

**Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP**

Secretary of State for Health and Social Care  
Department of Health and Social Care

20 May 2025

*Sent via email*

Dear Secretary of State,

As chairs of the BMA GP Registrars Committee, Sessional GP Committee and GPC England, we are writing to collectively raise our concerns about the increasing unemployment of GPs across England, and how this will be worsened when the next cohort of GPs qualify this summer.

As we are all acutely aware, patients are currently struggling to access timely GP care, and practising GPs are frequently contending with unsafe and unmanageable workloads.

This serious situation is reflected in [our recent survey of GP under and unemployment](#). The findings showed:

- 15% of respondents were unable to find any suitable work at all
- 56% of respondents wanted to work more hours in the NHS, but were unable to find suitable opportunities
- 21% of respondents said they have made definite plans to change their careers.

A 2024 Royal College of General Practitioners' survey showed that GP Registrars are entering a job market so challenging they find themselves applying for 13 jobs on average before a successful appointment. Data from 2022/23 showed the proportion of GP registrars taking up a permanent position within two years of completing training was only 49% - we expect this will be even lower now. Based on feedback from colleagues, many are seeking alternative careers in medicine, outside the NHS, beyond medicine, and some are even considering employment benefits as a direct result of this unemployment crisis.

We are expecting hundreds, perhaps as many as a thousand GP registrars completing their training this August who could be left facing unemployment - hence the urgency of our ask.

We acknowledge the additional £104m to the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) funding pot for 2025/26, and the regulatory flexibilities. However, this will not generate additional GP jobs: the vast majority of existing ARRS budgets are already accounted for and will be needed to continue to pay for those GPs employed under the scheme. In addition, increased budgetary pressures, including rising expenses for other practice staff, is leaving individual practices with too few additional funds to expand their GP workforce and increase their capacity.

**Chief executive officers:** Neeta Major & Rachel Podolak

We are calling on the Government for:

- Ring-fenced, additional, direct-to-practice core funding, to hire newly qualified and currently under/unemployed GPs as practice-based GPs. This would be separate from the 'GPs in ARRS' scheme, as GPs wish to be centred in practices offering continuity of care. PCNs have already been proven to be disadvantageous to more deprived populations;
- A national retention strategy for GPs in England to be factored into the Ten-Year Plan revisions with a commitment to: reducing social inequity, increasing continuity of care, and reducing the GP to patient list size ratio as per GPC England's Patients First manifesto;
- More practice-based opportunities for GPs at all career stages.

We believe that addressing GP underemployment and unemployment, particularly in areas of deprivation, is the single action which will have the greatest impact on meeting the Government's aims of improving access and fixing the front door to the NHS to bring back the family doctor.

We hope that we can collaborate to solve this burgeoning issue, and get all GPs trained by the taxpayer into practices, seeing patients, and offering greater continuity of care to address the wider crises in the NHS.

We hope to meet with you in the coming weeks to discuss next steps and mitigations to this issue.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr Cheska Ball**

Co-Chair, BMA GP Registrars Committee



**Dr Victoria McKay**

Co-Chair, BMA GP Registrars Committee



**Dr Mark Steggles**

Chair, BMA Sessional GP Committee



**Dr Katie Bramall-Stainer**

Chair, BMA General Practitioner Committee