In 2015 the local medical committees conference and BMA annual representative meeting voted to end the current CQC (care quality commission) inspection process on the basis that it was unfit for purpose. Furthermore, the BMA’s biggest-ever GP survey last year revealed that over-regulation is in the top four negative factors impacting on GPs.

The BMA conducted a survey of English practices in January 2016, about their experiences and the impact of CQC inspections. This survey comes at a time when the CQC has announced proposals for an unjustified, illogical and punitive seven-fold increase in GP fees.

Over 1900 practices responded to the survey, which asked a range of questions covering practices’ experience of CQC inspections including estimated impact on patient care, practice expenses, and staff well-being, and their views on the inspection regime.
What is your role in the practice?

- Partner: 71%
- Practice Manager: 26%
- Salaried GP: 2%
- Other: 1%

Has your practice undergone a CQC inspection under the current inspection system with ratings?

- Yes: 38%
- No: 62%

In terms of workload, how would you describe preparing for your CQC inspection?

- There is/was no extra preparation/workload involved: 80%
- There is/was some extra preparation/workload involved: 19.5%
- There is/was excessive extra preparation/workload involved: 0.5%
Estimate how much time per month has been spent by your practice on CQC preparation

![Bar chart showing time spent on CQC preparation]

What impact does/did preparing for your CQC inspection have on your ability to provide care for your patients?

![Pie chart showing impact of CQC preparation]

- No effect: 78%
- Increased time caring for patients: 21%
- Reduced time caring for patients: 0%
Has your practice incurred additional expense in CQC preparation?

- Cost of equipment and premises improvement: 75%
- Cost of external management support or consultancy: 12%
- Cost of GP locum cover: 15%
- Cost of nursing team overtime/backfill: 15%
- Cost of staff overtime: 0%
- Other: 0%

Has your inspection ever been cancelled by the CQC?

- Yes: 7%
- No: 93%
What rating did your practice receive?

- Outstanding: 6%
- Good: 18%
- Requires improvement: 4%
- Inadequate: 10%
- Awaiting rating: 62%

On the day of your inspection, how were services affected?

- Loss of GP time: 100%
- Loss of nurse time: 0%
- Loss of staff time: 0%
- No difference: 0%
Has your practice incurred additional expense to try and maintain services on the day of inspection?

- No additional expense
- Expense for GP and nurse cover
- Expense for staff cover

How well did you feel the inspection was at measuring the quality of your practice services (tick all that apply)?

- A good and fair assessment of the quality of care provided by the practice
- An assessment of some aspects of quality of care provided by the practice
- Did not fairly or adequately measure the quality of care provided by the practice
- Measured inappropriate aspects of the practice unrelated to quality
What effect did preparing for your CQC inspection have on the stress levels of GPs and clinical staff?

- No effect: 75%
- Slightly increased stress: 24%
- Decreased stress: 21%
- Significantly increased stress: 77%

What effect did preparing for your CQC inspection have on the stress levels of non-clinical staff?

- No effect: 77%
- Slightly increased stress: 21%
- Decreased stress: 24%
- Significantly increased stress: 75%
What do you feel about the aggregate ratings system ‘outstanding’, ‘good’, ‘requires improvement’ and ‘inadequate’?

- A fair assessment of practice performance
- A simplistic assessment system that does not adequately describe the quality of care
- A misleading assessment system

If you are a GP, how has the CQC inspection regime affected your commitment to continue in your current role in your practice?

- No change
- More likely to want to leave General Practice
- More motivated to continue to work in general practice
Has CQC as a regulator affected your inclination to raise concerns about practice pressures to the CCG or regional team?

- It has made no difference
- I feel more likely to raise concerns about pressures in my practice
- I am less inclined to raise concerns about practice pressures due to fear of CQC intervention

How would you describe your practice’s current status?

- Is coping adequately
- Is coping but experiencing some pressures
- Is experiencing significant pressures
- Is struggling and not coping