

Rt Hon Pat McFadden MP

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
Department for Work and Pensions

Sent via email

12 November 2025

Dear Secretary of State,

This week marks three years since IIAC's (Industrial Injuries Advisory Council) command paper 'COVID-19 and Occupational Impacts' was presented before Parliament. This paper, which recommended that five severe post Covid-19 complications should be recognised for the purpose of assessing Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit, has still not been formally responded to by Government. We are requesting that the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions urgently accepts the recommendations of the command paper.

Recognising these complications and Long COVID as a prescribed industrial disease for health and social care workers is something that the UK is significantly lagging behind with. Over 50 countries worldwide already provide formal legal recognition for key workers who contracted COVID-19 as a result of workplace exposure and offer corresponding compensation and support schemes. The UK Government needs to match this support and urgently accept the IIAC's recommendations as a crucial first step in recognising the risks that health and care workers took on during the pandemic. This could enable health and social care workers, in the NHS and independent sector, with long term physical conditions caused by COVID-19, to more easily receive much needed Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit.

Long COVID has had debilitating effects on numerous doctors, nursing and midwifery staff, many of whom were previously left, or remain, unable to work, leading to significant financial detriment. For example, nearly half of doctors with long COVID responding to a BMA survey reported experiencing decreased (or even no) income and increased personal debt. Similarly, nearly 70% of nursing staff with long COVID surveyed by the RCN experienced a loss of earnings due to changes in working patterns related to their health circumstances ([RCN, 2024](#)). Such losses significantly impact on mental and emotional health.

Health and social care workers worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to care for patients, and many were not adequately protected in their place of work. As a result, many contracted COVID-19 and subsequently Long COVID. A [BMA study](#) of over 600 doctors with Long COVID found only a small minority of doctors had access to respiratory protective equipment (RPE) around the time that they contracted Covid-19, with only 11% of respondents reporting having access to FFP2 respirators and 16% FFP3 respirators. Nursing staff report similar experiences, alongside a lack of individual health risk assessments carried out by their employers ([RCN, 2024](#)).

The UK Government needs to act quickly and provide support now to the many doctors and nursing staff, and their families, who have suffered significant financial losses as a result of contracting COVID-19 in the workplace and then developing Long COVID. As a first step to recognise those

efforts, we are calling on the Government to urgently accept the recommendations of IIAC's command paper.

The BMA and the RCN would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss a way forward as health and care workers have long been waiting for the support and recognition they deserve. We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Tom Dolphin
BMA Council Chair



Professor Nicola Ranger
RCN General Secretary and Chief
Executive