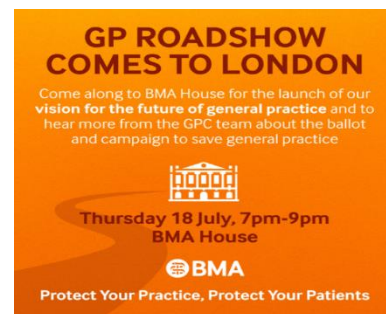


LMC Update Email  
12 July 2024

# BMA

Dear colleagues



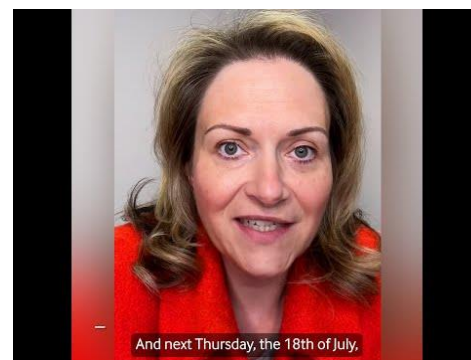
## STOP PRESS:

### BMA House London Roadshow and livestream 18 July

Come along to our roadshow at BMA House next week for the launch of our vision for the future of general practice and to hear more about the ballot and campaign to save general practice.

Thursday 18 July, 19:00-21:00 in BMA House, London. Register [here](#)

If you cannot make the event in person then watch it online as this event will also be [live streamed](#)



### Working with the new government to rebuild general practice in England

GPC England has [written](#) to the newly appointed Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Wes Streeting MP, offering to work together to rebuild general practice in England. We highlighted 'the enormous frustration at the loss of over 2,000 GP practices over the past 14 years and of over 5,000 "home-grown" GPs whose training has cost taxpayers in the region of £2-3bn. The number of registered patients in England has increased by 6.4 million in the past 5 years alone, the average number of patients per full-time equivalent fully qualified GP has risen by 18% to over 2,300.'

In the letter we suggested that the real issue over access to general practice is *patients' access to their GPs*, and as such GPC England has proposed some solutions to hit the ground running when we meet with Mr Streeting:

1. **Commitment towards a universal GP-led continuity of care model for NHS general practice in England with a minimal general practice investment standard**
2. **Work with the BMA's GPs committee England to agree a 2025 Family Doctor Charter**
3. **Practices need safe GP to patient list size ratios to ensure manageable workloads and patient safety**
4. **Build real-terms re-investment into general practice to retain and return our GPs to safe numbers to guarantee continuity of care for the population.**

Read the full letter [here](#)

The [GP patient survey 2024](#), published yesterday, also shows that there is a need to focus on general practice, something that the [Nuffield Trust](#) agrees on in their response: "Today's results show that if the new government is truly aiming to fix a broken NHS, it must prioritise fixing general practice".

Read also my response to news that the [Government plans to divert significant amounts of funding from hospitals to general practice](#)

**If not now, when? GPC England ballot for GP contractors / partners**

Our ballot will **close on 29 July**. The ballot is open to all GP contractors / partners in England, and to vote you must be a BMA member. Tell your GP partners, friends and colleagues to join the BMA today to take advantage of **three months free membership**. [Join by 22 July](#) to be able to take part in the ballot.

***Protect Your Patients, Protect Your Practice***  
***Vote YES and use the BMA GP Practice Survival Toolkit***

You should have received an email from [bma@cesvotes.com](mailto:bma@cesvotes.com). *If you haven't received an email, see more information [here](#)* and if you have any questions, please email: [gpcontract@bma.org.uk](mailto:gpcontract@bma.org.uk)

Read our [GP campaign page](#) for more information about the ballot, contract guidance, and how to order campaign materials such as BMA GP Practice Survival Toolkit cards which fit inside *GPs Are On Your Side* lanyards, badges, window stickers, and patient leaflets.

As the non-statutory ballot is only open to BMA GP contractors/partner BMA members, we have also created this [form](#) for non-GP partners/contractors to sign and show support for our campaign.

**GP contract roadshows**

The GPC England officer team is travelling the country in a series of roadshows, hosted by regional LMCs. This is an opportunity to hear about the action practices will be able to take, details about the ballot, expert leading counsel advice, collection of your practice resources, and a chance to discuss and debate with your peers. Our next GP roadshows are:

- Wednesday 17 July: [14:00-16:00 in Peterborough](#) and [19:00-21:00 in Bury St Edmonds](#)
- Thursday 18 July: [19:00-21:00 in BMA House, London](#) (this event will also be [live streamed](#)).

For those who couldn't make any of the events there are also two new webinar dates on [23 July 12:30 - 14:00](#) and [25 July 19:30 - 21:00](#)

The roadshows are free and you don't have to be a BMA member to register. Please encourage all your colleagues to attend, including **ALL** GPs, GP registrars, practice managers and practice nurses. See a full list of roadshows and webinars and register [here](#)

**Safe Working Guidance webinars with the BMA and Practice Manager Association, 16 and 17 July**  
***Protecting your patients, Protecting your practice***

The [BMA Safe Working Guidance](#) is being refreshed. Join us to find out about the updates and how this can support GPs to manage their workload and protect their patients and practice. This is your opportunity to Protect Your Practice and Protect Your Patients.

Speakers

Dr Samira Anane, GP in Manchester, vice chair of Manchester LMC and deputy chair of GPC England  
 Denise Smith, practice manager at Merepark Medical Centre in Cheshire, fellow of the PMA

- [16 July 19.30 to 21.00: BMA/Practice Manager Association](#)
- [17 July 12.30pm to 1.30pm: Practice Manage Association/ BMA Safe Working Guidance](#)

### BMA GP Practice Survival Toolkit

We will be inviting GP partners to work with their practice teams and, in liaison with their LMC, to determine the actions they will be willing to take. Each of these actions is outlined in the [BMA GP Practice Survival Toolkit](#).

It is for each practice to pick and choose as they see fit. You may decide to add to your choices over the days, weeks and months ahead. You can read more in the [guidance provided or in our FAQs](#). Read our [contract guidance](#) to help you consider how best to approach the contract changes.

### Help spread the word to patients

We've produced a range of materials to help you engage patients in the campaign GPs Are On Your Side:

- download our MP4 video and show your next PPG meeting
- download and display posters in your surgery
- save and share our social graphics for patients.

Access the patient materials on the [GPsOnYourSide Campaign page](#)



### GP Connect update

Our position on GP Connect (Update Record function) remains that GPs must retain the ability to restrict access to third parties to update the GP record. It is important to say we do not wish to restrict the use of the GP record for direct patient care. GPs who wish to and have already switched off update record need not make any further changes. Any GPs wishing to turn off the functionality can do so via the steps listed [here](#).

### \*Save the Date\* - Practice Finance Health joint webinar 7 August 12:30-14:00

GPCE - AISMA (Association of Independent Specialist Medical Accountants)

Find out how good practice management makes a difference. Join us to hear about improving practice income and keeping on top of finances. Register [here](#)

### GP pressures: workforce and appointment data

The latest [workforce data](#) showed that the NHS had the equivalent of 27,649 fully qualified full-time GPs. Although this is an increase of 43 FTE GPs since the previous month, we still have 1,715 *fewer* fully qualified full-time GPs than in September 2015. The number of GP practices in England has decreased by 89 over the past year – reflecting a long-term trend of closures and mergers.

This fall in both staff numbers and GP practices coincides with a rise in patients: as of May 2024, there was another record high of 63.37m patients registered with practices in England – an average of 10,079 patients registered per practice, and each full-time equivalent GP is now responsible for an average of 2,292 patients. This is an increase of 354 patients per GP, or about 18%, since 2015, demonstrating the ever-mounting workload in general practice.

The latest [appointment data](#) show that over 30.5m (non-COVID vaccination) appointments were booked in May 2024. The number of COVID-19 vaccination appointments increased from around 247,000 in April to over 285,000 in May. On average there were 1.47m appointments (estimated total count of appointments, including COVID vaccination appointments) per working day in May 2024.

[See more BMA infographics and data, showing the pressures in general practice >](#)

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### Template letter requesting access to a patient's record

Following some concerns raised, GPCE wrote to the OPG (Office of the Public Guardian), suggesting that under Para 5 (a) of the Mental Capacity Act, the OPG has the right of access to patients' health records if they are investigating the actions of a deputy or an attorney. However, the OPG letter referenced card 16 of the [BMA MCA Toolkit](#); section 4 of this card confirms the right of access and 'if GPs can release this information promptly it can help ensure these investigations are completed as quickly as possible'.

We suggested that practices may misunderstand this issue; the BMA MCA toolkit is not saying that the OPG's list of questions should be answered as soon as possible, but that the relevant health records should be released. Responding to the list of questions posed by the OPG is a private, non-NHS, matter for which a fee can be charged by the GP involved.

The OPG has reviewed the letter templates, which they agree could be viewed as unintentionally misrepresenting OPG's statutory rights to medical information. As a result, the templates have been edited to clarify that the BMA's MCA toolkit and the legislation on which this advice is based only apply to medical records and not to any of the accompanying questions. Access the templates here:

- [LPAs and enduring powers of attorney](#)
- [Form concerning Lasting Powers of Attorney](#)

### IIF and GPAD

We recently wrote to NHS England about practices adversely affected by a significant flaw in the appointments mapping data processing for GP surgeries using the TPP SystmOne clinical system. It appears that although practices accurately mapped appointment slots in line with the indicator, an issue with the data collection/processing software meant that many did not achieve the necessary targets, as during processing for General Practice Appointments Data, the legacy mapping often persisted, rather than utilising the updated mapping by the practice. Some practices have lost significant sums of money; in some cases, running into thousands of pounds.

NHSE has now acknowledged that due to the issues we highlighted, GPAD will not be able to serve as a robust source of achievement data for 2023/24 and the usual route to correcting data locally through the declaration process is likely to require a disproportionate amount of local effort this year, given the unique difficulties in being able to access alternative local appointment data. For this reason, in 2023/24, all PCNs have been considered to have earned 100% of the points available for this indicator.

### BMA vs RCGP judicial review hearing: exam attempts policy

BMA lawyers have argued in a two-day hearing this week that the failure to provide additional resits to GP trainees diagnosed with a disability following an unsuccessful examination attempt is discriminatory. [Read more about this in this article in The Doctor magazine](#)

Read more about the work of [GPC England](#) and practical guidance for [GP practices](#). See the latest update on X [@BMA\\_GP](#) and read about [BMA in the media](#). Contact us: [info.GPC@bma.org.uk](mailto:info.GPC@bma.org.uk)

### Read the latest GPCE bulletin:

[GP roadshow next week](#) | [our message to the new government](#) | [vote YES in our ballot](#)

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