Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP  
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care  
Department of Health and Social Care  
39 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0EU  

17 January 2019  

Dear Secretary of State,  

Today we have published our evidence to the Doctors and Dentist Review Body, a copy along with the accompanying statement is attached with this letter. Last year’s recommendations by the DDRB were, in isolation, insufficient to right the wrongs of years of stringent pay restraint on the profession. They were then further compounded by the Government’s decision not to honour the DDRBs recommendations in full and inconceivably not to backdate the pay increases, which in effect resulted in most doctors continuing to be subject to the 1% pay cap which the government espoused it had ended.  

Our members reacted as you would imagine, with anger and frustration. Since 2008, doctors have experienced the largest drop in earnings of all professions subject to pay review bodies, with some groups having seen their pay fall by up to 30 per cent against RPI. This against the backdrop of doctors everywhere dealing with an NHS under overwhelming pressure. With unsustainable workloads many doctors are at breaking point and as a result are tragically leaving the profession as they feel the job they are doing is simply not sustainable or fairly recognised by the Government. Fair remuneration and terms and conditions for all doctors will save money in the long-run and provide staffing solutions that will improve recruitment and retention, reduce absence and lead to happier, more productive staff.  

Given our members’ anger and disappointment with the DDRB over its repeated failure to adhere to its original principles to defend the profession against arbitrary action from Governments, and its continued interference in contractual issues (such as the histopathology recommendation of last year), we have taken the decision to drastically reduce our level of engagement with the prescribed process. We have submitted a brief evidence document and statement to highlight the key points we believe require urgent attention and must be understood by the DDRB and the Government in considering their recommendations.  

When you wrote to me in September following our meeting, you stated that you wished to ‘give fair reward for the difficult jobs’ that doctors do. I hope that this is the case and we will
see, in the coming months, a just pay offer that is welcomed by the medical profession and addresses the historic pay gap and address the decline in doctors’ living standards.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Chaand Nagpaul CBE
BMA council chair