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PRESS RELEASE

**Outcome of Small Medical Specialty Review does not
meet the needs of the UK allergy population**

The British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) are disappointed with the outcome of the Health Education England (HEE) Small Medical Specialty Review 2016 which includes allergy. Following the review HEE have said that “*current trainee numbers do allow for the replacement of, and the small expansion in, consultants in allergy to meet the current workforce requirements*”. This is despite the BSACI president, Dr Shuaib Nasser meeting with the HEE twice, and providing extensive data, and overall building a case to increase the number of NTN's.

Dr Shuaib Nasser BSACI President said. *‘This is disappointing news not only for the speciality but for our patients who repeatedly tell us that they attend multiple appointments in different specialties for each individual allergic symptom, yet allergy is often not addressed or correct diagnosis reached. When cost saving is a priority in the NHS this myopic decision suggests a lack of understanding of the benefits of seeing an Allergist despite multiple reports from Royal College of Physicians, Department of Health, House of Commons and House of Lords. Adult allergy services are inadequate with gross geographical inequality, resulting in misery to patients and avoidable cost to the NHS.’*

‘Examples of why allergy services are needed include drug allergy: life threatening anaphylaxis during anaesthesia means a general anaesthetic cannot be given without risk and surgery is deferred; or a patient suspected to have multiple antibiotic allergies may not be able to be treated or is given antibiotics that lead to resistance or increased cost. In addition paediatric allergy services have a rising tide of patients transitioning into adult care and therefore it is important that we make it clear that Adult Allergy Services lack capacity and therefore will not meet national standards on transitioning.’

It is hard to see how this conclusion by HEE could be reached. Allergy has only 11 NTN's; and on average only 2 trainees complete specialty training in allergy each year [none between 2015 and 2017] for a burden of ~5 million patients. There has been a track record of consultant growth, following national campaigns to improve allergy services including 13 new NHS consultant posts created in the last 5 years; but there are not enough trainees to fill these posts. There remains substantial need for continued consultant growth and the limiting factor is the very small number of trainees.

Although allergy is a small speciality, there is a large unmet clinical need, therefore the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) who represent the speciality of allergy at all levels intends to appeal the decision.

About The British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology

The British Society for Allergy & Clinical Immunology (BSACI) is the national, professional and academic society who represent the specialty of allergy at all levels. Its aim is to improve the management of allergies and related diseases of the immune system in the United Kingdom, through education, training and research.

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