



GP partnership review - London fact-finding visit

Dr Nigel Watson, Chair of Wessex LMCs, is leading the Department of Health and Social Care's (DHSC) review of the GP partnership, due to be completed by the end of the year. Once finalised, the review will be sent to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, and Simon Stevens, the Chief Executive of NHS England.

We have arranged for Nigel and DHSC officials to visit London on Monday 30 July to discuss the GP partnership review. We would like GPs of all roles to speak to Nigel, either at our offices in Euston or at practices around London, if you have a view on what you would like to see from any new approach to partnership please let us know your thoughts and give us an indication of your availability on the 30th – info@lmc.org.uk.

In this review Nigel is looking into four main aspects of partnership, which you may wish to consider when providing a response:

1 – The Workforce: More people than ever before are training to be GPs, however the number of GPs working in practices is in decline. From this fact it is clear that we are not recruiting younger GPs in sufficient numbers to the permanent workforce. As time goes on, older GPs are opting to leave practices to become locums or retire earlier.

2 – Liability and Risk: Everybody carries a degree of liability in the workplace however GPs carry an unlimited amount of personal liability. Younger GPs are less willing to take on this liability. The risks of being a partner is now being seen as greater than the benefits, an example being whether you are responsible as the owner of the estate or as a lease holder. Both can be viewed as a significant risk if the practice ceases to hold a GMS or PMS contract.

3 - Lack of career progression: Many younger GPs have said that they would consider joining a practice as a partner, however not immediately after completion of their training. Stating that they would like to gain more experience to develop their wider interest for their future careers, ideally having greater flexibility.

4 – Uncertainty about the future – The expectation of having the younger generation commit to a partnership for the medium to long term is highly unlikely if the majority of responses they get are full of uncertainty.

The formal governance structure for the review has been established with NHS England, the DHSC, the RCGP and the GPC all having a role. A virtual reference group with membership from a variety of people from different organisations, geographies and experience is being built. The purpose of this growing group is to both test out the assumptions and potential recommendations in the review, and ensure that the views of as many people as possible is reflected.