

27 August 2021

Dear Practice Manager,

Long before the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic the pressures on general practice have been immense, but the consequences of the last year and a half have added significantly to this. It is testament to the dedication and professionalism of all your teams that in the face of these pressures, hundreds of millions of appointments have been delivered and patients have continued to receive the care they need.

However, I recognise that the toll taken on you and everyone in the practice has been great. The need to work differently, to impose stricter infection and protection measures, including social distancing controls, and the limiting of face-to-face contacts has resulted in an increase in abuse levelled at staff and misplaced anger towards general practice.


It is important that we are upfront with patients, so they understand the reality that we are all facing and the underlying reasons for this, and that, despite the easing of lockdown, the pressures experienced by general practice and the rest of the NHS are unlikely to ease soon. Indeed, the winter ahead will bring added challenges and pressures. It is therefore important that we make it clear to the Government that practices urgently need more support.

To deliver this, we have launched a new campaign – **Support Your Surgery**. The campaign focuses on making the case for general practice and will include continued lobbying of Government and NHS England/NHS Improvement by the BMA, a media campaign, and support for practices.

I am therefore writing to ask that you do all you can to support our campaign. To assist with this, you will find enclosed copies of a poster explaining to patients the pressure that general practice is under and what they can do to support the campaign. There are additional copies and other resources, including assets for use on your website and social media, available for from www.bma.org.uk/supportyoursurgery. These will be updated as the campaign progresses, and members will be notified through our regular GPC England bulletins.

Thank you once again, for all that you and your team do. Working together, and with our patients' support, we can improve the situation for all in general practice.

Yours sincerely



Dr Richard Vautrey
BMA General Practice Committee chair



Support your surgery so it can be there to support you

GPs, their teams and patients have faced an extremely challenging time during the COVID-19 pandemic

Face-to-face contact has had to be limited across all NHS services to protect you and keep you safe from the risk of infection. We know that it's been frustrating for some of you who have not always been able to book a face-to-face GP appointment.

Despite lockdown measures lifting, we must be honest and tell you that the pandemic has not ended, the threat of COVID – 19 remains and general practice will continue to struggle to meet the growing needs of patients. This isn't the way we want it to be.

But there are millions of patients whose treatment has been delayed now seeking help, more tests to administer and more bureaucracy, as well as millions more vaccine appointments to deliver in the coming months.

We can't meet this challenge, without more support. General practice desperately needs help, which is why we're calling on the Government to provide the funding needed to provide better services, more GPs, and staff to see you promptly, and sufficient safe space in waiting areas and for staff to see you.

Your GP surgery needs your support, so it can be there to support you.

Please take a minute to sign our petition and show your support for your local practice by visiting www.bma.org.uk/supportyoursurgery or scan the code below.



#SupportYourSurgery