Dear Kirsty,

Minimum Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Bill

BMA Cymru Wales is grateful for the opportunity to respond to the consultation on your proposal to introduce the above Bill.

The BMA represents doctors from all branches of medicine all over the UK; and has a total membership of over 150,000 including more than 3,000 members overseas and over 19,000 medical student members. It is the largest voluntary professional association of doctors in the UK, which speaks for doctors at home and abroad, and is also an independent trade union. BMA Cymru Wales represents some 7,000 members in Wales from every branch of the medical profession.

Although we have decided not to respond in detail to specific questions within your consultation document, we nonetheless wish to reiterate our wholehearted support for the intention of your proposed Bill.

Providing more nurses on hospital wards would, in our view, not only enhance levels of patient care but also represent a valuable investment that will lead to cost savings further down the line. It should therefore be supported even at a time of austerity as an exemplar of prudent healthcare.

The need for adequate staffing levels has frequently been underlined, including in a recent study published in *The Lancet*¹ which highlighted the link between nursing staffing levels and patient outcomes. Ward staffing levels were also referred to in the recent report by Professor June Andrews and Mark Butler² which outlined inadequacies in the care of older patients at the Princess of Wales and Neath Port Talbot Hospitals.

Yours sincerely,

Rodney Berman
Senior Policy Executive

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