



Londonwide LMCs

The professional voice of London general practice

Mword Issue 89 - Dr Michelle Drage's latest update for GPs and practice teams

18 October 2021

Dear Colleague, We do have allies. On this autumnal manic Monday, it's important to know we are not alone. There are plenty of journalists and commentators ready and willing to counter the toxic narrative spun by the right-wing media last week. Here are just a few:

On Thursday Sky News carried analysis showing the number of GPs has been decreasing while the volume of appointments provided is rising. Also on Thursday The Guardian ran an editorial calling the Government's latest ploy to increase face-to-face access a "dangerous game". They also ran a piece by a GP on the dangers of demonising the whole profession.

The Independent's Shaun Lintern and health commentator Roy Lilley were both quick to point out the NHS half a decade long drive for remote-first GP access last week.

In September the Metro ran a frontpage story based on a patient's single tweet about trying to get through to her GP practice on the phone. The next day the same patient went public with her support for her local practice and how the paper hadn't got any context from her. And on Friday LBC radio host James O'Brien spoke passionately about attempts to turn the public against GPs.

In case you may have somehow missed last week's General Practice [so-called] Support Package from NHS England, you can read all the lowlights in Friday's MWord 88. The BMA has now produced a helpful analysis looking at what the package actually means. And for the avoidance of doubt, I would remind you that your contract states that care be delivered "in a manner determined by the practice"; so please do not be forced into exposing staff and patients to unnecessary risks. Please know that every week we at Londonwide LMCs speak to journalists, giving them a fair and realistic account of what we're hearing on the ground from our grass roots. We also organise access to people working in all roles in general practice, so journalists can hear directly what the job of GPs and practice teams is like at the moment. Thank you to everyone who has passed us details of what's going on in their practices and those who have taken the time to give detailed case studies in conversation. We do have allies. And as ever, I welcome your feedback at mword@lmc.org.uk. The team of experts and leaders here at Londonwide LMCs are by your side.

Keep well. Stay safe. With best wishes

Dr Michelle Drage MBBS FRCGPCEO, Londonwide LMCs