



Mword Issue 70 - Dr Michelle Drage's latest update for GPs and practice teams

30 October 2020

Dear Colleagues you or other practice team members have seen an increase in aggressive behaviours from our patients, sadly you are not alone. We are receiving increasing reports of such experiences from valued staff at our front desks, our caring nurses and our GPs. Examples include swearing during phone consultations about GP face to face consultations, anger about referral delays, and also complaints in general. All of this coincides with the various stories we've all had to endure in the media over the last few weeks, and national media activity and communications from NHSEI itself. Goodness only knows why, when as their own figures published this week show:

An estimated 26.7 MILLION appointments took place in general practice in September – that's 20% more than August.

45% of appointments in September took place the same day they were booked.

39% of appointments in September took place over the telephone of which 72% were with a GP, and

56.6% of appointments were face to face.

In the midst of this chaotic pandemic this is a massive unrivalled achievement of endurance which should be receiving not media-stoked anger, but politicians' accolades and the public's applause. And then some. But, as the October data from 2,696 GPs responding to the BMA Covid-19 tracker survey shows, remote consultations actually take longer than face-to-face, leaving you working even longer days and even more exhausted. The inevitable and obvious conclusion being that your endurance is coming at a huge cost to you and your nearest and dearest. None of us entered our professions and roles to feel like this. All of us want to care for patients to the best of our ability. That is our calling and our job. In a monopsony health care system funded solely by government it is the job of governments to enable us to do our jobs properly. But all the evidence shows that they don't. Or won't. Yesterday Richard Vautrey, Chair of GPC England wrote to Ian Dodge, Executive Director NHSE&I expressing our serious concerns over all of the above. We await the response. In addition to working with and through GPC England, at Londonwide LMCs and with your local LMCs we continue to forcefully represent you, your practices and your PCNs to your local CCG and the London Region NHS systems as I outlined in MWord 69. We have also written to key MPs, the office of the Mayor, the GLA, London Councils, lobbied CQC, in our endeavours to show that you and your practices are working to NHSE&I's own Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and Infection Prevention Control (IPC) in order to protect yourselves and fellow practice team members, and patients themselves. And that just because the front door is physically closed to ensure safe social distancing and patient flow can be maintained, your practice is open. We are also campaigning publicly and on social media using clinical examples of how we in London's general practice are providing appropriate care for our patients. And you can see all of our outputs on our twitter page @LondonwideLMCs. But be careful – you may inadvertently stumble on other tweets with videos such as these. As you know, I welcome your feedback at mword@lmc.org.uk, and as always, know also that my team of experts and leaders here at Londonwide LMCs will always be by your side. Look after yourself. Look after each other. Keep well. Stay safe. With best wishes

