



Press release - Patient power bid to ease pressure on GPs

A hard-hitting video for practice waiting rooms aims to enlist patient power by showing just how much pressure GPs are under. Part of Londonwide LMCs' GP State of Emergency, declared last year, the video encourages patients to engage with their practice's patient group and then together lobby councillors and MPs in support of their practices' needs.

Dr Michelle Drage, Chief Executive of Londonwide LMCs, said: "Patients are very aware of the symptoms of the pressures on practices – extended waiting times, rushed GPs and withdrawn services. But not so aware of the underlying causes, workforce shortages and squeezed funding.

"Our video provides some simple, factual background to these issues and suggests patients speak to their practice team about the challenges they face and how then to raise these issues with their elected representatives. With patients onboard, practices have a much stronger voice." "For an individual GP, it can seem daunting to start such a conversation with patients, but most are very receptive to hearing about the pressures on their practice. And are surprised by a lot of things we take for granted, for example that we provide unlimited care for just £136 per patient per year in the capital.

"Over the last year, I and other Londonwide LMCs' GPs have met with MPs and London Assembly Members from Labour, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats at practices in their constituencies.

"These meetings have all been positive and resulted in issues such as Capita, premises and workforce being raised with the Secretary of State and Department of Health. If we can get patients to join us in making the case for their own practices these messages will be greatly amplified." Londonwide LMCs have contacted most providers of waiting room screens in London, currently Egton, Numed and NoticeboardTV have agreed to make the video available via their systems. The ambition is for other providers to add the video if there is demand from practice customers. The two-minute long video will be available in a variety of formats for practices to download and pass onto their screen provider. Any UK practice can request a copy from Londonwide LMCs.

The new video is the most recent addition to a suit of resources provided to practices as part of Londonwide LMCs' GP State of Emergency campaign, which include template letters and posters.

Notes to editors

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Londonwide LMCs is the only independent body in London representing over 7000 full and part-time GPs and 1300 practice teams across London. Local medical committees are the statutory body representing GPs and practices; 27 London boroughs have a local medical committee, supported by Medical Directors working for the umbrella organisation (Londonwide LMCs) covering NW, NCE and South London.
Further information on Londonwide LMCs can be found on our website lmc.org.uk ; via Twitter @londonwidelmcs ; or on our campaigning website www.gpsoe.org.uk.