

Dear colleagues

### **National Insurance contributions**

Last week, at the England national conference of LMCs, we debated the impact that the increase in employer National Insurance (NI) contributions have on GP practices and passed a motion demanding that the Health Secretary rectify the issue with funding to the core GP Contract.

The BMA continues to [put pressure on the Government](#) regarding our concerns and the Chair of GPC England, Dr Katie Bramall-Stainer, [referenced the response from the Secretary of State](#) for Health in her speech to the Conference, where she said:

*"Mr Streeting recognises that we as GPs are so clearly the beating heart of the NHS family. We now need him to follow through and treat us as such".*

**Please use the BMA [online calculator](#) to estimate the impact of the increases to employer National Insurance contributions and the national minimum/living wage on general practice in England.**

Data from our online calculator submissions so far indicates that the average additional cost pressure runs to around £35,000 for each practice. This means practices are at risk of closure or, as a minimum, reducing staff and services as a result.

**Help us to continue to put pressure on the Government by writing to your local MP and inviting them to your practices using our [online tool](#) >**

The recent announcement about the NI increase has hugely affected the morale of the profession. Listen to Dr Adam Janjua explain why it is necessary for general practice to come together and take collective action as "enough is enough". <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBon3HpazRI>



### **Collective action**

Thank you to all those taking part in our collective action to protect our patients and practices. These nine [actions](#) will continue to make a difference: they are safe, sustainable, and do not breach your contract. For all General Practitioners to collectively participate continues to put pressure on the Government to do the right thing for patients and general practice.

At the Conference of LMCs in England last week, the GPC England Chair, Dr Katie Bramall-Stainer explained why collective action is needed NOW, as grassroots GPs are telling us that "this is going to break us". Watch the speech: [GPs are having to take collective action](#)

Make sure you are involved to protect your practice, your staff and your patients.

**‘Protect your Patients and Protect your Practice’ campaign**

The [BMA’s ‘Protect your Patients and Protect your Practice’ campaign webpage](#) has information about all of the actions. Please also refer to other useful links such as:

- [Safe Working Guidance Handbook](#)
- [Guidance for GP collective action for sessional GPs and GP registrars](#)
- [Background to the 2024/25 contract changes](#)
- [Patient materials](#) (waiting room/website videos and [infographics](#))

Campaign materials such as patient leaflets, lanyards, badges, window stickers and Beanie hats continue to be available from [the BMA rep Hub](#).

We will be producing more guidance around individual collective actions to support those practices in undertaking specific actions.

We want GPs to feel safe and empowered to take action to protect their patients and their practices.

**BMA GP opinion survey 2024 – Have you had your say yet?**

The [BMA GP Opinion Survey](#) is still open. This annual survey gathers GPs’ views on current issues facing General Practice and is helping to influence and inform this year’s contract negotiations, in addition to our longer-term strategy of promoting and protecting the future of General Practice.

It is open to GPs in England working in all settings and practices, including partners, salaried GPs, locums, and GP registrars at ST3 and above.

Participants do not need to be a member of the BMA to participate but we will need a GMC number to ensure that responses are coming from eligible GPs based in England. All responses will be anonymised.

Take the survey here: <https://www.research.net/r/FP9JLQJ>

**Data (Use and Access) Bill**

Changes to UK data protection law have been proposed in the government’s new Data (Use and Access) Bill which had its second reading in the House of Lords in November. Our [briefing](#) highlighted concerns about the potential impact on health data should there be a departure from existing high standards of data protection. The BMA is particularly concerned about the erosion of transparency standards when data is processed for research purposes and the threat to the regulatory independence of the Information Commissioner’s Office.

The bill also addresses the technical deficit in the NHS that limits data sharing and sets out measures to address this. IT system suppliers will be forced to develop software for sale in the NHS in line with technical standards – which we have long called for, and our [report](#) on IT was acknowledged as a factor favouring the inclusion of this measure.



## LMC Update Email

29 November 2024

### Government review of Physician Associates

The Government has launched an [independent review of physician associates \(PAs\) and anaesthesia associates \(AAs\)](#). In response to this, the BMA Chair of Council, Dr Phil Banfield, welcomed that the Government has acknowledged the concerns of doctors and accepted there is a safety issue with the employment of physician associates. He said:

*“So we need to know what immediate safety measures NHSE will put in place, how quickly they will pause their PA expansion plans, and in the meantime if they will adopt the BMA’s own guidelines to start protecting patients now.”* Read the full statement [here](#).

Read the BMA guidance: [PAs in general practice: making it safe for patients and GPs](#)

### Flu vaccination survey

The [NHS England vaccination strategy](#), launched in December 2023, contained a proposal for NHSE to explore the impact of a move to the centralised provision of flu vaccines. As part of that exercise, NHSE has launched a survey of general practice and pharmacy providers to gather their views on both the current model of procurement, and the potential benefits and challenges of a centralised procurement model. Any such change will not be implemented for the 2025/26 season flu programme.

The outcome of the survey will inform any future discussion on potential changes of the procurement model that NHSE will have with GPC England. As such we would encourage as many practices as possible to make their views known. Take the survey [here](#)

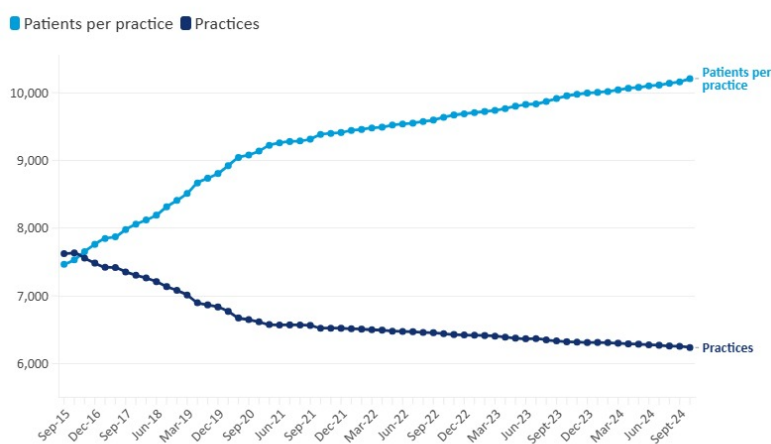
### GP pressures: latest [workforce](#) and [appointment](#) data

GPs continue to treat many more patients than they have done in the past. The latest data shows a record 63.66 million patients registered with practices in England, while there are over 1,300 fewer fully qualified full time GPs compared to 2015.

As a result, each full-time equivalent GP is now responsible for an average of 2,271 patients, an increase of 333 patients per GP (or 17%) since 2015, and appointments level at an average of almost 1.5 million per working day. Since September 2015, there has also been a decrease of 1,387 GP practices.

#### There are fewer practices but more patients per practice

September 2015 to October 2024



Source: BMA analysis of NHS Digital General Practice Workforce Statistics



This fall in both GP numbers and practices coincides with a rise in patient numbers, which is putting staff at GP surgeries under immense strain, with knock-on effects for patient care.

Learn more about the [pressures on general practice by visiting our website](#)

**Do you look after asylum seekers or refugees?**

It is well-evidenced that this group of patients continue to face significant barriers accessing appropriate and timely healthcare. We've launched a survey to capture your experiences, so the BMA can update its Refugee and Asylum Patient Health Toolkit and influence government policy to better support you in enhancing healthcare services for asylum seekers and refugees. **Share your views and complete this ten-minute [survey](#) by 14 December 2024.**

**Conference of England LMCs 2023**

Thank you to those who attended the Conference of England LMCs. We would appreciate your feedback to help us improve future events. Please use this [form to send us](#) your feedback.

Conference News with the resolutions from Conference will be published some time next week.

**LMC Secretaries Conference 2025**

The LMC secretaries conference is taking place on **Friday 7 February 2025** at BMA House in London. To register to attend please use the online application form available [here](#), each person attending the conference must register by completing a registration form regardless of how they are planning to attend i.e. first, second or observer, the closing date for registration is **Friday 24 January 2025**.

Please contact the GPC office at [info.lmcconference@bma.org.uk](mailto:info.lmcconference@bma.org.uk) with any queries.

Read more about the work of [GPC England](#) and practical guidance for [GP practices](#).

See the latest update on X [@BMA\\_GP / X](#) and read about [BMA in the media](#).

Read the latest GPCE bulletin:

[National Insurance contributions](#) | [GP collective action](#) | [take our annual survey](#)

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GPC England deputy chair

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