

From: FKenn@bma.org.uk [mailto:FKenn@bma.org.uk]
Sent: 21 December 2007 16:33
Subject: GP GMS contract - imposition details

Dear LMC and GPC colleagues

Please find below a statement sent on behalf of Dr Laurence Buckman.

"Further to my letter to the profession on 20 December 2007, you will be angry to learn that the government has moved to impose contract terms on GPs. The following link will take you to the documents that detail the contractual changes being consulted upon:

<http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/GMSchangesDec07>

We believe that this will be a cut in resources of approximately £36,000 per average practice. In the event that there is no agreement between the GPC and NHS Employers on extended opening hours, these changes will be imposed from 1 April 2008.

Please be assured that I am discussing with the negotiating team how to respond and will be in contact with all GPs shortly. We will also clarify the implications of this announcement in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In the meantime the BMA has issued a press release expressing anger that the government is imposing contract terms on GPs [copied below]

As we only received this document this afternoon, it has not been possible to email this to all GPs using the BMA database. I would therefore ask again that LMCs make extra efforts to ensure that this reaches all your constituent GPs."

Best wishes

Felicity Kenn
Assistant Secretary
GPC Secretariat

Press release:

Immediate release : 21 December 2007

BMA response to the government's imposition of a draconian contract on GPs

Responding to the news that the government is imposing draconian contract terms on GPs to force them to extend opening hours in a way that will hit patient care, Dr Laurence Buckman, Chairman of the BMA's GP Committee said:

"The government seems hell bent on tearing up a quality based contract designed to improve the health of patients and save lives less than four years after Gordon Brown approved it as Chancellor.

"These cuts will destabilise general practice and make it difficult for practices to maintain quality. An average practice with 6,000 patients could stand to lose £36,000 in resources¹.

The government is showing a careless disregard for patients with diabetes, chronic lung disease, heart disease and those at risk of strokes - quality markers to improve the care of all these patient groups are being removed by the government to finance longer hours for commuters. GPs will do their best to continue to provide good quality care but Gordon Brown's political objective will inevitably affect the chronically ill."

"GPs were prepared to extend their hours and the BMA came up with a workable proposal. Imposing this alternative contract change on GPs sends a very negative message to all NHS staff about how little the Prime Minister values them. GPs have hit 95% of the government's targets through the Quality and Outcomes Framework and their patient satisfaction record is high according to the government's own survey².

"The BMA will poll GPs to seek their views and will continue with talks during the next thirteen weeks to try to achieve a better outcome not just for our members but for the future of the NHS and for patients. The government plans as announced today will destabilise and harm general practice services for patients."

Ends

Notes to editors

¹ By removing points from the Quality and Outcomes Framework and introducing other changes the government has doubled the financial impact on practices compared to the deal on the table yesterday.

² The Government's GP Patient Survey was published in July 2007. It surveyed over two million people and showed 84% of patients are happy with current opening hours. Only four in every hundred patients wanted extended opening hours in the evening and seven out of every hundred patients wanted Saturday surgeries. The survey cost £11 million.

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