



Speakers' Corner - Powering up London's primary care workforce

In exactly one week 400 of London's GPs and practice staff will be gathering at the Emirates Stadium to work on the challenges we face and find the solutions to powering up London's primary care workforce.

We're focusing on workforce for the conference because a year ago we committed to doing six-monthly workforce surveys of London GP practices and the results have been worrying. November's survey shows that almost half of practices are short at least one member of staff; a third are missing at least one GP and 39 practices are considering handing back the keys within three years. Thank you again to all those who responded to the previous surveys and please keep us up to date by feeding in to the next one, which will be with you next month. The data is a valuable tool that helps us to best represent your needs.

We've got a great line-up next week including some special highlights:

Dr Phil Hammond, NHS associate specialist, broadcaster, Private Eye columnist and former GP who is chairing the day and wants to begin the resuscitation of general practice in London at the conference, through collaboration and ideas sharing.

Lord Victor Adebawale from Turning Point will be speaking about the wider determinants of health; such an important topic when looking at how we're going to manage challenges like obesity and diabetes.

Dr Crystal Oldman will talk about the practice nursing workforce, because the Queen's Nursing Institute has done some excellent work studying the pressures on our vital nursing colleagues.

And the afternoon expert panel, which will see Dr Phil Hammond picking the brains of four people who represent a cross section of frontline care and academic health knowledge: Professor Michael West, Head of The King's Fund; Julie Belton of Cuckoo Lane Practice; Dr Paquita de Zulueta of Imperial College London, and; Dr Clare Gerada of the NHS Practitioner Health Programme.

Our conference picks up the reins from January's Special Conference of LMCs – which clearly demonstrated that patients risk losing their GPs – even the CQC Approved Outstanding ones - unless the pressures on us are dramatically and appropriately eased. Whether you are a partner, a salaried GP or a freelance locum; whether you are a nurse, a manager, a member of the team, or a patient, the message is clear: general practice is struggling and now is the time for action not words. At our conference I will set out our new campaign to support practices in taking action to highlight the pressure they're under and take control of their workload.

My ambition for the day is to build on the professional unity we've seen gathering momentum over the last year, both in general practice and across the medical profession. After the final session on "One Profession" with Drs Johann Malawana and Clare Gerada, everyone should leave with a sense of empowerment, knowing that they can stand up against all the needless non-work which gets between them and their patients every day.

For more details on speakers, exhibitors and timings see the conference programme. Due to unprecedented demand we reached full capacity some weeks ago so we are adding 25 extra places – but you'll have to be quick to get one. For those of you who managed to register in time, I look forward to seeing you on Wednesday!