



Mword Issue 87 - Dr Lisa Harrod-Rothwellâ€™s latest update for GPs and practice teams

01 October 2021

Dear Colleague Practice staff abuse: raising your concerns with political and police leaders I am utterly appalled by the verbal and physical attacks on GPs and practice staff colleagues, and the level of abuse levelled at GPs through social media. I am astounded by the propaganda we face in relation to false allegations of practices being closed or refusing to see patients face-to-face when clinically required. I am disgusted by the relentless vilification of us as professionals and as a profession by those with power. It is incredulous that this comes at a time when we are buckling under the workload and cannot possibly give any more – an assertion borne out by data and not just anecdote. There simply aren't enough GPs and practice nurses to safely meet patient demand and expectation. We are working tirelessly on your behalf to combat this growing anti-GP sentiment, but we need your help, including gathering information on abuse via this survey. Londonwide LMCs and area LMCs have begun engaging with MPs, local authorities and the police on your behalf to seek their support in countering this unjust growing anti-GP sentiment:

At Londonwide LMCs we have written to all the MPs covering our 27 boroughs outlining the impact of abuse on practice staff, and the longstanding disparities between supply and demand, and workload and workforce, that have been exacerbated by the pandemic. The letter invites each MP to meet with Londonwide and LMC representatives and to visit a practice in their constituency to see how hard frontline staff are working. You can read the full letter [here](#).

We have also written to Dame Cressida Dick, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service, to raise practices' concerns around staff safety, which are particularly relevant following the recent attack in Manchester. The letter asks the Met what advice they have for staff being threatened, what action staff should expect from police, and how the Met track and record threats or actual violence against practices. The letter also invites Dame Cressida to meet with Londonwide LMCs representatives and can be read in full [here](#).

In partnership with our area LMCs, we are also in the process of writing to Local Authority leaders and the Met's Borough Commanders to raise similar issues at a local level.

Our communications team are continuing to work with practices to tell their side of the story in the media, including the BBC, The Independent, the Mirror and The Guardian. If you or a member of your practice team has experienced abuse and would be willing to speak to a journalist about it, on or off the record, please contact: comms@lmc.org.uk.

We are about to begin engaging with other key stakeholders to gain wider support. But we need your help. We need to continue to increase understanding of the reality of frontline general practice. To this end, we are gathering information on your experiences via this survey, which will help us to provide statistical and anecdotal information to organisations and individuals who are in a position to support London general practice. We also urge you to write to the MP who represents your practice communities. We have created a template letter outlining concerns as a GP providing care to their constituents. You can find the MP for your area and their email address by entering your practice's postcode into the MP finder on the Parliament website. If you or a member of your teams needs support they can contact us via: info@lmc.org.uk and their request will be triaged to the appropriate team or LMC. GPs can also access our GP Professional Support Network, which offers peer support, counselling, group sessions and a range of other services. Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank you. To thank you for your immense hard work, day-in day-out, in the only part of the NHS without any safety valve for extreme workload pressure. To thank you for meeting every challenge that the pandemic has thrown at you, in the best interests of your communities. To thank you for having the strength to face this hostile environment, and continue to care for your patients.

Let's stand together. And as ever, I welcome your feedback at mword@lmc.org.uk. The team of experts and leaders here at Londonwide LMCs are by your side. Keep well. Stay safe. With best wishes Dr Lisa Harrod-Rothwell Deputy CEO, Londonwide LMCs

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