

Worcestershire and Herefordshire Local Medical Committees Ltd

Our Ref: GF/LJC/6178

28th September 2021

Worcestershire MPs
BY EMAIL

Dear XXX MP

I am writing to you on behalf of Worcestershire General Practice to express our deep concern about the continuing negative media coverage over recent weeks in the national press. To put this into context, in just the last week, three local practices have been approached by national newspapers who appear to be digging for a story that will drive a wedge between patients and their family doctor. **This must stop.**

Practices and their staff are utterly demoralised. They have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic. They have offered appointments, including face to face appointments where clinically indicated throughout. These most recent articles focus on patients being unable to access emergency care from practices, and they look to name and shame individual practices based on survey results taken mid pandemic around access. General practice is not an emergency service and recent survey results shed a different light on access but those views do not get press coverage.

We are facing unprecedented demand on our services and increasing abuse from patients as a direct result of the media spin. The idea that we could see all patients face to face shows a deep lack of understanding about the true extent of the demand. More upsetting for practices is the apparent lack of support from those in government who could influence this behaviour. **We ask that a public statement of support from government for general practice is immediately forthcoming to end this vicious cycle.**

Many of my colleagues are leaving a profession that they once loved or are reducing their hours because they cannot sustain this workload indefinitely and the tirade of abuse is the final straw. Without more GPs and better estates to allow us to see more patients face to face whilst under strict infection control procedures and without public understanding and acceptance that recovery will take time and that patience will be needed, we feel we are fighting an uphill battle. Just some of the issues to consider are that:

- GPs have had to care for patients in the community who remain on long waiting lists, many of whom have become increasingly unwell and are now in need of specialist support.

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- GPs have absorbed increasing workload transfer from our hospitals without additional resource.
- GPs continue to roll out the covid vaccination programme on top of their normal work allowing many people to return to their normal lives and social activities.
- GPs have worked around late delivery of flu vaccines, and blood bottle shortages with no income protection.
- Practice staffing levels have been impacted by covid outbreaks from open reception areas and increasing numbers of face to face appointments.

Please consider the BMA GP campaign fact sheet which contains keys points to support our views and can be found [here](#).

Should you wish to speak with me directly please do contact me and if you would like to visit a local practice we would be happy to arrange that. I believe that speaking to staff would help to inform your opinion.

Yours sincerely



Dr G Farmer
Worcestershire LMC Secretary