



Department of Health & Social Care

*From the Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care*

*39 Victoria Street
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Dear colleagues,

Our NHS is broken, and I am determined to fix it. That includes fixing the front door in General Practice. General Practice sits at the heart of the NHS but has been neglected for too long - that is why my first visit as Secretary of State was to a practice. I know how hard you are all working every day to provide the best care for your patients, and I want to support you in that.

As you will have seen, Government is accepting and funding in full the DDRB pay recommendations. I welcome the above inflation 6% recommendation for GPs and their staff. The GP contract will be amended to uplift the pay elements of the contract by 4% (on top of the interim 2% provided in April) backdated to April 2024 - the first meaningful real-terms increases for years. My teams in NHSE and DHSC will work with the BMA to implement this uplift to the GP contract and ensure this funding gets to practices as soon as possible.

The contract needs reform, but the relationship I want with you and the profession isn't simply a contractual one, but a new partnership. That is why I am determined to act immediately in the interests of patients to address an immediate challenge you have raised. As I said on my first visit as Secretary of State, it is not acceptable to have patients that can't see a GP and GPs that can't find roles.

Earlier this year, there was a public petition to add GPs and practice nurses to ARRS. This gained over 11,000 signatories including the BMA, RCGP, and many other groups. I have also raised this issue in public on numerous occasions. In my first week in office, I asked DHSC officials to work with NHSE to explore this. And now, in week 4, I am writing to you to say I am listening, and I intend to add GPs to the ARRS scheme this year with additional funding.

You have made a clear ask to extend ARRS and we are going to deliver. This is an emergency measure, with new funding for general practice, targeted at recently qualified GPs, and complimentary to the existing scheme. We will re-open the PCN DES for 24/25 to make this new ring-fenced funding available to networks. Using the existing mechanism will enable us to get the money to PCNs faster.

This is a step on the journey while the Government works with the profession to identify longer term solutions to GP unemployment and general practice sustainability as part of the next fiscal event. Some nurses are already within the scheme, and for now as we want to address the specific challenge of GP employment, but we will keep the whole scheme under review.

We know that the ARRS has been successful in expanding teams, increasing appointments, and supporting the delivery of proactive care. However, we also know recruitment into salaried GP posts has not been prioritised. DHSC and NHSE will discuss

the detail on how to implement this with the profession. It is my intention that by putting additional funding into ARRS this will protect existing staff and continue to build on the success of multidisciplinary teams as we develop a neighbourhood health service, ensuring patients are able to access care from a range of healthcare professionals.

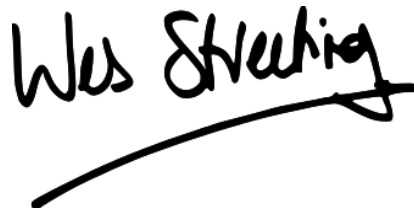
This is just the beginning; I want you to consider these two moves as simply the first steps towards more sustainable general practice. We want GPs and patients to shape the Ten-Year Health Plan and the next decade of reform. This plan will deliver an NHS fit for the future. We will move from treatment to prevention, hospital to home, analogue to digital.

We will also increase the proportion of resources going into primary care over time and help address the issues GPs face. We will make the future of general practice sustainable by ensuring we train thousands more GPs and shift the focus of care out of hospitals and into the community.

I've spent a lot of time in recent years seeing first-hand the day-to-day reality of challenges in general practice, often quite literally looking over the shoulders of GPs and practice staff to understand the pressures you face.

I want to reset the relationship between GPs and your Government. Out of this crisis is an historic opportunity to be the generation that took our NHS from the worst crisis in its history to getting it back on its feet and making it fit for the future. Let's seize that opportunity together, in partnership.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wes Streeting". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. Below the signature is a long, thin, curved line that starts under the first letter and ends under the last letter, resembling a flourish or a stylized underline.

RT HON WES STREETING MP