Do this instead of axing the bursary all together and you will get passionate, highly motivated nurses who may not have even been able to qualify without the financial support through a demanding 3 year degree.



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## Hannah, Nottingham

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Even with the bursary and the student finance I still struggled financially when I was a student. Fortunately I was employed with nhsp and if I wasn't God knows how I would have paid my rent and bills. Also my parents refused to support me all the time like the vast majority of student nurses so if the bursary is scrapped who would be able to afford the course and I tell you not a lot of rich kids decide to be nurses.



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## Kenneth, London

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The bursary we are receiving cannot even pay our rents. Majority of students are already in a difficult financial situation as they cannot work like other students. Most of the times we are on placement and spend 37.5 hours a week without any remuneration. Nursing students are already sacrificing a lot and adumbrating the government proposals will be tantamount to iconoclasm. It really shows politicians are out of touch. My fear is we lack nurses in the United Kingdom and I strongly believe 75% of students will not be able to complete the course without bursary. I think the government should rethink as they have done with working tax credit. With the bursary even, by the time I graduate I will have debts of more than £ 20,000 .I was on a full time job prior to starting my course in intellectual disabilities nursing. It has been a very difficult challenge and really feel for the students that are going to be affected by this barbaric action of the government. As usual is the poor that suffers the most.



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## Elaine, Northern Ireland

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Awful – student nurses need this bursary, if it changes to a loan I doubt many will want to choose this career.

### Jessica, London

Government student loans are not available to students doing a second degree. I have a neuroscience degree and without bursaries I would not be a nurse. I believe my degree and life experience have made me an excellent unique Nurse with many skills. I can state that under the new system I would not be a Nurse

### Jessica, Newcastle

For years I believed I would never attend university as I felt I wouldn't be able to afford it. My parents had heard the horror stories of how much debt you end up with as well as them having debt but they were eager for me to become a nurse. After realising I would be able to afford it, I am in a financially secure place in my life to study my dream job, attend university and care for patients/ people like I always have wanted to do. This money helps me with everything! It is an essential part for travel, food, my rent and my bills. It is so important that we receive this, how else would we be able to travel to the hospitals? I already have student finance from college in the past, meaning that's another loan. I couldn't get into nursing with that college degree!

### Sarah, Norfolk

I am just completing foundation degree in mental health with the plan to take a year out then go onto university to do BSC mental health nursing, now I will no longer be able to do this. I was hoping the bursary would help keep me above board now my hopes have been dampened due to financial issues I am now considering not doing it all together. How can this government expect to attract people to nursing? Really does show how much they value the very people who help save lives!

### Lorna, Salisbury

I have been a Nurse for 14yrs and am proud to work in the NHS. I would never have become a Nurse without the bursary, neither would most of my colleagues. Bye bye British Nurses!

### Stacey, Rhondda Cynon Taff

I took maternity leave during my training, and without the bursary, I would have been left in great financial hardship. Without my £350 a month when my husband was looking for a job, I would have not been able to contemplate returning to nursing, and would have been another dropout statistic, for the sake of starting a family. I have had student loans previously, and would not have been able to return to study nursing if it was a loan system. We are a young family, and I would not have opted / would not have been able to consider starting the course at all. We have got married, had a baby and bought a house during my training, and all this would not have been possible with the possibility of £50000+ of debt. The NHS bursary has given me a chance of a career, a better life for my young family and got me out of a cycle of low paid job after low paid job with no career opportunities. Thank you NHS bursary for giving me an opportunity to do the job I love!

### Jennifer, Ashbourne

I was a single parent working as a frustrated HCA as I knew I could achieve more. The bursary allowed me to study to achieve my full potential and train as a registered nurse. I am now working as an Advanced Clinical Practitioner and love my role caring for patients, educating nursing staff and driving advanced practice for nursing. Without the bursary I would not have been able to do this.



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## Jack, Haverfordwest

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I wouldn't have been as negatively affected because I'm incredibly lucky to have a job with very flexible staff who allow me to work more in holidays and less during term. I also live with 3 friends in true student file to save on rent. No-one else in my course have given up independence and a home of their own to do this course, which yes perhaps they should, but those who are married or have children don't have that freedom. I'm a single mature student. My bursary, along with maintenance loan, although it covers 1/4 rent and all other bills which are quartered, is used up by those things completely, not allowing luxuries like food (of any kind). If it weren't for my job, where in which I do a fair chunk of my coursework, I wouldn't be able to replace clothes or even essential cleaning products or toiletries. I keep chickens to cut food costs down as I have a free supply of food with eggs and chicken food is so cheap. Of course not everyone can do this. I dread to think what all the other student nurses are doing to manage besides getting out loans from the bank? If I don't get enough to cover ALL living expenses, FOOD included, when it's split between myself and 3 of my friends, then how do they manage, some of them single parents. Putting more financial constraints will most probably make very good potential nurses not follow their vocation into fruition because they simply can't afford to. We will end up with a less diverse work force who have less of a natural ability empathise with patients because it will only be the "well off" who will be able to afford to study. For the NHS to be successful in delivering care, we must be able to emphasise with and cater for the needs of ALL those in our care, which will become an issue if only the cream off the top are feasibly able to study nursing. In addition to this, those who has excelled in their nursing studies and would continue their study in the form of a MASTERS, would likely be refused additional student loans, so this cut could potentially remove our experienced nursing staff from our teaching rooms

and we will lose specialism. In a nutshell, although these cuts will save money in the short term, likely all this government is interested in, it could potentially have a domino effect which will threaten the whole nursing profession as well as the care of our patients.



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## Eghomwanre, Essex

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To my understanding if the bursary changes I think a lot of will not come into nurse again because doing the course is so difficulty with the placement. Now that they pay bursary the money is not enough many people are still struggling to cope with the stress.



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## Charlotte, Accrington

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Like myself, people from poorer backgrounds would feel they can't take on that debt. They don't have bank of mum and dad to rely on. I live on £450 a month, with £300 being used for bills and rent. I use the £150 remaining for transport to and from placement and food. I am better off, financially, if I quit and did the same hours at min wage, which for me is still £6.70 because I'm under 25.



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## Georgia, Bristol

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I am hoping to start my nursing degree next September and I'm already worried about how I'm going to afford to run my car and go about daily life comfortably. I have already started a nursing degree in 2013 but left for personal reasons and I don't think the government realise how hard it is to get by on the loans and bursaries students get, I had to get an overdraft just to eat and pay my rent as my family were unable to help as much as they would've liked. I think this is only going to put off students applying for nursing in the future especially as it's not one of the best paid jobs to pay off the loans in the future.



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## Coral, Essex

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I would not have started this course if I had known I would be getting into huge amounts of debt. There are other ways I could care for patients, such as becoming a HCA, which would not burden me with a debt I could not hope to pay off. As one of many students on my course that has a long term illness, affected by the length of shifts required, it would be impossible for myself and many others to work a part time job at the same time as going into university full time or working 37.5 hours a week on placement, as well as preparing for exams and writing essays, which, if the bursary was taken away and a student wishes to limit the Loan amount to avoid more debt, is what would be needed. Many of the students also have a family to provide for, and finishing their degree with a large amount of debt is not an option for them. Instead of having a diverse cohort of student nurses, I fear removing the bursary will eliminate the mature students and those with families to support. These are the students who are able to bring varied experience and insight to the profession.



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## Rebecca, London

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It will deter many good candidates from applying because no one would want to work for free and will mean that there will be less nurses when there needs to be more.



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## Belinda, Southampton

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If I wasn't offered a bursary I would never have started the course. I am studying the post graduate diploma and as I already have a degree don't qualify for government funding and also the PGDip is not recognised as a course qualifying for funding. I believe that as a result of this there will be a huge decline in the number of people with degrees already wanting to become a nurse.



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## Jo, Huddersfield

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I started studying nursing in 2010 to fulfil my lifelong dream of being a nurse, some 12 years after finishing college. I was one of the last PG Dip students who received a non means tested bursary, and we as a family of 4 struggled financially. My course colleagues struggled more on their non means tested bursaries. It is the pure determination and desire to become nurses that drives us, not the training bursary, and most certainly not our salaries at the end. It seems that these people making these decisions are aware of what drives us, and therefore us that against, knowing that some of us will do it, regardless of the debt we accrue. Unfortunately, studying may be totally off the agenda now for some would-be wonderful nurses, particularly those who are in a similar situation to mine who have a young family to support, whose knowledge and life experiences bring so much to the table, as does the energy and freshness of younger students. What we are left with is a cohort of frustrated individuals with a real passion to nurse made to stay in other jobs/professions because of these barriers. Such a massive, massive shame. We need these people in our wards and in our communities.



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## Paul, Manchester

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I am no longer a student nurse but know I would not be a nurse if they had not been in place. The issue for the nursing courses is that we have much shorter holidays due to clinical placements (work, looking after real patients including unsocial hours and weekends) and as a result unlike normal students we cannot get weekend jobs, or evening jobs or even jobs in long summer holidays. I suspect that instead of the increase in 10000 nurses it may have opposite effect. A nurses starting salary is not huge and once to have taken rent etc. and now loan, the student nurses of the future will need to ask themselves is it worth it, if the first years are going to result in prolonged financial hardship and indeed for those who do stick it out not even London weighting will be able to attract nurses in debt into the capital. Short sighted is an understatement, lack of transparent engagement not surprising but huge disappointment.



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## Amy, Warrington

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I have always wanted to be a nurse. I planned to start my training in 2017 I have worked in care for the last 10 years. Up until the other day yes I had looked into other ways of doing nursing which was forcses, originally I was 75% uni 25% forcses now it's more like 95 forcses 5 uni. I have never agreed with paying for fees for something we need in life like doctors nurses and teachers social workers paramedics etc. We need people like this. There is a shortage any ways so if it was still paid by NHS then it would help. If say people just use it to get a degree then I could understand but many people going into nursing after years working as a carer and we have worked long and hard as a carer we understand things that nurses do and we will appreciate Carers people who don't have the qualification in the future



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## Naomi, West Sussex

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As a third year student nurse and single mum of two children I rely on my monthly student bursary payment. Without it I wouldn't be able to afford my rent, pay my bills or feed myself or my children sufficiently. This course leaves little time for anything else and the thought of working a part time job as well as completing 32 hour week placements and studying seems impossible! Those of us giving it our all are already exhausted from the physical, emotional and psychological effort this course demands. To force us to hold done a job would just burn us out and force many fantastic and dedicated nurses of this country's future into quitting! I work 12 and a half hour days sometimes 3 in a row and have to pay my petrol and parking costs for the pleasure of doing so! This can amount to nearly £40 a week! Without the bursary this would not be possible. The essays and exams that I have to revise and study for many hours a week require text books which all cost money too. We all rely on our bursaries to financial support our training in many different ways. To take it away would be a disaster for the future of the nursing profession as many will leave and many others will be forced not to embark on what has been an incredible journey of learning so far. I really do hope the government see sense and start to support our amazing nurses and future nurses. Maybe they need to spend a week or two living and experiencing what we do to really appreciate what we do and why we need our bursary!



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## Maria, Cambridge

I started my training in 1993 under project 2000. I was 26 years old and had been out at work since I left school at 16. There is no way that I could have afforded to leave my job and start my training if I had not received a bursary. By stopping the bursary we are in danger of preventing mature students from entering training as those who already have financial commitments will struggle. This will mean that the NHS loses the chance of recruiting a great resource of potential nurses.



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## Carol, Leeds

The clinical hours in addition to the academic expectations make the degrees in nursing very different to other degrees. Mature students with good life experience and skills will be discouraged and young people generally will also be discouraged from training now there's to be introduction of a loan rather than bursary. Yes a lot feel nursing is a vocation however I believe there is already a shift away from it being seen like this and it is noticeable that the essential nursing quality for empathy is declining with this. After 30 years as a nurse the changes due to services fragmenting, gradual privatisation and deconstructing of the NHS are bringing about a worrying change in the nature and provision of health care. I've been proud to work within a service that has always been free at point of access but there us money to be made here by and we will see patients and clients mistreated, harmed and more deaths due to the misplaced value on money rather than lives and the capacity to be human kind. Undoubtedly overseas nurses will have to be employed in by agencies reaping massive profits and this will cause other issues .It's a 'hard slog' training and keeping up with all that's required to maintain a nursing qualification...this news is discouraging and will have a negative impact on a workforce already dwindling and suffering from physical and emotional stress.



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## Kirsty, Port Talbot

I started my nursing degree at 31 leaving a full time job. I had a 2 year old son and would never have been able to make the leap if it wasn't for the bursary. Even though it is not a huge amount it covers my crèche fees which I cannot claim any help with as I am married and my husband works. The system for nursing students is bad enough as it is, whereas I have 2 jobs just to make ends meet on top of my bursary. I am not entitled to any benefits or grants and if I didn't have my bursary I simply would never be able to complete the course. I am already paying back a student loan from first degree and would never take out another one. Such a shame that this will stop people going into the profession when there is already a shortage who could make a massive difference and be excellent nurses. I am in my second year and so glad this will not affect me as I would simply have to leave this extremely challenging yet amazing course. Starting nursing was the best decision I ever made and it's so sad that others in my position will miss out on the opportunity.



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## Rachel, Salisbury

I have spent many years as a nursing assistant whilst bringing up my family hoping that next year I would finally be able to begin my degree. Being 43 years old, taking on a huge debt in order to fulfil that dream would be out of the question, especially as I would only be earning, once qualified, a little bit more than I do now. This decision is very short sighted and will put off all mature experienced students.



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## John, South-East England

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Here's why I think the bursary changes are a bad idea. In my class, there are 2 other people of a similar age to myself (21). For us, the prospect of taking on over £30,000 debt isn't too out of the ordinary, many of the people we went to school with are doing a very similar thing when they go to university. But the reality is my class is much bigger than 3 young people and that's what makes it special. We have a range of people from all backgrounds each bringing their own unique perspective to the course and to Nursing. The class debates are varied and inspiring when everyone puts their view in, and I'm sure the same happens when my classmates attend their clinical placements. The ward can learn as much from Students as a student can from the ward. The sad fact is, the prospect of taking on crippling debt when they are trying to settle themselves into life, own their own home, start or raise a family would deter many of my classmates away. These proposals are to save money, and nothing else, despite the sugar coating they've been pushed through with. Nurse education and nursing will most certainly suffer as it will become restricted to even more people. I've heard too many times from some fantastic Healthcare support workers "I'd love to do my training, but I just couldn't afford it". I fear this will become more common and that more and more of our best nursing staff will disengage with the profession.



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## Anna, Huddersfield

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I am still reeling from the announcement in the latest spending review about cuts to student nursing bursaries. It has been my dream since my son was born two years ago to work as a mental health nurse. However, I decided to wait to apply until both of my children are in school (Sept 2017) so that I could minimise potential childcare costs and still remain as much of a stay-at-home mum as finances would allow in the meantime while they are so small. I have been using my time trying to maximise my chances of a successful application (working as a volunteer for an advocacy support charity, working as a carer, reading up on mental health issues etc.) and now I am really worried that all of this has been in vain. I still have approx £11,000 of debt hanging round my neck from my first degree and the thought of adding to this further makes me feel sick with worry when I have a young family to support too. Taking away the bursary would put huge pressure on our finances, meaning I would likely have to keep my part-time job as a waitress alongside my studies. But when would I have time for my children?? I am a hard-working, caring, compassionate mum who has been drawn to the nursing profession because I care deeply about improving the lives of others. It's a shame George Osbourne doesn't feel the same way. My future is now hanging in the balance and I am furious.



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## Laura, Staffordshire

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Coming from a low income family, I may not have done the course as my father would not have been able to support me. Doing both placements where there is no set work pattern and theory would have made it difficult for me to get a job as well as doing the course. Getting a bursary was not the reason I underwent my nursing degree but it supported me to achieve it and made my life less stressful as I was able to be fully committed to complete such a challenging course without the added stress of finding a job to fit round it.



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## Adele, West Yorkshire

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I am 35 years old and was working as a support worker for 13 years. I pay a mortgage on a mid-terraced house and have done since I was 26. I am now married with a 4 year old child. 3 years ago I was informed that my workplace (WMDC) would be making cuts and possibly going private. As a lot of home owners began renting their home out the area we live in is slowly getting worse we find ourselves surrounded by drug dealers, heroin addicts and people that don't particularly value their home or street as they see it as a short term thing. I made the decision to provide my son with a better life, I felt strongly about not wanting him to be subjected to such things. My main motivation was to bring my son up in a better area and provide him with better opportunities. I decided to go back to college to do an access course, whilst still working it was very true consuming and stressful, I hardly spent time with my family. It caused a lot of financial difficulties as my son was only 1 year old I had to put him into childcare and received no help from the government. When I finished my college course I went to university to do a nursing degree. As it is a full time course and 40 hour weeks working on placements I had to give up my job. Due to the amount of hours I attend university, travelling time, amount of assignments, and shift work on placement this has not only been the most stressful time of my life, but the most financially difficult only now is it a little easier as my son is in full time school (although I still have to use a childminder). My son cries some days because he misses his mummy so the guilt I feel is heartbreaking. I have no social life and if not for my husband's laid back attitude sure my relationship would have broken down. We cannot have family holidays as nursing students are not granted the same holiday entitlement to normal students and we cannot afford it. I miss out on special occasions such as my sons play, every spare moment is spent on assignments, revision or pre sessional work when it should be spent with my family. I am making huge sacrifices, and

all with the minimum bursary, which is a strain to say the least. If not for the bursary it would be impossible for me to become a nurse (I strongly believe I will be a good, compassionate nurse) and provide a better life for my son.



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## Charlotte, Sheffield

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I qualified as a nurse in January 2015 and am currently working full time for the NHS. Before training I achieved a degree in Education and worked for years as a clinical support worker. I already had a student loan to pay back so even if I were allowed another, with £20,000 debt to my name already, I didn't want to start my new career in further debt. I started my training at just the right time. I was accepted onto a diploma course and therefore had a non-means-tested bursary. If it had not been for this financial support, I probably would never have begun training in the first place. I had been financially independent from my parents for years and the intensity of the course made it difficult to earn money. Now, I know I still have a lot to learn and a long way to go, but I feel that the previous degree and extra life experience have made me better at the job I do today. One day in the future I hope to become a clinical educator and help to train other nurses and find a use for both of my qualifications. Without the bursary, I might still be a clinical support worker (a valuable job all the same) but I may also have left the health profession altogether as I was in need of a further challenge. I am so happy that I was able to complete my training with the financial support of a bursary and today be doing the job that I love and which challenges me every day. It saddens me to know that others in my position will no longer have this opportunity.



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## Jane, Swindon

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I am a mature nursing student, wife and mother to three children. Without the NHS bursaries funding my degree, I wouldn't have been financially able to finally pursue a lifelong ambition. Just having the NHS bursary paying for me to undertake the degree itself, will enable me to give something back to society. I can appreciate that other degree students have to pay for their education and continue to work alongside, as I have also had to do that with my previous degree. However undertaking this degree, is a whole new level that I didn't expect. Not only is the degree 45 weeks long (making it harder to sustain extra employment that is flexible to incorporate these extra weeks and shift patterns on placement) as a pose to the average/usual 32 week degree. During this degree we have to incorporate (a minimum) 40 hours a week placements (which is effectively an unpaid job) which do mimic the typical NHS shift patterns and nursing commitments. We also have to still find time on placement, to complete assignments, reflections, initial/midway/final placement paperwork, while still achieving and maintaining our nursing competences set by the NMC. Then on top of that still find time for my family and the chores that still need to be done. When most people finish their days work and can easily switch off, most student nurses/ODPs are reflecting on that day's events; things that they could have done better. Processing raw emotions that may have been stirred up, whether that be dealing with the loss of a patient, or the feeling of helplessness and lack of experience. I do feel privileged and honoured at being given this opportunity, although it is or can be extremely emotionally and physically exhausting and challenging. You do as student nurses/ODPs experience both highs and lows; but knowing that you as an individual can make even the smallest of positive differences to another person and their health journey makes it all worthwhile and rewarding.



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## Anne, North Wales

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I am a mature (33) student with a young 2 year old son, I cannot afford to do this course without the bursary support which pays a bulk of my childcare and somewhere towards paying for a roof above our heads and food in our bellies. I cannot put my family under the pressure of accumulated so much debt, being a nurse is a dream, I got here by working 60 hour weeks, as a support worker which I miss, for 10 years to get myself in a position where I was able to live the dream. You are destroying the opportunities for mature students with families and you will lose all their experience and passion for this profession.



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## Annie, Portsmouth

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I wouldn't have even applied for the course if it wasn't for the bursary. I'm a student nurse and I can't tell you how heart breaking / infuriating this news is. On placement, I am required to work 37.5 hours a week on the wards. I also have to work on top of this to earn enough to pay for a roof over my head and food in my mouth. I'm usually working about 45-55 hours a week. All so I can work for a government that don't value our profession, media that criticise us at any given opportunity and working conditions that no other profession would be expected to endure. I'm not in nursing for the money, I don't think anyone is (which the government quite clearly take advantage of - nurses are worth their weight in gold!), but the knowledge that I could get more money stacking shelves than saving lives when I qualify doesn't fill me with any sense of gratitude. Expecting nurses to pay back a minimum of £27k on a £21k salary with the nature of job they do, just isn't right. If I feel like this 1yr away from getting my registration with my fees paid, why on earth would anyone ever become a nurse?!

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## Rachel, Streetly

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I have supported around 120 student nurses over the last 15 years only 2 of which were in a position to do it without bursary. I myself was seconded and receive in today's equivalent a band 4 pay. I would not and could not have trained otherwise, this means not only would I have not being a nurse but I would not have supported another 120 students. The local Birmingham University states the course requires you not to work, if the course is adapted to allow this what impact will that have on the standard of qualified nurse. I have sat on student nursing interview and there are a significant number who apply and really don't have the skills to become a nurse, I fear without the bursary more of the people who should be on won't afford it and more of those a who should not get on will be allowed to make up the numbers

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## Zarmeen, Leicester

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The bursary that I receive allows me to pay for travel expenses whilst on placement, with working 37.5 hours on placement, and doing a degree is manageable. However if that changes students like myself would have to work 70 hours a week to pay for travel and maintenance, especially for those who would come to live from other cities. The nursing degree is different to others we as student nurses do not have 6 months off for summer to work and earn the cash. When does George Osbourne expect us to do that? Long term wise I think not a lot of students would study nursing as it would be asking for much more, then the government would employ nurses from abroad and the care standard in the UK will change! Psychologically it would be draining for student nurses, especially for those who have responsibilities such as children, bills and no time to spend with families. The bursary I receive takes off that burden and not receiving it anymore would cause havoc in nursing education in itself.

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## Marina, Hampshire

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I wouldn't have done the training without it. Would have done a different degree and would have worked to earn money during the holidays something you can't do while nurse training

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## Charley, Cheshire

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After having two children once the youngest is at school my goal was to train as a midwife, already it's an incredibly hard degree to get onto setting the goalpost and expectations further before even getting work to re-pay the lone, I will attempt to find other methods of learning but when raising a young family and having to keep a roof over our heads, food on the table and clothes on their backs the risk of having an extra £20k debt with no guarantee of paid work makes the prospect far less appealing.

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## Jessie, Brighton

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I currently receive a student bursary and I use this money to pay for my rent. Without it I would be a homeless nurse! I currently work a 32hour week on placement on top of writing assignments and studying. I have no time to find a part time job as well. It currently works out that I receive £2 an hour for my time working at the hospital, and I don't know a single tax payer that wouldn't be happy with their taxes going to student nurses and paying them £2 an hour. We are considered to be supernumerary, but because of the nature of our course it is natural that we are considered an extra member of staff. We are advised to do no more than 3 long days a week once we qualify, so why should we do more than this whilst we are studying just to fund our selfless life choice to become a nurse.

## Helen, Birmingham

I did my nurse training as a second degree, married and with a mortgage. I would not have been able to access another loan and would not be a nurse if I had had to pay tuition fees. I worked throughout my studies and as a student nurse was a valued and well used part of the work force. In return for the tuition fees the NHS had my twenties.

## Lauren, South Yorkshire

The bursary that I get pays for my rent and my travel to university and placement, I also have a job and work where I can as the bursary still doesn't cover all of the costs of living which includes eating. I am still struggling and only just getting by. Without a bursary I would not be able to afford to do my degree in nursing, which means the world to me. There is no time in our course to really work and if there is our 40 hour week turns into much more. Leaving no time to study and putting more stress on myself. I think that cutting bursaries will have a major effect on the numbers of students who want to be nurses as it will be made impossible. It is a disgrace. Nursing is a very demanding degree unlike all the others and without support impossible.

## Stephanie, Wiltshire

As a single parent of three children I would not have been able to even consider nurse training without the bursary I received. I am now a fully qualified, working nurse. This will have huge implications for the nursing workforce in the future, which is utterly ridiculous as there is already a shortage of nurses in this country.

## Victoria, Northampton

I wouldn't have started the course if I knew that the bursaries we're going to change. I only receive £80 a month as it is and I still struggle to get by with that little amount.

## Jade, Bournemouth

I am a single mother and a student nurse. Without my bursary I would NOT be able to be a student nurse. The bursary pays 85% of my childcare (£450 a month is the total) I have rent and bills to pay. My course is heavy! I am in uni mainly Monday to Friday 9 till 5 which gives me the weekend and evenings to do my coursework. I have just finished my first essay, which consisted of 6 mini essays we had to write each week and a final 7th essay, as well as doing that I had other work to do as well as an exam each week! You tell me where is the time to work full time around this? I am on placement as of January and I am expected to work between 37.5 and 48 hours a week! Again when will I be able to fit a job around that? I have a job at the hospital and I love it but I have worked once since starting my degree because I am exhausted already! The reason I went into nursing was because I have always wanted to do it but also because it offered the most support! I and many people like myself will not be able to become nurses if the bursary is scrapped. Nurses do a lot, a hell of a lot which is missed and forgotten. We save lives every single day! There is so much pressure and there is just so much expected of you! It's not as simple as handing out medicine because the doctor told us, no! It's about analysing, emotionally supporting patients and their family! It's about saving lives! The reason it's so hard and limited to get in to uni is because so much is expected and required before we can even start to learn to become a nurse! I am extremely disappointed you have already let down registered nurses with the lack of appreciation and crap pay, now you're letting down the future nurses! We do it because we CARE and we should not be landed in loads of debt because of this!

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### **Karen, Essex**

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I was a mature student when I took a career change to train as a nurse. I'd already had a loan so would not have even got one. Even with the bursary I had to work a flexible part time job, which sometimes meant working 6-7 days a week when on placement. I simply could not have trained without the bursary.

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### **Kirsty, London**

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As somebody with a degree prior to nursing, there is no way I would have been able to afford to train without a bursary. It was hard enough with one and I had a job as well as being a full time student. I ended up working 7 days a week just to have enough money to pay for everything I needed. I am still paying off my first student loan which takes a considerable chunk out of the salary that is already only just enough, even after nearly 6 years of being a qualified nurse. If I had to manage repayments for a second student loan as well I would undoubtedly be in debt for the rest of my life. I don't know anybody that didn't consider leaving the course at least once because of stress or financial pressures or after having a particularly bad day at placement. Add in the fact that future nurses will have to pay for these 2 or 3 years that may well be the most stressful they will ever have themselves and I don't think many people will make it through. I can't say I blame them. I wouldn't be a nurse today without having a bursary. It's as simple as that. We are already running horrifically low on nurses, especially British nurses, I can't believe the government wants to make this situation even worse. I am so grateful to our overseas colleagues, they are a fantastic asset to the NHS and we couldn't function without them, but we desperately need our own nurses too.

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### **Amy, Bristol**

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I was planning on applying to do adult nursing next year and now I have to wait longer to be able to save up. It is already competitive and a demanding job as it is without the added stresses of having to take out a loan.

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### **Chloe, Croydon**

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I would never have been able to fund my studies to become a valued staff nurse delivering high quality care for a minimal salary today. Paying off a loan would be challenging with the current cost of living (flat rent cost, travel to and from work etc.)

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### **Diana, Aberystwyth**

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I could not have done this worthwhile and amazing job without the support of a grant. I live in a rural area and had to travel for over an hour to get to college. This rural area is in dire need of nurses and are now recruiting from abroad. This is totally unnecessary! There are plenty of local women who want to take up nursing in this area, but cannot afford it due to the extra costs of travel. This area carries an increasing amount of elderly population that need and increase in nursing staff. A decrease will be dangerous to the greying population



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## Yvonne, Liverpool

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As a mature student I simply would not have been able to study without the bursary. Scrapping the bursary will make it impossible for many mature students like myself to join a nursing degree. I believe this will result in most of the places available being filled with much younger students lacking experience who aren't depending on an income. This is such as shame as so many mature students like myself have years of valuable care experience essential for student nurses to have. I also imagine the dropout rate will become much higher as younger students straight from school will struggle with the long days and nights spend on placement. Although cutting the bursary will make more places available the quality will fall as a result as people who have spent years working in healthcare and know without doubt nursing is the career for them will no longer be able to afford university. When I applied to university it was highly competitive allowing university to choose students based on experience and passion for caring rather than simply just filling places available and this is how a nursing degree should be!



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## Abigail, Wiltshire

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Means more debt after qualifying, I would need a full time job alongside training to be able to cope as a more of three. Most students are matured students meaning they have family commitments too. Taking out loans will mean less people will be interested in studying nursing, which might have an impact on training more nurses for the future.



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## Kim, Norwich

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This bursary change is disastrous for nursing, in a time where there is already such a shortage of qualified nurses. Without the bursary I would not have undertaken my training. I am already in £30 000 debt from a previous degree and would not have taken on further debt for a career which is clearly so undervalued in every way. When I started the degree family and friends said to me "are you sure you need a degree just to be a nurse". I reassured them that I did, that nursing carries with it a lot of responsibility and requires many skills. People still find it hard to believe that the training is so extensive and I certainly would not want to dramatically increase my debt for such poor rewards. As I have completed another degree I am aware of how different nurse training is from typical degrees. By the end of my first term in my first year I had been expected to write 7000 words, this is the same amount as my dissertation for my psychology degree and I was working full-time on placement as well! Currently I am working 30 hours a week on placement, have a 7000 word dissertation due in in early January, 3000 words to write to evidence my achievement on placement and work at least 12 extra hours a week of paid work so that I can pay my bills. Between placement, written work and paid work I have absolutely no chance of a work life balance. I am deeply saddened that future nursing students will face even greater challenges whilst attempting to join a profession which puts others before yourself.



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## Clair, Edinburgh

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I am a doctor and see how hard student nurses work. They are basically another body in the numbers, and I think that they are happy to do this as they get a bursary. The average person would not be able to pay to go to work so why are we expecting nurses to do that? What a great way to reduce the numbers of nurses training, this is a disaster.

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## Deborah, Lancaster

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I relied heavily on my bursary. Removing it will either force student nurses to 1) abandon their studies prematurely as some students have families to provide for - with most people needing dual incomes to get by 2) pick up part time work- not that many organisations will take us due to the demanding, spontaneous and unsocial shifts- which is stressful, tiring, affecting mental health and affects our academic grades 3) take it more loans to survive meaning we spend our life time not only being paid less than other developed countries but also being indefinitely in debt to the government which reduces our overall income. A poor way of showing respect to the most hardworking force nationwide, not to mention the disregard to the thousands of working student nurses who on many occasion fill out ward numbers, work during strikes, undertaking essential work within the wards who are working for free. Heartbreaking.

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## Heather, Glasgow

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I am from a low income family and would not have been able to afford to come to uni for a second time if I had to take out another student loan. I can barely afford to live off of the bursary we currently receive, meaning that I have to work on top of going to uni and placement. If nursing students were able to take out a student loan to supplement the current bursary I believe a lot of nurses would take that option so that they can concentrate on their studies instead of worrying about money. However, with the decision to remove the bursary, that places nursing students in an even worse situation meaning that many people will not be able to afford to train. I am worried that this decision will reduce the number of people willing to train as nurses, when the NHS is already needing many more.

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## Sarah, Bolton

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Without the bursary I would never be able to train to be in my dream job. I have a family at home who also depend on me financially. I'm a 22 year old mum who would show my daughter hard work is the key, but in honestly having to juggle family life/ university needs and placement hours is a struggle in its self but then to have to further that and worry about the financial burdens in the future and a part time job to bump up my wage is scary. I'm lucky enough to be in the catchment group to still receive my bursary for the whole 3 years of my education. My plans was to further my education to be skilled in other areas but honestly, that isn't going to happen now. You're killing people's dream of becoming an amazing health care professional. We work so hard to train to care for people. I'm in university and/or placement most of the year, I'm spending my Christmas caring for people in hospital rather than take my daughter out and spend time with my family in the run up to Christmas. That's dedication, dedication will slowly drop for individuals as we're not being looked after by the government. Please take into consideration the thoughts of students whose bursary you're cutting. Money needs to be saved, but honestly they can be saved in much more reasonable places.

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## Kayleigh, York

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In 2011, I left my place on a DipHE Nursing course owing to health reasons, vowing I'd get back into it when I was able. Since then, the diploma is no more, meaning I would now need to do an access course to get into university in the first place. To be told that the bursaries for student nurses are to be taken away, is another blow to myself and many others. The idea of undertaking so much debt considering how much work is involved on the course is massively deflating. Personally, I'm struggling to understand why I'd want to be a nurse in these times. Simply wanting to care for others, sadly, does not pay the bills.



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## Cristina, London

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If I wouldn't had the bursary I couldn't afford to pay the fees because I would still need to work to be able to pay my rent. Being single puts more pressure on what you can afford to do or not since you need to think in term of finances. When I done my first degree I've studied part time and working full time, which had put far too much pressure on me and I couldn't achieve the marks that I really want it initially.



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## Tracy, Godalming

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I would not be a nurse now if I didn't have a bursary during my training. My parents were never in a position to help me financially, so if I were to start now, nursing would not be an option for me. The poor salary would also mean I would never pay off the debt. I would not recommended this profession to anyone, unless you are wealthy enough for this to be a hobby.



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## Victoria, Falkirk

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I have recently applied to study mental health nursing, starting in 2016. Changing it from bursary to a loan has greatly impacted my future decisions, I currently work as a mental health support worker and I am now wondering if doing a degree would value me as I already assist people in there day to day life, I administer medication and personal care. I am wondering what the point of doing the degree would be when the wage increase wouldn't be as much and I would be coming out with £50,000 debt! By doing this you are putting off people from becoming a nurse, nursing degrees are hard, you get few holidays and do shift work making it almost impossible to earn while studying! Also it makes me wonder why are no other bursary funded degrees being changed to loans? Are nurses not as important?



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## Caroline, Plymouth

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I worked as a support worker for a number of years, enjoying the job and finding the work rewarding. I supported people in their own homes who experience mental health needs. After having children I decided that I wanted to enter the nursing profession to maintain my values and outlooks and help other people within this professional role. My decision was a natural one which in turn will benefit my family as well. I already have a degree with a loan. I am in my first year of my nursing degree, enjoying it but it is a full on course, with young children time management is key. I cannot work because there is no time. I rely on the bursary to help with childcare costs and to keep money coming in while I study. I am looking forward to placements but know that I will find managing time stressful. If I did not have the bursary I would be very worried about money. With a loan, many people in similar circumstances as myself who would make fantastic nurses will be put off. Often entering into nursing is a decision based on life experiences, taking away bursaries means taking away opportunity for those that will maintain excellent nursing values.



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## Karen, London

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At 38, with 2 small children, I have finally found what I believe is my calling. This year, I am completing an access course. I'm volunteering locally and over Christmas with Crisis. Early next year I will do a mental health first aid course with Mind. Everything in my life at the moment is about preparing for this change. I am excited! Hopefully, my application for mental health nursing is successful for the 2016 intake. If not, that dream ends for me and I truly feel I have so much to offer the profession. I would never, could never, undertake this calling if I were to be left with a full student debt.



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## Helen, Scotland

Let me start by saying I am not sure how this change affects Student Nurses in Scotland, however I believe wherever we are in the UK, Student Nurses should support each other. When I started my training, I was lucky enough to have some money to support me. It took me a long time to even apply because I had no idea how I could survive even with the current levels of funding. I had absolutely no comprehension of how big a commitment doing the training actually was until I had finished my first year. I was grateful that my tuition fees were paid and that I had the bursary but as an independent mature student, I had to work as well as study which has put additional pressure on me. As Student Nurses, our academic year is longer, we have to work full-time in placement, get less holidays (which we all work through) and most of us have to work to earn money to survive because we have children, mortgages, rent and bills to pay. Taking away the bursary and forcing student nurses to take out loans and get into debt even after they have qualified especially when nurses salaries have not had an increase above 1% for years is wrong. Student Nurses work approximately 60 weeks over a 3 year course, 37.5 hours a week for free. At minimum wage of £7.20 that equates to £16,200. The total of the bursary is around £19000, so we are paying back most of what we are given as we train. The remaining £3000 would probably cover the travel, childcare and other expenses we pay out. If the numbers are uncapped for entrants to the courses, how will this affect quality of the courses? How will the teaching staff cope with more numbers? Will the universities be given more money to recruit more staff? I think the bursary needs reviewed but to give more money not less.



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## Alex, Somerset

I would not have been able to go to university to become a nurse without the bursary. There is so much travel involved that most of my money goes on petrol, I have a mortgage to pay and bills just like most students who go into nurses. I do not have Children but those that do need to pay for child care. Mature students would not be able to go back into education and become nurses when in fact they are more often than not the best nurses due to healthcare and life experience. There is a huge shortage of nurses and it is just going to get worse. It is an insult to the profession and degrading. I would love for the people who make these decisions to even spend one day with the student nurses or real nurse on real wards. Not the private wards where they are staffed and workload easy. But the care of the elderly you need to be an octopus to do the work wards. It's upsetting more than anything to think that these people feel they need to demonise doctors and nurses. Making out we are the bad people and are greedy. When we are real people trying to get through life with the little support and income that is there. The NHS is a wonderful thing we achieved and I think we all need to take a step back and look at why we created it in the first place. Who should one man get to choose whether or not someone can get life-saving treatment? We are all humans, this shouldn't be about money making but about saving lives. Without nurses this will not happen. We are a cog in the system and remove the bursary is removing all those hard working caring people who really just want to help and do what it says on the tin, and care.



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## Marisha, Redditch

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I feel very little thought has gone into their decision to make nursing students take out a loan to complete their nurse training. I am 40 and would not have been able to go to University if this was the case when I applied. I am lucky enough to be supported by husband, a bursary and have had to take out a loan to be able to pay the bills and Mortgage. I know student colleagues that have children and this would have a huge impact on them, especially as some of them are single parents. I urge any politician to spend a week as a student nurse, they would not cope. The long shifts, the study alongside managing home life. It just feels to me they keep putting up barriers to prevent people like myself entering into nursing. A course is not like the other courses at university it is very intense. My son has just started University full-time and only has to attend for 15 hours a week. He has more free time than me and my husband put together. I would like to point out that many of the students on my course also try to work where they can to make ends meet if they have not qualified for a bursary. I myself have tried to work, but find it difficult to due to the long hours of placement and study. My back ground is a healthcare assistant, so I knew what to expect when entering into nursing and I went in with my eyes wide open, but the process took me three years before I even applied for University as I had to re-educate myself. The access course I attended incurred a cost implication as I had already completed a higher education course when I left school, but even this changed just as I was finishing and new students who hadn't where having to fund this course full stop. So this involves cost before people have even got to the stage of University. I think the point I'm trying to make is their will be a huge short fall in student nurses with a knock on effect of qualified staff. There is currently a problem with staffing levels. This will lead to poor quality of care given to patients due to lack of time. When do the cut backs stop and when will the government see the damage they are causing that could potentially be irreversible. I'm sure they haven't had cutbacks on their wages??



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## Kate, Corby

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I was a mature student and have been qualified for 5 years. Without the bursary I would never been able to achieve my dream. I have two children and needed an income, which to be fair wasn't a living wage but it did help. Whilst on placement I worked. I mean really worked hard. Doing all the duties both healthcare and trained staff do to ensure patients are cared for. Worked long days 7:30 till 21:00, so I really do believe the bursary should stay. Staffing levels within the NHS are at an all-time low. You need to be attracting future nurses to the profession. Take away the bursary and even fewer will apply.



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## Katherine, Southend-on-Sea

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I have an Upper Second Class Honours degree from King's College London. I am an ACA qualified Chartered Accountant. In my mid-twenties I started to think about what I wanted from my life. Was sitting in front of a screen the most I could be doing? I wanted a job where I could make a difference to someone's life, however small a difference that may be. For this reason, and many others, I decided to become a nurse. I was lucky enough to get a place on a PGDip programme at City University where my fellow students were brilliant, compassionate, caring and fiercely intelligent. We need people from all walks of life and with different life experience to provide the best care for our patients. We can bring different skills to the table, and share these with each other. This only helps to grow our profession. Without the bursary I would not have been able to afford to leave my job, it would have been impossible. And I know the same is true for many of my fellow students. Yes we need more student nurses, but this is not the way to make this happen.



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## J, Kent

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I qualified two years ago as a nurse, having been one of the last to receive the non-means tested bursaries as I was lucky enough to get on the diploma before it was scrapped. Prior to this I had worked for 9 years as a care assistant in an acute hospital setting and my colleagues encouraged me to further my skills by becoming a nurse. I will admit that as an 18yr old I had initially begun nurse training and dropped out-as I was unequipped at the time to deal with the pressures of concurrently working, studying and essay writing. This time, as a mature student, without parents' financial help to rely on, I applied straight away when I heard it was my last chance at diploma level with full bursary. I simply could not have afforded to live on the reduced degree bursary without loans and credit, and did not want to qualify at 30 years old with a mountain of debt when I was trying to build a career, and become financially stable. I also worked on the hospital nurse bank as a care assistant throughout my first 2 years of training to afford my rent and bills. If I had not got on that course, I would not be a nurse. I know for a fact there are now many other people who have amazing experiences and skills to bring to nursing who are currently care assistants, parents, voluntary carers and others with valuable life experience who now will never become nurses because they simply cannot afford to leave their current jobs/ roles for 3 years to do a full time course, which puts enormous stresses on the student and their family, because of the 37.5 hour working weeks on placement and trying to write assignments and essays at the same time, and not to mention the lack of 'holiday' time in which to work (we had 8 weeks a year which is also needed for valuable mental, emotional and physical recuperation...in addition to the essays we also had to complete in the 'holidays'). And then at the end of it their only reward would be a mountain of debt to pay off over, potentially, the rest of their career. Whilst continuing to work gruelling shifts and continuing lifelong learning and professional responsibilities to attend

courses and study further. In summary, the decision to replace bursaries with loans has just hammered the final nail into the coffin of a profession already struggling to recruit and train enough nurses to care for our population (evidenced by the continued extensive recruitment of overseas nurses), and has created an impossible barrier to many skilled, experienced over 25 year olds who would be a credit to our healthcare services. I am furious, sickened, saddened, and most of all devastated for our nation's health's future and the future of our profession/ vocation/calling.



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## Sarah, Manchester

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I think it is unfair, I am currently a nursing student and as well as balancing assignments, exams and presentations I'm also working full time at the hospital on placement, we have to complete 37.5 hours in practice per week. As well as this the hospital which I have been allocated is 30 miles away from my home so that's 60 miles per day I have to travel just to get to my placement. If I didn't have a bursary I wouldn't even be able to afford to travel to placement never mind buy books, uniforms and other essentials. I think it is ridiculous scrapping the bursaries nurses are under paid as it is so if nursing students were to have loans and tuition fees to pay back when they qualify this will be leaving them with minimum wage. I think it is unfair and inconsiderate it is okay for the government to make these changes but they don't know what student nurses have to go through. There is already a shortage of nursing staff and if these cuts happen then the NHS will have a major breakdown. Nursing staff actually save lives, are the government really risking it all?



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## Joan, Yorkshire

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I am a retired nurse. I trained as a mature student in the early 1980s and had three small children at that time. I needed to work to help support my young family. My husband was a nurse so was not well paid. If I had needed to take out a loan to train then I would never have become a nurse and the National Health Service would not have benefitted from the 25 years that I spent working for them. I think it is even harder for students today than it was in the 1980s



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## Jodie, Shrewsbury

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I am a second year nursing student at Staffordshire University and I love what I do. I love the patients, the families, the knowledge and most of all I love the passion I and my others have for the vocation. I am a 20 year old student with no children still living at home yet without this bursary I wouldn't be able to even consider the course, working full time hours within uni or placement and still having to work full time hours in a hospital to bring money home. Many people give so much up to consider nursing as there vocation- limited social life, no time to see our families, fatigue, burnout, emotional drain yet we all still do it; to look after strangers we have never met, to hold the hand of those who need us, to support, reassure and care. We don't come into the job for money we come into it because of love for the profession. We already struggle with the amount of nurses we have don't exclude more!



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## Katarzyna, Aberdeen

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I am still at college and if I knew it before I started the course that everything will change so badly I didn't start my courses. I am a single mum and I have to work so hard to have money for me and my daughter. I am already working, have my placement and college. It's so hard but I wish I would become a nurse.



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## Sam, Tredegar

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I live off my bursary. It pays all my bills, although I live with my parents I have been independent since I was 17 and have always paid my own bills including buying my own car. My bursary isn't very substantial and I still have to work a part time job whilst doing 37.5 hour weeks whilst on placement because of the poor bursaries student nurses receive. We don't have time off like other students and spend more hours in uni unlike other students. Cutting the bursary will have a huge impact on future student nurses, a loan isn't enough to live on per term for some, especially those with children. Those ruining the NHS should walk a mile for a month in a student nurses shoes, then see if they want to cut the bursary, but they have money always have unlike us working class people. They don't understand how it truly will affect so many students and the future of nurses. Shame on our government!



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## Marta, London

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I would not have been able to pursue a career in nursing without the NHS bursary. I am a mother of one, live with my partner and we bought a flat on the outskirts of London through the shared ownership government scheme. I would not have been able to afford doing my degree without the bursary. It simply would not be financially sound to go into university knowing I would be £65000 in debt at the end of it. I strongly feel this new deal will deter mature students like me from joining the nursing profession as it would just be silly to get a family into debt to pursue a career, as lovely as nursing is, and as much as I LOVE nursing, it would not be an option hadn't the bursary been in place.



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## Amy, Wales

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Even with my bursary I found being a student nurse extremely hard. I worked 80 hour weeks just to be able to afford to get to university. However, the fact I knew I didn't have to pay any of my bursary back was a weight off my shoulders. Nursing isn't just turning up to lectures and listening to what lecturers say. Nursing is working a full time 37.5 hour job for 50% of your course. It's different to other degrees and we are giving back before we are even qualified. We are an extra pair of hands on short staffed wards and by having a student loan means we are paying the government to work for free. It's absolutely ridiculous and with the shortage of nurses at present, this change is only going to make it worse.



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## Claire, West Midlands

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I have just started my nursing degree and I can say that having given up a full time job to follow my dream and be a nurse I would not have been able to do this without my bursary to pay my bills. I am a single parent to my 17yr old son and due to the hours I have to put in at placement and for uni work I am not spending as much time as I would like to. I am now seriously considering whether I can continue with my dream as can I really afford to come out with a lot of debt at the end of my degree. With the changes to bursaries more people will have second thoughts about whether they can afford to train as a nurse so this will lead to even more shortages to all branches of nursing. With fewer nurses there will be even more pressure on the existing nurses and will lead to more sickness for nurses and less nurses to care for sick patients.



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## Rebecca, Towcester

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I would not be able to study without it. With 2 children under 5, a husband and a home to run it is unrealistic to think that people in my position will be able to become part of the most compassionate vocation without some help. Mature students are said to make the best nurses, but people will not be prepared to cripple their family financially to follow their dreams... Not matter how passionate they are. As I am on unpaid placement for 22 weeks of the year (full time) and only have 7 weeks a year on holiday my earning potential is minimal, and if I work through my holidays when am I meant to rest? Nursing is physically and emotionally draining, people will never be able to comprehend what a normal shift for us is.... Last offices and supporting grieving families then moments later caring with the same compassion and care for someone with a different illness and a different set of needs without batting an eyelid, as if we had not just witnessed the most heartwreching loss suffered by a family. But I do it because I love it. I am passionate about caring for others and helping people in their darkest hours, we need nurses like me. People who care and want to be there. This bursary cut will create a recruitment crisis..... Without question. I would be where I am today without the bursary.



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## Julie, Swansea

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That it is unfair. Student nurses have to work on placements in hospitals and participate in shift work, with only a meagre bursary. It is outrageous that this is happening, and it will only deter people from going into nursing. The Government must think again about this, and people must make their feelings known. Again they are hitting people in society that need help and support.



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## Rhian, Pontypridd

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It's terrible that student nurses and future student nurses like myself are expected to work a full time job whilst studying and pay back a student loan, when we are training to look after the people of this country, one day we may be looking after the future prime minister or other members of parliament. But we will have constant worries about paying back a loan and not being able to give you the care you need and deserve



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## Stroma, Dorchester

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As a final year nursing student, I have held people's hand as they take their last breaths, comfort family members as their loved ones have passed, laughed, cried with patients or about patients. While doing this I have missed time with my 6 year old who has been passed from pillar to post so I am able to study and work the shifts needed to qualify! Falling behind on the set hours, I have lost weeks of my Easter or summer holidays. However nursing is a lifestyle not a career and no one can ever understand until they speak to us students and see the damage being caused by stopping this funding. Students are by no means rolling in money with bursaries, however this helps to fund our rent, mortgages, food bills, fuel to placements, parking at the hospital! We are informed we are only able to work an extra 10 hours paid work while on placement? Also we spend 50% of our time on placement ..... The course has lost a lot of applicants by Becoming only degree level ... Now I fear for my working career as a nurse in 9 months for the state of the NHS and lack of applicants because it will be financially impossible to study to be a nurse.



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## Laura, Shropshire

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I started my nursing course when I was 27. I had already done a degree straight from college, completely unrelated to nursing. However as I got older I realised that I wanted a job where I could give back to others and my life took the direction towards nursing. The only way it was possible for me to do the course was through the bursary and the fact that it was funded because I would not have been eligible for a second loan and neither would I have wanted to have been saddled with more debt! I have no idea where I would be and what I would be doing now with my life if I couldn't do the course. I would have been very limited in my future prospects and frustrated because I know I have potential. As it is, I qualify this March and hope to join the armed forces as a nurse, which is an exciting prospect. My concern is that through the introduction of a loan, people like me who have already done degrees and have been drawn towards nursing a little later in life will be unable to do the course. This is wrong because I really feel that nursing is a profession where having some life experience is greatly beneficial in terms of helping to provide deeper insight into others and certain situations, which ultimately I feel, impacts on the delivery of patient care.



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## Claire, Derbyshire

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I was a student 8 years ago, a mature student and single mother of 3. I worked bank shifts alongside the bursary and struggled to make ends meet in order to qualify in the profession I wanted. I wouldn't change a thing but without the bursary I would not have been able to even consider my career change. This move will, I feel, prevent a lot applying, mature students especially. Life experiences count for a lot and having a caring nature and wanting to be a nurse does not come with having the means to pay for a course that is in effect 50% a job. Please rethink this decision as the NHS is struggling enough and a lack of nurses will not help the situation at all.



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## Jessica, West Midlands

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The change to the NHS Student Bursary will effectively reduce the amount of trainee nurses in the future. Many student nurses are mature students who have chosen to quit their full time, good paying jobs in order to follow their dreams of becoming nurses, although they have families. Without the bursary I feel many if not all mature students will not be able to quit their jobs to train as nurses as they will not be able to afford going from a full time job to relying on loans, and if they did, they would struggle horrendously and possibly not being able to continue with their training due to financial strains this will cause on themselves and their families. I myself am a 20 year old student nurse, who came straight out of college and applied twice in order to get into university to study nursing, which I've always wanted to do. To stop my bursary will mean that I will not be able to afford to drive to university (which is 20 miles away from my home) and nor will I be able to drive to my placement (by which I have to start my shifts at 7am - so I would have to get taxis there). This is just one of the reasons why losing my bursary would make my studies so much harder. Unlike any other course, the nursing course puts students under physical, mental, emotional and social stress, as no other course requires students to work 12.5 hour shifts, 40 hours a week, with x4 3000 word assignments to submit at the end of placement. By the bursary being removed, financial stress will be added to this. The student bursary is vital in keeping student nurses. Without this, many of us, if not all, will simply not be able to cope with the financial strains, as well as all of the other stresses of being a student nurse.



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## Louise, Dromore

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I have a young child and work 37.5 hours a week for placement. I am entitled to no benefits as my partner earns minimum wage. We have rent, child care and the cost of living. Without my bursary I would be forced to either work an additional 16 hours a week to receive benefits, equating to a total of 53.5 hours a week. Plus I currently have three assignments and two exams for January. I couldn't complete the course without the bursary. There will be a huge drop of student numbers. It's too financially difficult and then at the end of a hard three year we earn 21,000 a year. Future students will be discouraged to choose nursing with NHS budget cuts, stress and no one appreciating the hard work and effort students put in when on placement.



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## Chris, Poole

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I trained in 1988, before compulsory degree nurse training came in. I was a mature student, single parent with 2 teenage children. Fortunately during my placements I was paid the going rate for working on wards. I would not have been able to afford to do nurse training otherwise. There are enough candidates excluded due to degree only training without excluding further candidates by removing bursary. I went on to work for 20 years as a renal nurse. I retired from a managers post. There are few enough nurses in this country requiring overseas nurses to be recruited to fill posts. This action will only make that situation worse. Nursing appears to be reverting to a career only for rich and upper class. Shame.



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## Sara, Durham

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I would have never undertaken my nurse training if it hadn't been for the bursary. I left a full time job to do change my career/ life. There would have been no way I would have been able to afford to do the advanced diploma in nursing. Once I qualified I went on to do my degree and got first class honours. Due to the nature of the training there isn't opportunities to get part time employment to supplement the bursary as you are on placement doing shifts that a fully qualified nurse does or in uni, you have to commit 100% to the course. You don't get the long summer breaks that other students get. Whilst on placement you have to complete assignments/portfolios, plus much much more study for your placement area in self-directed study. It is intense and stressful course but worth it, not having massive debt hanging over you when you qualify makes a massive difference. Are we not already struggling to fill nursing posts? Won't this discourage people like myself to come into nursing? If I was going to consider nursing without a bursary I wouldn't have been able to do it. Thanks to the government for yet again demoralising the NHS! I'm so proud of what we provide in this country providing healthcare on need rather than ability to pay. Please let's not deplete all resources that make it great like the doctors and nurses who are the cogs that keep it turning.



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## Graham, North Wales

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I did my nurse training in my mid-forties, with a family to support. There is absolutely no way I would have been able to manage without a bursary, or pay back a student loan. I would not have become a nurse, and I think many others in this situation will be put off in future.



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## Sharon, Oxfordshire

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I trained in Swansea from 2006-2009. I was lucky enough to receive a bursary and left university with no debt. I am now a senior band 5 in a large teaching hospital, I own my house and love my job. Without my bursary I would not have gone to university at all!! My parents would not have had the money to fund me. The structure of the nursing course would not have allowed me to have a part time job to help with funding. I am not sure what I would be doing now were it not for the money I had.....but I know I would not be nursing!! This is the case for many of my colleagues, there will be so much wasted talent if the bursary is stopped. I am one of the lucky ones who had this opportunity and was allowed to follow my dream of nursing.



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## Sarah, Ash Vale Surrey

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I am a mature Student Nurse at 50 and it by having the bursary has made it easier to help with the cost of living. At my age I would not put my family through with a huge debt if I had to pay for a student loan to become a nurse. By scrapping the Bursary it will discourage mature students to study nursing than encourage. How is this going to create more nurses for the NHS? This degree is more hours, half the course is on placements working long hours nights and weekends. What other degrees does this? This is one big mistake and the NHS will suffer.



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## Senzeni, Coventry

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It's not fair that the student nurse bursary has to be scrapped. I can barely make ends meet with what am getting now, I have lost a home (homeless up to today) as I had to leave work and study nursing. Most employers are not keen on employing student nurses as they are already over worked with their placement which is 37.5 unpaid hours a week and on top of that study, the cuts have made regret starting a nursing course. Instead of bettering my life am digging myself into a huge hole of debt.

## Rebecca, Nottingham

I am a newly qualified nurse and while these changes won't affect me I'm so angry for the future of nursing. We are desperately short staffed, we've been advertising for staff for months with not one application. I already pay over £100 a month towards the small student loan that I had during my training. That combined with £120 to the NMC, £44 for my DBS, Union fees of £98 (introductory rate to double next year!) and paying to park at my place of work I couldn't afford to live near my family in Devon (or work in the trust I trained in where I had multiple job offers) and have moved to an area with a more affordable cost of living. I spent my student years a single parent of one child. The bursary just about managed to cover my rent leaving me £100 a month to pay my bills and feed myself and my family, not to mention fund travel to placement (60 miles a day) and university (120 miles a day). Without the govt benefits system (which decreased year on year) I couldn't have survived my course and I still needed to use food banks at times during my training. I finished my degree with a first class, I won an award at my university and was nominated and shortlisted for two Nursing Times awards. I completed over 3000 placement hours on short staffed NHS wards and community teams, I am a mental health nurse. People like me will not be able to apply. If I knew I would be carrying £50k+ debt at the end of three years of hard work, I couldn't have made the decision to enter the training, it would have been irresponsible as a parent and grown up to put myself in that position in a job which likely would top out at the top of band 6 £34.5k per annum before tax, fees and pension contributions. This move by the government will force out those with experience, those with life experience. We will particularly have a shortage of mental health, midwives and learning disability nurses and there already is one. Not to mention the time bomb of debt being written off in 30 years because no one will have a hope of clearing this before the debt is scrapped.

## Martin, Coventry

I think that this change could potentially deter a lot of mature students from applying. It's hard as a student nurse with a bursary and working, but knowing that you'll have to qualify with a lot more debt would be daunting- Especially on starting wage that nurses currently have.

## Sarah, Wales

I am due to start my nursing degree next year, I am a single mum of two young children. I am going to have to seriously reconsider my options now as I cannot afford to pay back any loans as I am going to struggle with child care costs and other things as it is. This is an absolute outrage as we need more nurses to train and stay in the UK yet the government is making it impossible for people like me to train and do the job. I have wanted to do since before I could talk. Disgusting. I know that you are fighting for our rights. Just wanted to say thank you. I think the government should have their wages and bonuses cut and be forced to struggle like the average working person does day in and day out. If they were not paid so much maybe the country would not be in the state it is and we would have the nurses and doctors we so desperately need in the UK. I am absolutely shattered by this news as I probably won't be able to fulfil my dream of helping people and saving lives. The NHS is in a bad enough state now this is just going to destroy it and soon people will have to pay for their care. The ones that can't afford it will suffer greatly. I am actually really upset for me and all the other students that want to do a vital job and are being punished for wanting to. I hope for the government sake they never need a doctor or nurse because soon there won't be any. I hope this helps you in your combat against the injustice that this is.

## Ross, London

I would not have been in a position to become a nurse had there not been a bursary. I feel that nurses need to support our future and the burden that is already there. I suggest that nurses move for strike action. Nurses who quality do not earn enough as it is and unless they are prepared to increase nurses' wages significantly the bursary should remain. As a student nurse I did hundreds of hours unpaid work, this should always be taken in to consideration. I feel the present government is completely out of touch with the reality!

## Jennifer, Oxfordshire

I would never have been able to complete my nurses training without the student bursary. My husband financial supported me during my 3 years of training and we only managed to scrap through with his wage and my bursary. I would not have been able to pay back a loan and I would have never been able to pay to become a nurse. Scrapping the bursary will cause a decline in the number of people who want to train to become a nurse. They won't be able to support themselves or their families and I think the government has made a very very big mistake.

## Alex, London

Without the bursary I would not be a student nurse. I am finding it hard enough as it is having to work 37.5 hours per week in placement and working bank shifts to fund myself. The long 48 hour weeks are having a detrimental effect on my studies. This will only get worse with the loans, it will put people off becoming Nurses. How are we expected to pay back £65000 when our salaries are capped at a 1% rise? I love nursing and we all know that no one does nursing for the money but then again love alone won't put food on the table or pay the bills.

## Catherine, Manchester

I would not be on this course were it not for the bursary. We already put ourselves through three years of penury to do this course which I love. But it is already near impossible financially because we already get less than other students. I have to balance unpaid placement with uni work and employment because I am too poor not to work. My grades may suffer. To put us in debt with a loan is tantamount to us paying to work FOR FREE for the NHS. We are already used as free labour to plug staffing gaps. Paying to work for nothing is just insulting. It is clear that the Tories have no idea what nursing involves. I love what I do and wouldn't change it for the world. But I would give anything to change the callous, ignorant intellectual pygmies responsible for ruining our NHS and our country.

## Tami, Shropshire

I'm 41 and mum to 4 children, 2 at uni and 2 at primary school. I have recently applied for nursing degree courses. I have had one interview a few days ago and have another in a couple of weeks. The recent news about bursary changes has saddened me. I already have a student debt from a previous degree and the thought of adding to that considerably at my age will take some very serious thought and may well mean that I give up on my hopes of becoming a nurse. I think many people will feel the same way. I understand the demands of the course very well as one of my daughters is a student mental health nurse. Nursing and midwifery degrees are very different from a lot of degrees, where the demands on the student are very different and therefore, should not be treated the same. If student loans are the only way to go then students need to be paid properly for their time on placements otherwise they are effectively taking out a loan to work!

## Sam, Sheffield

I am a new, first student Nurse. I didn't go straight from school or college into University, I worked, saved money, got experience before committing to my dream of becoming a Nurse. Without the Bursary and lack of Course Fees I wouldn't have even been able to contemplate dropping everything to go to University. I am in a relatively good position as I don't have a mortgage or children to worry about but I still find myself struggling financially. On placement, I work. I learn at the same time, but I am still working a 35 hr/week job for no pay. Knowing that I have some money from the Bursary to keep me going is a massive weight off my mind. I don't think I could handle having the spectre of massive student loans over my head. If the government wants to introduce loans, leaving Student Nurses in £65,000 worth of debt then they HAVE to increase wages significantly. When we qualify, we're on low wages, artificially controlled low wages. We don't want to be working on low wages, struggling to meet rent/mortgage demands all on top of the stresses of the job, something the government doesn't seem to grasp. I am eternally grateful for the help the Department of Health has given me to get me onto my career path, but removing it now will be a real blow to the future of British Nursing.

## Anna, Manchester

Even with the bursary, my overdraft is the only way I'm managing to live... And when I say live, I mean essentials, not being able to have a social life and go out partying like other students. I'm often borrowing money off family for travel to placement and lunches/dinners on placement, how is this fair? I work overtime for the staff when they say they could do with an extra pair of hands, and all for minimal money and financial support. Why did I bother I sometimes ask myself? I'm putting myself and my family through so much financial pressure and working myself ragged, and in my second year, I'm struggling to see a happy ending...

## Sophie, Scotland

I totally disagree with taking away the bursary. Nursing students effectively work half the year when on placement so can't work in a part time job as much/at all then, and also get shorter holidays so can't work over summer, etc. to make more money like those studying other degrees. Travelling to placement is also often very expensive. They also get paid less than many other people will when they graduate and pay goes up a lot less as you progress than it will in other jobs, meaning it would be harder to pay back a student loan. Taking away the bursary for student nurses is unfair, and may put people off pursuing a degree and career they would love, and would help countless people in the process of doing!

## Loretta, Newcastle

I'm currently on the postgraduate diploma pre-reg nursing course. Having already completed a degree and having the debt from that I would have had to have seriously considered whether to end up around another £36,000 in debt, a total of over £60,000. Plus realistically I would never be in a position to fully pay back this debt.

## Jemma, Manchester

This week I have worked 30 hours unpaid on placement. Nurses I work with say they would really struggle without the help of student nurses. I haven't seen my daughter in 3 days as I leave before she wakes up and don't get back until she is in bed. I am lucky to have a supportive family. I rely on my student bursary even though my family only just manages to get through the month. In between attending university, placement and looking after my family I can't work to earn extra money. I am already in debt when I finish the course, I don't think I would be able to continue if I knew I would also have to pay off tuition fees as well.



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## Mark, Stirling

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Even with the bursary, my room mates and I have been finding it incredibly difficult to live as it is. By the time, we're due another instalment of our bursary, we've been living off anywhere between as little as £0.40 and £6.00, which we have to make last for a week. We are nursing students and are supposed to not only help people with their health, but also be an inspiration in the public's health, but how can we be that inspiration when some of us have to go days not eating or eating nothing but unhealthy cheap foods. We don't have time to get jobs in correlation with our degrees, in fact it is frowned upon when we do by most, if not all, Universities. And if we were to get jobs whilst on placement, we will be so overworked and exhausted, we A) will not be good providers of care and B) poor inspirations of health. By removing our bursaries, you will essentially be killing student nurses slowly, overworking them and starving them. Possibly even making them live in poor accommodation, making them more susceptible to the illnesses they are working with. The government have poorly timed these cuts, as it was not too recently they gave themselves pay rises, while most of the public sector has suffered pay freezes. I have a basic understanding of Economics and I'd like to think the Government at least do to, but the fact these pay freezes are happening provides some evidence they are not. A pay freeze does not account for increasing costs of living or inflation. I have gone off on a tangent, but the financial crisis has been handled so poorly by the current Government, that they shouldn't take any more money from the public and should instead focus on giving back the money they have essentially stolen.



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## Carla, Chingford

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Being a student nurse is not a part time thing, its full time I have 6 weeks off a year... and in those 6 weeks I work full time to earn money for my car and other expenses. Although I still live with my parents and they can help me sometimes if I don't have my job working one day a week I'd have to rely on them completely, despite them having their own bills to pay. I get 200 pound a month for bursary, this just covers petrol... how would I even get to uni and placement if I didn't have my part time job... I'd get a loan and pay it back they wouldn't give me much more!



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## Lauren, Aberdeen

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I already struggle to keep up with course work, placement and a part time job. Finding time to complete academic course work around a full time placement is challenging, I often find myself exhausted juggling so many things and struggling financially, taking away the bursary will make it impossible to afford to live and complete the course.



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## Elleah, Sheffield

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My bursary is all I have to live off each month, without it I have nothing!



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## Theresa, Hampshire

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I decided nursing was the career for me two years ago. I was pregnant at the time and wanted to have my children close together so it wasn't going to affect my studies. I am due my second child in a few months. By converting the bursary to a loan means that I will now have to look for an alternative career as I am not able to burden myself with more debt whilst raising my family.



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## Megan, Southampton

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There is no possible way that I would have been able to undertake my degree without the NHS bursary. I suffer from a long term condition that means that I cannot work on top of my degree without it impacting on my learning and ability to learn what I need to care for my future clients to the best of my ability. Furthermore, I come from a low income family, and there is no way my parents can support me financially. Over the last 3 years (I am undertaking the dual field degree), I have relied on my bursary heavily to be able to function. I rely on it to pay for rent, utilities, food, travel to and from university, and public transport to and from placement. I cannot afford to learn to drive a car with the finances I have now, so I cannot comprehend how people are going to afford it when they have to pay it back. Considering NHS services are moving more into the community, surely a car and finances to fund a car would be vital for a student nurse to have access to? Many of my fellow peers are parents and carers, and with their family commitments, they also would no longer be able to undertake their degrees. This degree is not like other degrees; it takes years of blood, sweat and tears, of resilience and determination, of perseverance striving to be better, in order to prepare us for a lifetime of doing the vocation that we love; to care for people who need us. If students can no longer do the degree, we deprive our ever growing population a large proportion of people who want to care for them when they need it. And if the NHS cannot care for people, our country will suffer as a result. What sort of government, created in the people's best interests, will let their future citizens suffer, for the benefit of finance?



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## Louise, Dundee

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Nursing students simply cannot hold down paid work and attend university and placements all at the same time. Taking this away only leaves nursing and such courses open for application to more wealthy families and penalises those with less opportunities financially. Typical the powers at be make the less fortunate suffer. Taking away this financial investment will only force more individuals into poverty!



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## Clare, Basingstoke

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If I was not able to receive my bursary, I would not have been able to afford to go to university to do my degree in children's nursing. This change would leave me in more debt on top of existing debt and I would be financially unstable. I am a 23 year old who is living on my own trying to support myself with no help. I have to commute because moving is expensive and living where I am now means I have to pay £400+ for travel a month. This is on top of my rent, bills, food, etc. I have to take out another loan as my outgoings are more than my income. If the bursary was scrapped, I would then be paying back an extra loan out on top of everything else. It would just seem like it's not worth it and it makes me upset that something like this is getting in the way of my dreams. I go to King's College London and I am extremely proud of where I am. To have the bursary taken away, would be like ripping my dreams apart.



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## Leanne, Cardiff

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I am study to be a Midwife. I live one hour way from the university and an hour and a half away from placements. If I didn't receive a Bursary the travel cost alone would cripple me. I am also a single parent and rely on the childcare grant to help whilst I am doing my training. The course is run over 45 weeks per year. No other degree course requires students to work sometimes 40 hours a week, working long and unsociable hours, whilst also completing assignments, achieving competencies and doing extra reading at home, so that students can improve their knowledge whilst on placements. Unlike other degrees there is very little time to have a part-time job, in order to prevent the mass of debt that the government is suggesting, especially if you already have a family. Midwifery is a challenging degree, in which you have to dedicate time into, whereas students on non-healthcare courses are able to do the bare minimum and still meet the requirements of the course. Why do the government think it's fair to replace nursing and midwifery bursaries, but keep those from the other healthcare professions, such as physiotherapist? I understand that they want to increase the number for students, but have they looked at the overall effect. Quite often placements cannot cope with the number of students they already have and not all qualified staff are able to sign-off competencies, so we struggle in placements as it is. Those students who are training at the moment have been selected from thousands of applicants, so are seen as the best person for that role. Cutting bursary payments will deter people from applying for the course who would have made amazing midwives, with experience and life skills. When students are on placements they are providing services to the public. Both qualified members of staff and service users, express how they can tell the difference between those who have life skills and those who haven't.



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## Jade, Sheffield

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Gaining experience in the care sector before applying for university, I knew that nursing was a vocation which required long hours, commitment and a passion for providing care to others. I'm from a working class family and have no siblings, my parents are both employed but do not earn enough to supplement living costs at university. Without NHS bursaries, I simply would not have been able to apply. Yet still, with thanks to the funding I have received from NHS bursaries, I am coming to the end of my three year degree, as passionate about providing good quality care as I was on the day I started. Therefore, I strongly believe that future nurses are reliant on NHS Bursaries and good quality care, or the NHS, will simply not survive if people do not choose to commit to the nursing profession.



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## Joseph, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

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My name is Joseph. I'm 24 and want to train as a mental health nurse. This is something that I feel very strongly about, as I have a lot of family experience dealing with mental ill health. However I, like many others have already been to university and already had my ascribed 4 years of student loan funding. This means without the bursary I would have to self-fund my course as well as working on top of my course to pay the bills. Simply put, without the bursary I will not be able to access a career in mental health nursing.



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## Millie, Kingston Upon-Thames

I am a second year nursing student, and receiving my bursary has enabled me to live day to day, especially whilst on placement where it is impossible to work extra hours when you have 37.5 hours a week plus a 2,000 word assignment due. Living in London is expensive and I still have support from my parents weekly. I am very lucky my parents are able to help me, whereas some of my friends do not get this help, and have to struggle trying to work whilst having many other commitments. The debt at the end of the three years would be so much I would not have considered it if I had to go through this



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## Lauren, Manchester

Currently to be able to afford to go to university and study nursing, not only do I do all my assignments and care for ill people and their families, but I have a part time job as well. Without my student bursary I would have to work a lot more, decreasing time spent on my academics. If you want tired, run down student nurses who won't be as well qualified, then that's fine, you can bring in the loans. But your NHS is struggling enough as it is, you haven't considered the impact this will really have. It is hard enough to be us as it is, but now you want us to do the hundreds of hours of practice, little holidays and assignments with a student loan to worry about at the end of it. If you did this degree, you wouldn't even be considering this. We are the future, and you are making it bleak.



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## Natalie, Manchester

This change is obviously prejudiced against mature students with financial commitments and families. As a student nurse/midwife your time is spent 50% theory and 50% practice which runs 45 weeks of the year for 3 years. It is impossible for student nurses/midwives to work alongside the degree to earn the money needed to keep you financially stable, this includes: child care costs, living expenses, travel expenses and equipment. This announcement will put an awful lot of future medical professionals off, which will re-bound by lowering the number of qualified nurses/midwives which will reflect the future of the NHS. I understand that the government must find a way to save money and invest back into the NHS, but, surely investing in the training and lively hood of your future medical staff will benefit the NHS and therefore investing in your future employees, whom without you will not have an NHS to begin with. Child care costs are inflating, living expenses are inflating, and fuel costs are inflating, so lowering the amount of money a student can receive by cutting the NHS bursary is leaving already struggling students penniless. Please re-consider your decision. If you leave it the way it is, then I'm afraid people will have no choice but to no longer follow their ambitions, meaning all the previous hard work and dedication will be for nothing. This has crushed an awful lot of people, me included. So please re-consider.



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## Marian, Kent

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Without a bursary my Daughter would not have been able to become a Nurse. She is a single parent and I have helped her as much as I can with her finances but she would have a lot of money worries without the bursary. We need good Nurses my daughter is one of them. You may not get anyone willing to train as Nurses as I'm sure too many would have the extra worry of paying back a loan.



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## Student Nurse, Bracknell

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I am a mature student learning disability nurse and I'm currently in my second year. I am a mother to 4 children, with one child who has Autism and ADHD, I have always wanted and had the passion to do nursing but decided to wait until all my children where in full time school so that they did not have to be bought up by childminders. So I studied an access course to be able to gain the qualifications to become a student nurse. Due to my daughter having Autism and ADHD my husband had to reduce his hours at work for me to be able to start university due to her not being able to cope with going to a childminders, this has put a lot of financial pressure on us but this has always been my dream and I'm so lucky to have such a supportive husband. If we had had to take out loans to be able to get through the 3 years it would not have been possible to have put that much debt upon my family. Being a student nurse is very different to studying another degree, we work a 45 week year between theory and placement and whilst on placement we work a 37.5 hour week which means it's pretty much impossible to work alongside. The NHS bursary has made it possible for myself and fellow students to follow our dreams of becoming nurses. I honestly think that a lot of very good potential nurses will now not bother applying due to the changes. The changes are going to make it very difficult for mature students like myself with huge family commitments to be able to follow their dreams which is such a shame, the NHS needs us.



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## Rhianna, Leighton Buzzard

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I was sat waiting to go into my first university interview to study midwifery when I was scrolling through my phone to see that the bursaries have been cut... Ironic. This was crushing news as an NHS bursary was the only thing that was going to allow me to fulfil my dream to be a midwife as I come from a low income family. I'm a bright girl, I go to grammar school, I just don't have money to fund me through university despite me working throughout my GCSEs and A levels. So now I may be deprived the privilege of studying at degree level and entering the midwifery profession purely because I can't afford to. Let's hope I get offered a place on the already highly competitive courses this academic year otherwise the chances of me being a midwife are looking slim. Will the midwifery average salary been increased to compensate having to pay back a student loan?



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## Kerry, Aberdeen

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The money students receive is to help them with study and normal living expenses as we can't get work due to long hours of study and unpaid work placements. If we have to study on loans alone by the time we graduate and get a full time job that is not very well paid where are we getting the money to pay back this loans. We will get into more debt and this will lead to financial difficulties this needs to be readdressed in the House of Lords, they won't let George Osborne cut tax credits so now let's take it out on the nursing students.



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## Lydia, London

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I started my nursing course in September 2015, which means I have 'escaped' the government's immoral plans regarding implementing tuition fees and abolishing bursaries for nursing students. However these changes will certainly affect me long-term. As a future employee of the NHS, the changes will have a huge impact on how the NHS functions and what my role as a nurse will be in the future. If these changes had come in before I started my course, I would not have opted for nursing as a career. As a postgraduate, I already have a significant debt from my first degree, which I am nowhere near paying off. The thought of doubling this debt and how long it would take me to pay it off would be very off putting. The fact that healthcare degrees are funded by the government is a real incentive for many going into nursing. Now that this incentive has been taken away, I find myself thinking - so what are the incentives for new nurses? Does a passion for caring outweigh the long days, low salaries or the way nurses are treated by patients, society and the government? As a student nurse, I work 37.5 hours a week, for free. I get shouted at by patients most days and I don't take any breaks. I am exhausted but I love what I do and will continue to do it passionately. But what if I had to pay £9,000 a year for this privilege? I'm not sure I could justify it. I currently receive a small amount of NHS bursary which combined with my savings, means that I can dedicate my time to my placements and studies without undertaking extra employment. Without the bursary, I wouldn't get by and would need to work. But on the days when I work a full shift and come home to write an essay or prepare for a lecture, this wouldn't be a possibility. In fact, it's completely unrealistic to expect students to balance homework, placement and paid employment - especially for those with a family life to balance as well. Sadly though, this is something which most students will have to do now that the bursary has been abolished. The government changes are unfair and short sighted. Many people who would make fantastic nurses will not be able to train because of the financial

implications. Those that can train will experience even more pressures around balancing university life with earning money and I suspect the student stress rates and drop-out rate will soar. The government are putting up more and more barriers for potential nurses and leaving a sour taste in the mouths of many qualified nurses who already feel hugely undervalued by the government



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## Claire, Sussex

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I have just been offered a place for Midwifery starting September 2016. I am currently a HCA in an acute trauma ward. As a student we have to work 37.5 hours, with universities advising that we cannot work more than 10 hours a week on top of this, as this is a WORKING DEGREE! Without the bursary student nurses and midwives will have no income. At 32 I personally have expenses that have to be paid for, I won't be able to work and study. I strongly believe the new ruling will be disastrous for the NHS, and for future Nurses and Midwives, with a career that demands a degree qualification, we are the lowest paid graduate profession, we will never be able to pay back a loan. So scrapping the bursary is a short term gain for long term pain in governmental terms. And for newly qualified nurses and midwives will take our income below the national living wage!



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## Diane, London

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I trained under the bursary system, before that students were actually paid - yes paid for the work they do on the wards between classroom activities, now they will pay for the privilege of caring for patients while students and then after all that and passing a degree get the princely sum of about 25K with a huge amount removed for the pension - genius - there will be no nurses soon as this is not an enticing prospect. Nursing is already at crisis point in London with the average rental meaning staff are leaving in droves. Short-sighted and immoral.



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## David, Oxford

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At the grand age of 49, I'm looking to qualify soon and find my first band 5 nursing role. I'm absolutely committed to nursing and can't wait to see how my career progresses. I'm very fortunate at the moment, as I don't have a student loan. The current band 5 starting salary of 21,692 is just above the student loan threshold of 21,000 so yes, repayments in the first year of work would be low if I had one. But not enough to reduce the loan given the current interest rate. I would need to wait until I progressed up the pay scale before I could start to effectively pay down the loan. Just like a mortgage it would take me years to pay it all off, yet I'm not sure how long my career will be given my age. I doubt it will be the 30 years needed before any outstanding loan will be automatically written off. So would the prospect of a large loan hanging round my neck for the whole of my shorter than average career have stopped me training to be a nurse? I don't know. It would certainly make life financially more difficult to balance with all existing family commitments - such as a real mortgage. Personally I am lucky to have a supportive family and we get by. Had I needed to take on a debit of nearly 40k with the risk that it could not be repaid over my career, I doubt we could have got by and I would regrettably not have started training. I believe that the government's decision to stop paying fees and providing a bursary will be a significant disincentive for mature students like me entering nursing. It is likely to discourage individuals returning to work after raising children. It is likely to discourage individuals from retraining as nurses. It is likely to reduce the diversity of life experience that we collectively harness for the benefit of our patients. A short-sighted proposal that undervalues the hard work, commitment and dedication that all student nurses - no matter what age - need to succeed.



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## Rebekah, London

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As a student, I received a bursary which was essential to me getting by but even while I was getting this I had to work and rely on my parents and bank overdrafts to get me through the three years. The bursary was amazing but even still I found it hard so imagine what it would be like for those who don't have the opportunity to gain the bursary. I dread to think what life would be like for them and what they would have to do in order to survive but I think it would be incredibly disheartening and would end up reducing the amount of nurses coming into the fold.



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## Maggie, Bristol

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No I wouldn't have considered training. My 14 year old daughter wants to train when older but I will be discouraging her if she is not discouraged already. Even with the bursary I still had to work part time to make ends meet as a single mother despite the work load I had as a student.



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## Mandy, Telford

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Without the bursary I could not have afforded to do my degree (I qualified this year) and the last six months whilst I repeated a module without the bursary left me in severe financial hardship, £900 in arrears on my rent relying on my parents to buy food for me and my daughter. Even with the bursary that I received I still had to apply for a maintenance loan and the university hardship fund to support myself. I was unable to work a part time job as the degree, plus the practice hours already made it difficult to see my daughter. If the bursary was not available I could not have done the nursing degree as having previously received finance for my first degree I would not have been eligible for any further student loan

## Vicky, Cardiff

The government are expecting more and more of nurses, yet without increasing pay. As a profession responsibility is increasing, a profession that often gets the blame when things go wrong. Now they are expecting us to come into debt to qualify as a nurse. Many nurses have no choice to work weekends, they need the unsociable hours enhancements to provide for their families, and now with no significant pay increase for a prolonged time, the cost of tuition fees is being added?? Moreover Drs have reduced fees in their final years due to their high number of clinical practice hours, yet nurses who are subbing the wards being short staffed and having to do so?? The UK is already short of nurses, it will become an epidemic with this in place. Nurses are already overworked and underpaid. I know I wouldn't have gone into nursing if it involved tuition fees. People become a nurse because they have a passion for people, you cannot put a price tag on this, in doing so there is a risk of turning away people who have the potential to be brilliant nurses.

## Rachel, Anglesey

I am a 39 year old mother of three, I am currently studying -Fdsc in healthcare practice with the view to doing my nurse training. I won't be able to do this as I can't afford to run up this sort of debt.

## Sophie, Salisbury

I am 28 years old, I want to be a nurse and I will be. But without my bursary I would not be doing this course, I could not afford it. Even with my bursary I still do not have enough money to pay my rent eat and get to placement which means I have to work extra hours at the hospital on top of my 37.5 hours a week. This week I have done 3 nights shifts for placement and have been at uni for 7.5 hours, I have a 3500 word essay to do and I was nearly falling asleep in lectures. This is all amongst me working bank shifts to be able to afford to stay on the course. I feel burnt out before I have even qualified. The government need to look after student nurses more. It took me till I was 26 to know I wanted to be a nurse, at this stage in my life I would not want to take a £27000 loan out, especially when you take into account that as a student we have to do 2300 hours of placement for free, 24-7 hours, shift work, we are meant to be supernumery but with the overload of work that nurses have we certainly work our fair share. The government are short sighted, there will be a shortage of nurses in the future, and there is already a shortage now. It is truly disheartening! I can't wait to be a nurse and feel lucky to be able to follow my dream and care for people for my career. I am thankful I get the chance.

## Sonia, Middlesbrough

I am 45 years old. I raised my children before embarking on my nursing career. I receive £4000 a year bursary so my husband works 60 hours a week so we can survive and it is only surviving. My bursary was decreased this year as my husband worked overtime last year to keep us going. It is an absolute disgrace that the government think that it is fair to make undergraduate nurses end their degree in around £60000 debt for a £22000 a year job. There is no way on earth I would have been able to be a nurse if this was brought in earlier. I'm saddened to say that the NHS will be destroyed due to the significant lack of nurses entering the profession



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## Luke, Leeds

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I am currently studying adult nursing at Leeds Beckett University, and without the NHS bursary I would have been unable to even contemplate taking on the challenge of a three year course as a mature student who already has student debt. I've been working in healthcare for five years since finding it impossible to find work with my first degree in sociology and social policy. After loving the work that I did and being encouraged by my peers to pursue nursing I decided to take the gamble and apply. The bursary itself isn't much and day to day life is still juggling financial knives. But without it I would have never even considered taking on nursing due to the debts I would incur on top of others. The fact that nursing wages are also so low, I would see no way to even be able to claw out of that debt. I feel very disheartened by this, and feel for all the potential students who will now be unable to fulfil their career aspirations. As I said before I've worked in the NHS for a number of years and its evident how desperate the need for nurses is, I fear it will be impossible to bridge that gap now.



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## Samantha, Didcot

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I am a single parent and struggle enough to survive month to month even with help from the nursery. I am doing the degree in order to give myself a better annual salary doing something I feel strongly about and so that I can become financially independent from the government. This is something I could not do without this course. Having to pay back higher loan amounts would distract from my final salary making me unable to gain this independence and ultimately I wouldn't have undertaken the course if I was going to spend the rest of my earning life paying it off.



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## Kerrie, Aberdeenshire

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As a mature student I could not have considered taking on nurse training without a bursary. I couldn't work part time as had so much study to do when not on placement. The bursary barely covered the basic needs, without it I wouldn't have become a nurse. Fantastic nurses will be missed if they don't have the opportunity and the bursary is stopped.



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## Olivia, Oxford

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Coming from a family who cannot afford to support me financially enough to cover all expenses (i.e. Rent, travel costs, maintenance and food), the NHS bursary I receive monthly is a life line. Working full time, exhausting hours for placements means it is physically impossible to hold down a job to support myself comfortably. This, coupled with the assignments, exams, reflections, dissertation writing, personal study, and \*gasp\* a social life (!?) shows just how stressful this course is. Even with my bursary (I receive the maximum amount), I still have to work part time in a bar as the amount isn't enough to cover my rent. When I tell people the hours I work on placement (often 14 hour shifts) they naively say "well, at least you're getting paid", to which I reply "... But I don't! It's part of my training! I do get an NHS bursary though, so I guess I am kind of getting paid". Without the bursary, student nurses literally WILL be working for free, which really isn't fair. Student nurses, though supernumerary, are an integral part of the work force within wards. We work our butts off, we are keen to learn, we love nursing! But it is hard, hard work and extremely intense... Please don't make it harder for us.

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## Sarah, Cambridge

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Without the student nursing bursary I wouldn't be able to afford my travel costs, such as getting the bus to university up to five times a week, which costs me £7.40 per day, or drive to my nursing placements. The student bursary also goes towards insuring my car so that I can drive to placements. The bursary also helps towards costs for food and basic bills. It will not be appealing for people to pursue a career in nursing, knowing that to manage these bills, a student loan will be required. The prospect of graduating in debt from this, and now in debt also from the proposed cost of the nursing course itself is not appealing. I am really disappointed by this change, and nursing is not like any other profession so should be treated uniquely. It is really tough being a nursing student and I think that the proposed bursary changes should be considered carefully to respect the work, commitment and enthusiasm of student nurses.

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## Rosie, Birmingham

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Nursing is not a vocation that I thought I would ever have to confidence to apply for, however as I turn 24 I now have the experience and confidence I always craved and could not see myself doing anything else but nursing. I am so lucky to be accepted into the University of Worcester commencing my degree in 2016. I cannot put into words how happy I am. However. Due to the scrapping of the NHS bursary I believe I may have to desert this dream. Although I am able to have the bursary during my first year, I may have to apply for a loan in order to pay for tuition fees, for my second and third year. This will not be viable, as I have completed a degree in the past. This is not me being greedy or wanting more money, I simply require my tuition fees to be paid for me, by a department I though cared about the nation's health. I do not have £18,000 to pay for a qualification that could change my life and help me change others. If you take away this bursary you take away my hope, and many others of ever being a nurse.

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## Hayley, York

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I am currently in my third year as a student nurse, I have been working up to 60 hours per week (including practice placement hours) throughout my degree to afford the cost incurred whilst been a student in the City of York. I would not have been able to complete this degree without my NHS student bursary, my fellow 9 housemates and course friends state they wouldn't have either. The country would have 10 less exceptional future nurses.

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## Janna, Fife

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Having a young child and a home of my own to run there is absolutely no way I could have pursued my dream career in nursing without the bursary. Making ends meet is still a challenge but it is made possible with the financial help we are given.

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## Dawn, Glasgow

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Student nurses "work" unpaid for around 65 weeks during their studies. To those we are care for on the wards and in the community we are not seen as supernumerary. To the short-staffed wards we are a much needed extra pair of hands. When I was an auxiliary I loved having students on the ward because we needed all the help we could get and I hope staff on my placements feel the same about me. The academic year is longer than most degrees and despite the bursary most of us still need to work to make ends meet. The summer break doesn't coincide with the school holidays so those of us with children sacrifice our family life to care for the families of others. I wouldn't have been able to pursue this vocation without the bursary, how many future nurses will never be because of this?



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## Jennifer, London

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I am a mature student. I feel that my previous employment in the care sector and my precious degree, in psychology, has given me invaluable experience to draw upon, and to make me a better nurse when I qualify. However, because this Nursing degree is my second, I receive little support from student finance in the form of a reduced amount that I can take as a loan, and no access to grants. As a mature student, I cannot expect financial support from my parents. I am already in debt from my previous degree. As a student nurse on placement currently, I am unable to find work that is flexible enough to fit around the minimum 30 hour week I must complete, let alone work enough hours to support myself during this time. Without the bursary, I would not even have been able to consider undertaking Mental Health Nursing bsc. Many of the others in my cohort are in a similar position. By removing NHS bursaries for student nurses, you will be preventing people like me from accessing a career in which their previous, costly, experience will aid them and allow them to excel; leaving the opportunity to study nursing open only to those graduates who are wealthy.



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## Alex, Worcester

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I for one would not be able to live and learn. I am doing one of the hardest courses there is to do in university. It is my dream to be a nurse. I know that I wouldn't have been able to have done this degree if it wasn't for the bursaries. Financial hardship causes many people to drop out of university courses. If they cut NHS bursaries, people wouldn't be able to afford to do the degree. This would cause an even greater shortage in the amount of qualified nurses coming through the system. I don't think the government realises just what the implications would be on an individual basis. Please don't take away the bursaries, if not for me personally but for future generations to come



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## Christopher, Sheffield

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Personally I believe that removing NHS student bursaries is going to have a negative impact within the future. Firstly as students we are expected to work 37.5 hours a week with no pay. Most students now understand this as we are having our tuition fees paid by the NHS and it adds to our hours to be qualified. However if they add tuition fees it wouldn't make sense, as future nursing students would be paying £9000 (£27,000 over 3) and work with no wage. The argument often is students do not count within the staff count. However when on a busy ward and it may be understaffed you are an essential member of the team at that time and will be treated like any other member. Second of all the problem with student finance is that a lot of it is based on parents' income. This is a negative as student loans will not cover the expenses of rent, travel, daily living etc. The NHS bursaries have allowed people to be able to attend various university's as without it they would not have been able to afford it. With the removal of bursaries is also likely to see a decline in the number of people who want to have various healthcare roles. This will have a negative impact within the future as nurses and staff will be stretched even further. Overall personally I believe that removing the bursaries has been a terrible decision and will have major negative impacts within the future. Thank you for giving students the chance to voice their opinion on this matter.



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## Donna, Alloa

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Simply will not be able to afford to do my degree in nursing. Words cannot describe my disappointment – it was my dream career.



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## Binita, Wembley

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Working night shifts, day shifts, being apart of community services all require travelling, food, confidence and effort. Although I do not receive a large amount of bursary, the amount that I do receive does not even cover half of this cost, yet I am still thankful to receive this small amount. Students work just like Nurses, without pay. It's much harder for us to adapt to new settings every placement and still do everything with respect. We do not get paid to work 12 hours shifts four times per week, we do not get paid to provide care, being vomited on, yelled at, questions, being emotionally drained, give medications, and deal with the emotional and physical stress as students overall. Without this bursary, placements are much harder to attend to, students will lack the motivation to want to continue nursing and attend lectures, causing a shortage in future nurses and putting patients at risk. Many students rely heavily on the bursary to pay for food, travel and books. It's completely ridiculous to scrap it altogether whilst student nurses are trying their best to help others and provide care to the sick. This will have such a negative impact - maybe reduce the amount given to students instead?



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## Becky, Cardiff

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I was lucky because I was the last intake of students to get the full bursary before it changed to a mix of bursary and student loan, and there is no way I would have got through the course without it! I am a Mental Health Nurse, and like many others I wasn't ready to become a nurse at 18. I was 24, living independently of my parents when I started my BN. My monthly bursary worked out around £570 a month which just about covered rent and some bills, leaving not much left to live on. I worked on the nurse bank however this was difficult to fit in around placements which were already 37.5 hours a week. Scrapping the bursary will prevent many mature students from applying for nurse training. I saw many students in cohorts below me who really struggled and would in some cases work over 60 hours a week to make ends meet. As is especially the case in Mental Health Nursing, where we are expected to deal with extremely difficult and emotional situations, a bit of life experience can really help, and keeping the bursary is crucial to enable mature students to become nurses!



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## Leanne, Stoke on Trent

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I have just qualified as a nurse but I know that if there had been no bursary I never would have started the course. I had three children when I started the course and a husband with a low income. There would have been no way I could have supported my family, paid for childcare and completed my academic studies. I am so grateful for the opportunity that I have had to change my life and the life of my family and I feel sorry that others in similar situations will not have the same opportunity.



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## Mary, Scotland

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As a nursing student I am working full time hours on placement, and working a part time job as a care assistant, just so I can afford rent, food and travel to placement and classes. It would have been a much bigger pressure, much more stressful, if not impossible to complete this course without a bursary. And that's just from a student's perspective. Hospitals would not function without the help of students, who are officially supernumerary but from my experience are certainly depended on, especially when wards are short on staff or are a physically demanding ward. Taking away a small bursary for a course which requires a huge commitment, for a job which is very important is really unfair, makes no sense, and provides no incentive for those who are passionate about nursing to fulfil their career. I would like to see the people who made this decision try to survive off a nursing bursary, I doubt they could. And as for suggesting we take loans out instead- what about those of us who already have student loans and are already in huge student debt.



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## Janet, Suffolk

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I am a mature student and I am currently expecting my first child. Without the bursary there is no way I would be able to afford child care when the baby is born. I would be unable to return to my studies and qualify as a nurse. When we started the course our tutors told us that they did not recommend that we worked whilst on the course as they thought it would affect our grades and ability to complete placement. They felt that patient safety would be compromised if we were too tired from working extra jobs whilst studying. There is no way I would have even considered starting the course if there was not a bursary in place.



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## Gemma, Birmingham

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As a mature student with a previous degree taking on a degree in Nursing was a massive decision. A decision I would not even have considered if tuition fees were not funded as I simply could not afford it. For the past three years I have worked alongside qualified nurses, doing the same long hours, looking after other people's families, with care, compassion and kindness. I do not get paid anything to do this, but it is my job to be professional, to be an equal member of the team. I only get the minimum bursary amount a year (£1000) so cannot afford normal living costs such as rent, bills, and food so rely heavily on my family for support, again without such I would not be doing this course. Alongside working full time hours caring for patients and their relatives with a smile and kind words, student nurses are completing academic work, doing exams and being scrutinised in order for the UK's nurses to be the best. This allows no time alongside to be doing paid work. Nursing would never have been an option for me if I knew it would leave such a massive financial burden. Patients often say to me "you've earned your money today" but when I explain that as a student I don't get paid, those members of the public are truly shocked. When future student nurses respond to the same comment and have to answer with "I'm paying to be here", the reality of this situation hits home. Why are people going to pay large sums of money to work long hard hours to enter a profession that won't pay you when you qualify either? We are in desperate need of nurses, how does this change make recruiting our future workforce any easier?



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## Debra, York

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This summer I worked 13 hour shifts at a hospital an hour away from home. I wrote 3 assignments at the same time. My little 6 year old daughter said “I miss you mummy”. My heart broke. I said “When Mummy is a nurse, we will save some money and go on a special holiday wherever you like!” This makes her happy, it helps her to understand when mummy missed her singing in church for harvest festival, why I can’t go to the Christmas service with her and why I can’t help out on her school trips. It doesn’t stop her missing her Mummy she is proud and she understands. Thankfully I will not have huge debts when I qualify and I will save for our special holiday. If I had huge debts I would worry about paying them back and not saving. Why should student nurses have to pay to train, when will people see what our nurses give above and beyond their call of duty, they deserve so much more!



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## Kirsty, Staffordshire

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I wouldn’t have been able to afford to go to university if the course wasn’t paid for, as I already have debt that I am paying off and I am having to work at least 20 hours a week as well as attend university just to afford to keep paying my rent and bills. Working as well as doing placement will be difficult but knowing that I won’t have a huge debt when I graduate is a huge relief. We give every part of ourselves to this course- it’s not a standard degree- we have to be aware of ourselves in our everyday lives and our professional ones- this degree is for society as much as for myself.



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## Elizabeth, Kettering

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I understand that as a student nurse in practice I carry out tasks that add to productivity of the team I am working with. Should the bursary be cut, I would see this as me paying to be in a work place whereas the bursary is now paying me a basic income for the work I am completing.



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## Fiona, Oxford

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Honestly without the bursary it would be extremely difficult for me to manage accommodation, living expenses and materials needed for studying. I have to also apply for student finance each year because I know that the bursary on its own will barely help me cover rent let alone everything else like travel and ordinary living expenses. I’m currently in the third year and studying learning disability nursing, I had been considering also retraining as a children’s nurse so I can have both qualifications however considering the fact that the bursary may not be there any longer has greatly put me off. With most of my time on placements during the course, it leaves me little to no time to find a part time job to help with finances as I simply do not have the time or energy to do so. It’s such a shame because I would love to further my career and opportunities by having both qualifications but it’s just not possible without the bursary to ease just a little bit of my stress from thinking about expenses. As well as that there is also a growing shortage of nurses, I think cutting off the bursary will just push this even more until the situation becomes worse than it is. Working on placements without getting paid is already questionable so without the bursary as a kind of “payment” for our time and effort isn’t acceptable at all. The chances for someone in a less fortunate position (such as being unable to afford the expenses and time of doing a three year course) is made even narrower. I would highly suggest this to be thought through properly and to listen to the people who are going to be seriously affected by all this.



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## Chloe, Rochdale

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I travel for an hour and a half to get to placement and the bursary just about covers the cost of this. The reason I stayed at home with my parents while studying was purely because I didn't want to be burdened with loads of debt. I love what I do, but having a loan and no way of earning money by having a part time job would mean I would be extremely anxious and stressed throughout my training. That is not what you want your future nurses to be.



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## Joan, Hamilton

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I qualified 6 years ago. I could never have afforded to become a nurse without a bursary. In fact I did a diploma because I could not afford to do a degree. As a single parent with my youngest child at home, I also received extra for my daughter but I also worked part time to supplement my income as I also had a mortgage to pay. Due to this when I was on clinical placement my total working hours were 49 per week. Then I also had to find time for studying and time with my daughter. I was 43 when I began my training, my daughter was 15. Who is going to take this on without financial support?



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## Emma, Liverpool

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I am currently in my final year of a nursing degree and without the student bursary I would not have been able to do my training. I have a 3yr old daughter, I own my own house and would not have the time work any extra hours above the 30 hrs per week we already have to work and would not be able to pay a loan back. I hope the government overturns this decision as students which would make excellent nurses would not be able to undertake the training. We need the bursary to maintain a high level of care for our patients!



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## Liz, Chelmsford

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I qualified as a mature student in 2008 on a student bursary. I already had a degree so would not have been eligible for a loan. I trained as a single parent with 2 very young kids and wrote my assignments at night while the kids were sleeping...I was always broke and exhausted.....it was the hardest but most rewarding time of my life. I'm now an oncology research nurse, and chemo trained. I've treated cancer patients on trial with drugs that are now licenced by NICE, and feel so proud of my role. .... my job is my passion. How different things would have turned out had I not had that bursary.....



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## Pauline, Perth

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I am a charge nurse in a medical ward we work up to 7 shifts in a row our students follow our rota as they work days, and nights weekends and holidays. They help us provide care whilst learning as nursing is now more challenging than ever. Nursing even in the last ten years has changed we have taken on roles that junior Dr completed before we study hard and learn drugs inside out as we need to know interactions and complications. Student nurses deal with stresses that young people would shy away from. Taking their grants would make nursing a poor degree. The students would focus less on their learning and have to take on second jobs putting YOUR relatives' life at risk not only when they are a student but also when they are qualified as a nurse. I know I hold the hand of my patients and hope I can make their day better.



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## Linda, Dorset

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My daughter works in a London hospital and made a decision to become a nurse after fulfilling an honours degree at a top university. She already had a debt of £20,000 from her previous degree and although she was adamant that this was definitely the career she wanted to follow she could not have undertaken the training without a bursary. Living in London would have increased her student debt substantially and a nurse's salary would in no way fund living in a city with extremely high living costs and a huge debt. Nurses have experienced v low cost of living rises and their salaries may even be cut if Jeremy Hunt takes away their unsocial hours payments. Nurses will be deterred from training especially in areas of high living costs and students with existing degrees will definitely not enter the profession.



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## Phoebe, St.Neots

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I won't be able to afford to drive to my placements. If there's no bursary it would be impossible to function as it is extremely difficult to hold down a money earning job at the same time as a nursing degree!



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## Rachel, Shropshire

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I qualified as an RGN 3 years ago and received a bursary for 3 years. Without this bursary I could not have completed the course as during placements I was working 37.5 hours a week (not including assignment writing.) Often the placement hours occurred at nights and weekends. I did a previous degree 10 years ago and was able to have a part time job alongside this to supplement my loan. This would have been impossible at the same time as the nursing degree. Without the bursary I would not be an RGN today.



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## Claire, Plymouth

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I am a mature 3rd year nursing student and would want people to know that without the current level of funding, I would not have chosen to go into this profession, nor would it have been financially possible for me to have done so given the level of commitment required from the course. When I am on clinical placement, I work 37.5 hours a week, alongside this I still have deadlines for essays to meet, sometimes exams to keep revising for, more often than not, I have two sometimes three pieces of coursework to complete as well as evidencing my competencies during placement. I would say on average, I am working a total of 65 hours a week in order for me to attain the evidence I need to pass my placement and also to gain the knowledge and understanding required of me to be a proficient, safe practising nurse. I also have a family - husband, two children, one of which with autism and high anxiety, which at times can be very difficult to cope with on top of my academic studies, however, the current financial funding to do this course enables me to continue my studies with minimal financial worry, also with thanks to the additional financial support from family. I am very thankful that I have not had to work part time to support my studies as some of my peers have had to do. I don't think mature students (I am going to be 40 when I qualify) will want to start their careers with £50,000 worth of debt when they have mortgages and families to support. The removal of this funding is ludicrous.



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## Anthony, London

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I wouldn't have been able to do it. I don't see why, when I provide 2300 hours of free labour to the NHS now, for the sake of learning, I would be expected to pay for the privilege of entering a profession where I will not be valued (as seen by the real time pay loss of 9.6% in 6/7 years and the lowest starting salary of any profession). Student nurses attend their courses, 9-5, 45 weeks a year. Other students attend university for 30 weeks or 56% of the year but will often only have a few lectures during those weeks, a lot of their learning can happen away from the campus. Other students therefore have a better chance of being able to work a part-time job whereas student nurses on placement will have to work on top of the 48 hours they can already be expected to work for their learning. The Deans of Health lobbied for this change knowing full well what the outcome would be. They don't care about improving nurse education they just want to line their pockets. There is no way that they will accept more staff to make up for the higher number of students, they certainly haven't this year. Finally, whenever anyone tells you that we can't afford to fund the NHS they are lying. We are the 4th largest economy on the planet. We have one of the strongest financial sectors in the world. Since 2008 we have given £375 billion in quantitative easing to the banks, literally paying them for their mistakes and so they continue to gamble with our money. Interest rates on savings haven't improved, they haven't loaned more money out for mortgages, they've kept it because they know that if they consolidate that wealth and keep it they can earn enough interest that they will never have to spend it. The cost to pay student nurses a salary would have been nothing compared to that. They could have been band 2 rising to 3 in the 3rd year, had a stable source of income and the loyalty to an organisation and country that would seem to value them. Instead they've been punished, despite a demand for them, for the mistakes of the financial sector. £800 million was just cut from the health budget for no reason. It doesn't protect the long term future of the NHS it undermines it.

It makes it more likely that people will choose other professions and other degrees. It makes it more likely that currently studying and qualified nurses will decide to leave the country and avoid the chaos that will ensue when the staffing shortages continue. If I had to advise someone now? I would tell them to become a healthcare assistant and use that to fund themselves through studying another degree. You'll still have the opportunity to care, you will still be useful and with the new Band 4 role you will be able to work as a nurse without £57,000 of debt. From there the world is your oyster, ask your trust to second you to university to become a registered nurse, or move into another field when you realise that salary cuts are the only thing that Osborne can offer you.



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## Jessica, Manchester

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I have recently enrolled on the pre access course looking to enrolling next year on access to health as a stepping stone to university. This change from a bursary to a loan is despicable. By 2017 I will be enrolling for university that now I know I can't repay and would never earn enough to pay it back... honestly I'm heartbroken and undeniably disgusted by the government's decision. How am I supposed to live my dream to be a nurse and make a difference? I'm hurt our government actually believes this is the acceptable way to save our country money!!!! It's a disgrace!!!!



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## Gemma, Leigh

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That students will struggle trying to work to earn a living, work in a hospital as part of their studies and complete a full time course. This is going to make more people turn away from nursing and lower the amount of people wanting to go into further education. This will result in fewer nurses being trained and having a big impact on the future of people's lives and the NHS



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### Joanne, Doncaster

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I was a mature student with 3 children and would not have been able to take on the burden of student loans. I am now a community specialist practitioner district nurse. Although student nurses are supernumerary they still help to prop up the infrastructure of a heavily understaffed NHS. Student nurses work incredibly hard and although they are learning they are working unsocial hours and often longer than they are expected to because they are so dedicated. Student nurses will become a thing of the past as people will not want to get into debt and pay to work nights!!!! Nursing is not like many other degrees, it is full time and hard work. I would urge our government to reconsider otherwise there will be a huge crisis!!!



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### Rachel, Lancaster

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Without the bursary, I could not possibly have started my nurse training. I am a 40-something single mum so need every penny of my bursary, but still regularly go without myself to put good on the table for my children. Borrowing money to train would not be an option for me as my eldest will go off to uni 2 years after I qualify, so a high percentage of my earnings will be spent on her expenses.



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### Gemma, Leigh

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That students will struggle trying to work to earn a living, work in a hospital as part of are studies and complete a full time course. This is going to make more people turn away from nursing and lower the amount of people wanting to go into further education. This will result in fewer nurses being trained and having a big impact on the future of people's lives and the NHS



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### Charlotte, North Wales

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My health board is currently facing a shortage of nurses. It has also been recently placed in special measures, of which I have no doubt this shortage has contributed to. If the bursary is to be scrapped this may discourage high quality candidates from training. What, then, will become of health boards like mine?



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### Jacqui, Kingston Upon Thames

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My daughter is 16 and just about to sit 10 "academic" GCSE's, she had a longstanding ambition to study Nursing at the University of Surrey. She now feels that is a choice she cannot afford to make. A potential nurse walking away sadly from a career choice which just looks financially ridiculous to a young person.



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### Dan, London

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that I will be required to work just to pay for my bills and to pay for my food allowances as my parents are already working so hard in order to provide payment for my rent whilst studying. Also, books and other necessities will be harder to attain due to financial problems.



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### Rhiannon, Swansea

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Without my bursary and travel expenses, I would not be able to travel to and from placement and would then miss out on the amazing learning opportunities I have been fortunate enough to experience so far. I currently study child nursing but still have to work on an agency, receiving much less bursary/loan than friends studying other degrees. Without my NHS funding I would not be able to study the degree to achieve my desired job as a paediatric nurse.

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### Ann, Berkshire

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I completed training in 1995. I completed an OU degree working full time to support my 2 children. Without a bursary I could never have got out of a poverty trap. As it was I went on to further training helped my 2 through university now in good jobs and none of us are on benefits. I love nursing but working weekends and unsocial hours is something most students do not have to and that as well as study full time. With the pay freeze most will look at careers with better futures and an ability to pay back the loan.

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### Suzanne, Londonderry

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I would not of been able to have the honour of starting my degree without the bursary, I care for my step father as well as volunteer as a youth worker. The government had a push on the 'Big society' giving back to your community which I have been doing for 10 years, I have my step father living with me so not to have him in a home. For me becoming a nurse is not for a career, it is who I am. Someone who is there in someone's hour of need, giving hope and comfort. I am a mature student who only wants to help others which my degree is teaching us, yet it seems like the government just wants people to show good will and in turn they show no support. The hours required from a student nurse is not the same as any other student so we do not have the luxury of a job, we cannot have a sick day. How can we be safe in our practice when we will have more stresses and less sleep? This bursary allows people from all backgrounds to have the opportunity to become a nurse, now this new policy is stopping that and potentially decreasing the amount of nurse graduates. It seems like cuts across the government sectors have happened in every part with the exception of politicians, why are they exempt what is more important our health safety and wellbeing! Or that politicians have enough money for private health care? Will new students only have to pay half the cost! Seeing as we are out working for free in the trusts for half of our degree?

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### Michelle, Leeds

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If the bursary changes had happened a few years ago I would not be a nurse right now. As it was I had 2 kids and needed to remortgage my house and work extra hours on top as I needed to pay for childcare and pay the bills. I feel I've given more than enough back to society in terms of my skills and caring and the amount of income tax I pay. I was a carer on minimum wage before my nurse training. It was a worthwhile investment. This government has no interest in investing in people and making this country a better place. They want to run everything into the ground. I think it is a deliberate attempt to devalue the NHS and sell it off cheap to private, rich investors who have supported the Conservative party. They disgust me.

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### Alana, Swindon

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I have only recently qualified but if it wasn't for the bursary I never would have made it. The bursary covered my rent, but to see my friends I needed to work on top of my uni and placement hours. I was working just shy of 70 hours a week. I was lucky to be just out of school with no children. I don't have any last debts. Whilst I got into nursing so I could care for the ill and vulnerable the money helped. The bursary allowed me to not have to work over 70 hours. If I had to I would have been tired. I would have made mistakes, I would have become frustrated with my patient. Not only will taking the bursary away reduce nursing numbers but it will reduce the quality of nursing care.



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## Elizabeth, North London

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As a mature student there is absolutely no way I could have afforded to contemplate a degree where I would have to pay full tuition fees, especially as I have children who will be considering university themselves very soon. I think this change of funding will be a barrier to a whole group of prospective students, who with their wide previous experience enrich the nursing profession and who will no longer be able to start their nursing programme due to financial worries. The nursing programme differs from other degree programme in that there is a great deal of practical placements which are full time, making it almost impossible for nursing students to supplement their finances with other part-time work. Please don't suggest we can work as HCAs for NHS Professionals - everyone I know who has tried this are struggling with the application process 10 months later!



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## Morag, London

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Without the bursary I wouldn't have been able to train as a nurse. I have previous student loans and financial commitments. The bursary was a big factor in allowing me undertake my training. Quite simply I wouldn't be a nurse today if there was no bursary available.



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## Rachel, Swansea

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I am a 35 year old single mother of 2 young girls. I am currently in my second year of my adult nursing degree. My time is split between clinical practice and coursework, leaving very little time for my children. Without the bursary I will be unable to carry on with the degree as there really is no time for me to work, let alone find an employer who could be as flexible as my life would demand.



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## Rachel, Edinburgh

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The bursary that I receive for the nursing course allows me to be able to live in Edinburgh and study to get the degree in nursing that I want. Without this bursary there is no way I could afford to be at university. The maximum loan I would have received had I studied in England was not even enough to cover half a year's worth of rent. As my siblings are also at university there is no way my parents could afford to put all of us through university. I came to university straight from school so I don't have savings to help me pay. Therefore if the bursary had been taken away when I was applying for university, I wouldn't have applied at all because I wouldn't be able to afford it. Scrapping the bursary might open up money in other areas and more nursing spaces, but it will also deter people from applying.



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## Christie, London

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The bursary was definitely a major factor for me when I considered doing my nurse training and especially doing it in London. As a PGDip student I worried about the extra financial pressures that would be added to debt from my first degree. It was a relief to know that I could come out of studying knowing that I didn't have any financial burden.



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## Emma, Cheshire

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I'm 23 living at home with my partner and have a previous degree. I struggle financially anyway running a car to get to and from placement. I rely heavily on my partner financially and couldn't do it without them. Knowing I would have to pay £9000 a year for tuition fees alone would put me off. No one goes into nursing for the money, its low pay and long hours and stressful work but we all do it for the patients.



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## Julie, Wolverhampton

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If feel for the amazing health care assistants I worked alongside that have put their training off for a better time in their life. The health care assistants that I have promoted the excellence of nurse education to. Their future had been torn apart, if training isn't affordable now it 100% won't be in the future. It's a sad time for future nurses. Although not directly affected financially by the change, when I qualify the lack of student nurses to spend 5 minutes with my anxious patient, or make friends with the patient they are escorting to theatre to observe the procedure will be a huge hole that will never be filled. If I'm unable to represent an NHS with high standards as I would like I may well be ending my career not long after it has started



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## Hannah, London

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At 18 I went to university and got a degree in French. To fund my studies I was a part time community care assistant, which I realised was what I enjoyed doing much more than anything I could do with my French degree. As a result, I went into nursing with some life experience and healthcare experience, knowing it was something I wanted to spend the rest of my working life doing. I was able to do this because I was supported and funded through my course, meaning the career path I chose at 18 and very young was not the be all and end all for me. I still had the chance to pursue what I really wanted to do after gaining some life experience without being barred access, as one student loan is enough; two would just not be feasible. These are the kind of nurses you want: educated and dedicated, which does not mean rich. The very group that will be completely ruled out of nursing if tuition fees are introduced.



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## Rebecca, Birmingham

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Nursing is my passion, however I am 25 years old and this is my second degree, without the NHS funding I would not have been able to afford to do it. I finally found a career in which I love and it's a shame to think that by switching to loans the door will close to all those mature students who already have degrees and want a career change. Mature student make up the majority of my cohort, all of them fantastic, and many who would not be studying nursing today if they'd had to take out student loans. Nursing is unlike any other degree, with the amount of hours we spend on placement, working full-time 37.5 hours a week, on all shift patterns including nights and long days and on 12 hour shifts away from our families for free, and the government now expect students to pay to do that too?



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## Jeni, Edinburgh

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I simply would never have started my nursing degree had it not been for the bursary. I did the postgraduate course so already had thousands of pounds of student loans to pay off, the bursary took away that promise of extra debt.



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## Lynsey, Wales

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I'm a single mum bringing up two children as well as my nursing degree. I do not have the funds to support myself and my children while completing my course. The money I receive through my bursary is essential, without it I wouldn't be in a position to complete my degree. I wanted to become a nurse to better myself and to provide a better future for my children. Getting into debt just isn't an option when I have children to provide for.



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### Caroline, Leicester

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It means that I will no longer be applying to University, stopping my career progression from HCSW to RMN as I cannot afford the debt.



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### Kate, Manchester

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Even with the bursary I cannot afford to pay for anything, especially not my nearly £5000 rent. I thankfully have parents that are willing to help me out as much as possible but this is not the case for everyone. The nursing degree is such a difficult thing to do and students don't need the added stress of money troubles. We have placements and extended semesters and most of the time we don't have time for a part time job, and if we do then we are doing university, placement and then working 7 days a week. It's absolutely disgusting that the government think they can just cut and change things without thinking of the future. I wouldn't have done this degree without the bursary and I know that this will be off putting for so many people as it's just not possible, I have considered multiple times dropping out because I simply cannot afford it. What is the future of the NHS if no one can afford to train?



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### Joshua, Inverness

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As a student nurse I'm at university or on placement 5 or more days a week. It is therefore impossible to hold down a part time job like other degree courses. I am already paying off a car so it will be impossible for me to pay off a loan when I graduate on top of this. Being a student nurse is like being in full time employment.



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### Becca, London

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I receive the full NHS bursary (just over £500). Without this money I wouldn't be able to pay rent. My parents aren't in a position to support me financially at uni making this money essential to me staying here.



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### Jonathan, Worcestershire

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I am not wealthy enough to train as a nurse without my bursary, and I will already have student loans to pay off after qualifying. To create more debt for future nurses is cruel and unfair. I can barely afford to live now. Owing more money would cripple me financially and make me quit.



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### Jen, Plymouth

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I am a third year student nurse, and feel privileged to have received a Bursary for my tuition fees. As a mature student with a family this has enabled me to afford to live and travel to my placements. As I am placed 40 miles away from home and have to pay accommodation and travel up front this is very expensive. Without the Bursary refunding these expenses I would not be able to carry on. Getting rid of the Bursary will have a detrimental effect on recruitment, as who wants massive tuition fees to pay back when you earn the lowest graduate salary? This will create a shortage of nurses again and is the government's way of privatising our NHS.



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### Jade, Bristol

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I would not have started!



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## Charlotte, York

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Without the bursary it would have been a much harder decision to return to education after 6 years of regular income from my previous job. I worked full time whilst I completed a year's college course before entering undergraduate study and it was tough to keep up with my studies. I barely have enough money to pay rent at the moment but not working whilst at university has meant I can focus on the course and ensure that I am at my best whilst on placement delivering front line care. I find it reassuring that I will only have to worry about paying back my maintenance loan once I begin working. (Conveniently the wage for newly qualified nurses is over the threshold, meaning we have no chance to spend a few years enjoying our newly earned pay packets without paying it back.) I think it is important for the government to understand that nursing degrees are not like other degrees. We don't have three months off over summer to earn money for the next year and recharge our batteries. We spend half of the year witnessing every aspect of life and death, it is emotionally draining as well as academically demanding. If student loans for nursing courses are to go ahead it is important to understand that we will need enough money to cover all of the costs of living at university, including over the usual holidays. While waiting for reimbursement for travel expenses I struggle financially as it is. I am aware that Yorkshire is a huge county but for one of my placements I had to drive over 80 miles a day, I'm sure you can appreciate how petrol costs add up; yet the travel to placement mileage rate has been reduced for this academic year despite increases in costs. Ultimately I think that the government needs to spell out exactly how it is going to help student nurses, what the loans will consist of. Will they receive extra allowances for the longer term times? Will they still be able to claim assistance with travel expenses? Will there be grants/ other financial assistance readily available to ALL nursing students? Will they be treated as part of the workforce while on placement and receive financial benefits for the hours they work? I just hope that this doesn't put off people from becoming nurses as I fear it

will, and that all these apparent extra places available will boost workforce numbers.



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## Holly, Bacup

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I wouldn't be able to continue on the course. I have 2 young children and there is not enough hours in the day to juggle placement (37hrs a week)... A job AND coursework essays and exams. I feel drained as it is battling through the course without added pressure to squeeze a job in the very little free time I have. Our nursing degree is unlike any other as the academic year has 2 weeks of holiday! If this comes into action I'm afraid my future as a CYP nurse will be nothing but unrealistic dream. Passion for nursing children will be all a waste and I will have to get a job working in a supermarket. The little bursary I receive goes a long way... without it I will feel like slave labour. All those hours of taking pressure off our staff nurses?? We will get nothing in return and it's appalling.



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## Andrea, Jarrow

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Had the bursary system not been in place I would have not started my training, I left a good career as a youth worker for a large national organisation, but really had something pulling me towards nursing. It would have been irresponsible of me as a mother of 2 young children to take on the course only to laden me with £50k + debts for a job earning more or less the same as the job I left. Trying to solve the budgeting problem with debt will only lead to more problems in the future, isn't it debt that caused the financial problems in the first place? There are many other issues to do with the style of the training itself, it is not like any other degree programme. Either keep the bursary or pay a training wage. Even apprentices don't pay for their training and some apprenticeships go up to level 5/6.

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## Lizzie, Leeds

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I am a midwifery student in my final year at Leeds University. I have a family and came to midwifery in my 30s, leaving a well-paid job in order to pursue my dream career. It took years to get the courage and support of my family to start my training. If I was thinking about starting now, burdening my family with at least £27k tuition fee debt, I highly doubt I would even apply. We work so hard on placement, and many midwives have told me that they don't know how the NHS would run without students. To not even get your tuition fees paid for in return is disgraceful. This will seriously deter mature students, which is to the detriment of training programmes where a diverse mix of ages and backgrounds should be valued.

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## Student, Aberdeen

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Being in my 3rd and final year of my adult nursing degree my bursary has got me through it. It's paid for my transport to class and to placements (30+ miles away 2 of them were). I am away to start another placement for 3 months in the country side, 37 miles from my home and I'll be staying there. This will force me to work 6/7 day weeks or just get by on my bursary! It has helped with the fact I can't work as often due to working 36 hours, 48 hours or 37.5 hours a week depending on the type of placement and having no summer to be able to work. I find myself working 6/7 day weeks at 50+ hours a week just to get by because sometimes the bursary isn't enough but I'm forever grateful for it! I could never have lived independently without it and would forever be at my parents door step! It's helped a lot and I don't know how I could have done without it. The NHS are so short staffed at times and us as students work just as hard as they do and not getting paid to care for people the same way as full time nurses and care workers do isn't fair. Even our bursary comes to working full time at £3.37 an hour which lower than the legal minimum wage.

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## Jennifer, Colchester

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I go to uni and my placements in Ipswich, the travel cost alone is more than my bursary already. In order to make ends meet I already have to do extra paid bank shifts, which gives me less time to complete assignments and makes me more tired during my placement. I am well aware that this makes patient safety an issue, and I have nearly fallen asleep at the wheel several times, I'm just grateful nothing bad has happened so far. It seems that this decision was made by people who have no clinical experience and do not understand the emotional and physical stress and aspects to this course. It has been said "this uni course is not like any other." It is not. We have to work a certain amount of hours on placement and get treated as hcas and included in template numbers, even though we are "supernumerary." Taking away our bursary will put off those in the future, who wants to do a pretty grim job, when we are having less help to study and learn, the NHS is being attacked and the media scorns nurses at the first chance they get? Moral is at an all-time low.

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## Alison, Warrington

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If as a student nurse I had to pay for my tuition and get student loans, I would not be able to continue the course or afford to go on placement my husband is in a low income so my bursary helps us no end.



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## Rebekah, London

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The NHS bursary is a lifeline for students like myself who come from a working class background. One of the principle reasons why I could consider university a viable option was the NHS bursary and the lack of a threat of massive loan repayments. Including a little background not for any sympathy but to show the impact that the bursary had for my education. Both of my parents are disabled, my father receives a small industrial injuries pension and nothing else. My mum works two jobs, she used to work three, as a cleaner, while suffering from chronic back pain and other health issues. They live in a council house and don't own a car. I haven't got a safety net or any family collateral to back me up. They cannot afford to fund me. All my funds either come from part-time work or my bursary/maintenance loan. Because of the bursary I was able to go to King's College London to study to become a Nurse. Because of the bursary I was able to do this without the threat of massive loan repayments that would potentially cripple me financially for the rest of my life. I'm able to live fairly comfortably. I have been so blessed to come to KCL, to study a fascinating and challenging course. To be able to learn the skills to provide care for my patients. To be taught and strengthened by my colleagues working in the NHS. Will students in the future from backgrounds like mine have the same opportunities?



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## Owen, York

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I am a medical student and have seen first-hand how nurses are the life force of our NHS. I have spoken to many nurses and people thinking of applying to be nurses and have heard first-hand how these changes will be devastating for the NHS. I believe that the RCN should follow all available options to protest this change and will have the full backing of the rest of the medical professions.



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## Hannah, Leicester

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I have just completed my paediatric nurse training and I now have a job in intensive care. I initially went to university and studied a different degree but left as it wasn't for me. I had considered training to be a nurse at school but was dissuaded from doing so by a teacher. After some time I decided to train to be a children's nurse but was concerned about finances due to my previous degree. This was a stressful time as I thought I wouldn't be able to pursue my dream of becoming a nurse. Luckily I was offered a bursary and this has enabled me to complete the course. I love my job and look forward to going to work. Without the bursary I wouldn't have been able to study to be a nurse and wouldn't be doing the job I love. I feel this move will prevent many excellent perspective nurses from doing their training and the NHS and patients will miss out on valuable members of staff.



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## Fraer, Haverhill

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If I hadn't had my bursary I would not have been able to carry on with my degree because having a loan would have been too much to pay back once qualified. I have had to work part time alongside studying with the bursary which is hard but without the bursary part time work would not be enough



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## Liam, Forfar

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Without the bursary, I would struggle to support myself and my partner, let alone even make it to Uni. Compared to some degrees, we spend a lot of time in class or on placements and have a large amount of reading, self-directed study and assignment and so I would have very little time for any of this, if I had to work to support myself. Likewise, it would also impact my placements if I were to work as (student) nurses are subject to the working time directive legislation and, realistically, I would have no chance of working more than 10-15 hours whilst trying to gain clinical experience which would be financially unfeasible. On top of this, most people choose nursing as a career as they want to help others, I know I did. I imagine that many people would be put off nursing if they were going to be burdened with huge debts in order to help people they don't know. It's unfair to expect nurses to treat patients with dignity and then treat nurses in an undignified manner by making us work long hours in an emotionally taxing job in, on occasions, a stressful environment with massive amounts of responsibility; all the while trying to pay off debts that we accumulated in the process of learning the skills we need to help patients.



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## Laura, Macclesfield

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A student bursary allowed me to become a nurse without accumulating any debt. I think it's very unfair and cruel that the government are going to make student nurses pay to work 37 hour weeks in order to become a nurse!!!



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## Vicki, Cheltenham

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This is madness when so much money is spent on agency nurses and recruiting nurses overseas in hospitals to meet safe staffing levels. If the student bursary is stopped less people will train as nurses and more money will be spent. On one ward that I was working on recently £14000 was spent in one month on agency staff as it could not recruit enough trained staff. The government should be supporting nursing by increasing the student nurses numbers across the country and giving people more incentives to train not making it harder as this will obviously have a further damaging effect on the NHS and patient care. Nursing is a very intensive course and it's difficult to do regular paid work alongside it. I was well supported in comparison to the government's proposals and I struggled with doing a professional course full time whilst working most weekends and throughout the short holidays. It was exhausting but it was worth it and I love my job and making a positive difference to people's lives. The bursary changes are going to have a massive detrimental effect upon people's lives and their families. These are real people and not statistics; it is their health and wellbeing that is at stake and should not be compromised.

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## Susan, Poole

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I'm lucky that my tuition fees are paid and I have a bursary. As a mature student who has previously been to uni, I could not have afforded the cost of living and tuition fees. I believe we will lose many mature students. They come with many life skills that benefits the profession and patients, but they will be lost as they will be unable to afford it. It feels as though we've gone back a few centuries with education. Sad times!

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## Ellie, London

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I am an undergraduate Psychology student, trying to plan my career. Until now, I had been set on doing a pgdip in mental health nursing after my degree, but knew that I would have to try and save in the run up to this, as well as try and work part time whilst doing the course (which would be difficult) in order to still live in London. Since the news of cuts to bursaries has come out, I've had to really think about whether I can afford to become a nurse, which is so sad to have to think about considering that I am passionate about caring for people with mental health issues and my wealth should not matter in this. I know I am not the only one who will have to potentially rethink their future because of this, and the logic used by George Osborne, that this will create more university places for student nurses, is deeply flawed and does not apply for those who cannot afford to rack up a huge student loan.

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## Sophie, Taunton

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I could not have afforded to do my degree without this - I barely scrape by on what we do get - this is a real loss to nurses and will definitely reduce the number of applicants going into it.

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## Carrie, South Wales

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I am a third year student nurse in the final few weeks of the degree course. As a single mum and sole provider for my teenage child, it was a big decision to leave full time employment to begin my training. I knew it would be a struggle financially and it has been, but I also knew I could make a difference to peoples' lives. For me nursing is not just a job it's a calling. Over the last three years as a part of the degree course, I have worked nearly 2,500 hours providing nursing care to patients young and old. I would often leave a 12 hour shift and head straight to the library to improve my knowledge and nursing skills. I have left my own child's hospital bedside to work at the bedsides of others. I have worked full weeks on the ward as a student and then worked in a part time job on my days off to make ends meet. The NHS bursary supports nurses like me because... I have held the hand of a woman bringing new life into the world. I have held the hand of a husband as his wife slipped peacefully away. I have held the hand of the homeless man who on admission vomited on my shoes. I have held the hand of the patient as they're given the all clear from cancer. I have held the hand of the confused patient who becomes aggressive when they're scared. I have held the hand of the relative as they are told their loved one has pulled through. If someone has needed it, I have always held their hand. I did not do any of this for the bursary, but I could not have done it without it!

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## Lindsay, London

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University caps the amount of hours you can work in a paid for position due to the hours you are expected to work in placement and at university. Based on the fact the average nurse age is 29 how do you expect nurses to live. The government think that it will create 10,000 extra positions, where are you going to find the trained professionals in placement areas, there isn't enough to meet the current capped recruitment levels. I would never work for 2300 hours for the pleasure of over 30k of student debt. I look forward to having no colleagues in the next 5 years.

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## Hannah, Cardiff

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I think it's ridiculous. The amount of hours we all work within placement is phenomenal. That's all unpaid work. I personally do not qualify for any extra money other than the 1000 pound a year that is not means tested. That still does not mean however I get the equivalent to someone on full bursary from my parents. So therefore having 83 pound a month aids towards my food and petrol to get to placement. Without it I would be stuck as I don't get much maintenance loan either. Our NHS is struggling as it is to employ nurses and this cut in bursary payments means that future nurses will be lesser than now! I'll admit I could be worse off by having my own family to provide for but I know student nurses who do and they struggle enough as it is! People go into nursing to get a decent career out of it. If they don't do the degree, chances are that some will end up on welfare as they can't afford to do any other degree surely the government will end up paying more towards benefits in the long run than allowing the students their bursaries. It's unethical. Decisions are being made about health care by people with no experience of working within the health care system. How is that fair? You wouldn't expect someone without expertise to make decisions regarding care so why is the government making decisions about this?

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## Stacey, Cardiff

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I am currently in my second year of my nursing degree and although I do not receive a huge bursary what I do get is better than nothing! Being a nursing student is so difficult, yet rewarding at the same time, it is a struggle to balance 37.5 hours a week in placement with assignments on top of that and having time to spend with family and friends. It is not ideal having to work a part time job alongside these long hours in placement but this is now what many future nursing students will have to do if they choose to pursue a nursing degree. Scrapping the bursary will put many aspiring student nurses off as they will not be able to survive financially. It is a disgusting decision and the government need to realise that a nursing degree is unlike any other degree!

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## Nicola, Oswestry

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I'm a single mother in my second year of nursing. Without this bursary there is no way I'd of been able to achieve my career goals. In my first year I tried to work alongside the course but, I stopped as I could not physically or mentally meet the demands of the course and a small child as well as a work a part time job. I know there are and will be many people in my position and to scrap the bursary will see a huge decline in the number of people wanting to go into their nurse training. The bursary also provides support with childcare and travel expenses which again, people will struggle to fund.





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