

GPC's Prescription for General Practice

The most striking suggestion is that NHS England should set a 'national standard for a maximum number of patients that GPs, nurses and other primary care professionals can reasonably deal with during a working day to maintain delivery of a safe and high quality service'.

To manage the situation when the limit is reached, commissioners should 'establish locality hubs to which practices can refer urgent patients when they have reached the capacity threshold for safe care on any given day', the GPC added.

Other suggestions include:

- A national list of services that are not included in core GMS which practices can choose if they wish to provide, with pricing benchmarks nationally set that can be locally adapted according to any variations'.
- The current CQC regulation process to be 'replaced' with 'targeted assessments of essential quality assurance processes where supported by evidence of risk of patient safety'.
- An end to the 'duplication' of the CQC registration process and NHS England's national performers list 'with a single slimmed down cost-effective process funded by NHS England not practices'.
- A nationally defined employed GP contract modelled on the hospital consultant contract 'for those GPs working for other providers or GP led organisations' in a bid to ease recruitment problems.
- An end of inappropriate workload shift, including 'all hospitals' providing 'a dedicated GP helpline to address primary/secondary care interface problems';
- The introduction of 15-minute consultations
- A new DES for GPs to dedicate time to care home patients.

GPC chair Dr Chaand Nagpaul said the 'important' document 'brings together practical and deliverable ideas from GPs and sets out a comprehensive, positive and practical approach which, if adopted, would make a significant difference to both practices and patients'.

He added that the document comes in response to the 'clear message' sent at the Special LMC conference in January about the 'state of emergency' in general practice.

He said: 'Fundamentally, it calls for a reversal in the decline in funding for general practice to ensure it has the resources to cope with escalating demand and provide GPs with the space and time to provide high-quality, safe patient care.'

'It also proposes ways to limit workload to safe levels, manage demand, end the inappropriate bureaucratic demands on GPs and support practices with new ways of collaborative working and maximising the potential of technology.'

Legacy of the Special LMC Conference

The Special LMC Conference was convened following grassroots pressure regarding the crisis in GP workload.

It was kicked off by a barnstorming speech from GPC Dr Chaand Nagpaul, who said the current state of general practice was unsafe for patients.

At the meeting, GP leaders moved a step closer to a potential mass resignation should the Government fail to respond to ongoing pressures facing general practice.

The latest document - which is a result of the Special LMC Conference - comes ahead of the Government announcing its new road map for general practice.