

Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP

Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
Department of Health and Social Care

Sent via email

20 March 2023

Dear Secretary of State,

Further to our meeting on 02 March 2023, you will be aware that on 01 April 2023 the contract changes proposed by DHSC and rejected by GPC England will come into force. We are writing to you hoping that you will reconsider this imposition and sit back down with us to agree a contract which we can accept. At this time of unprecedented pressure across general practice, the imposition of such a contract will serve only to undermine further the confidence of the profession in the government to adequately deliver what is needed to maintain a safe and accessible general practice, for both GPs and their patients.

We are clear that the contract as it currently stands is not fit for purpose. To rectify this, it must include at a minimum:

- Support with practice expenses to cover minimum wage uplifts for practice staff, national insurance contribution rises, and inflationary rises in energy and medical supplies. This could be funded by enabling QOF, IIF, and ARRS underspends to be utilised by practices to cover these expenses.
- Removal of the access clause from the GMS contract. This clause is unachievable without investment in workforce and infrastructure. We support the aim of this clause in the long-term, but believe that the majority of practices will not be able to achieve this at this time.
- Pausing of the pay declaration requirement which will worsen attrition of the workforce and lead to worse patient care
- Retirement and payment protection of QOF and IIF to enable practices to focus on direct patient care

By using funding already allocated for general practice (QOF, IIF, ARRS funding), none of these requests comes at an additional cost to the government. Accommodating these requirements would go a long way in demonstrating to the profession, that the government is prepared to work with us, and not against us, whilst preparing to agree a new contract for 2024 and beyond. Not accommodating these requirements would further undermine the profession, who we have been engaging with, and who tell us they are ready to act if they do not see positive change.

I would be happy to meet at your convenience to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

Co-chief executive officers: Neeta Major & Rachel Podolak



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