



Our Newsletter for LMCs – Spring 2017



GP Health Service

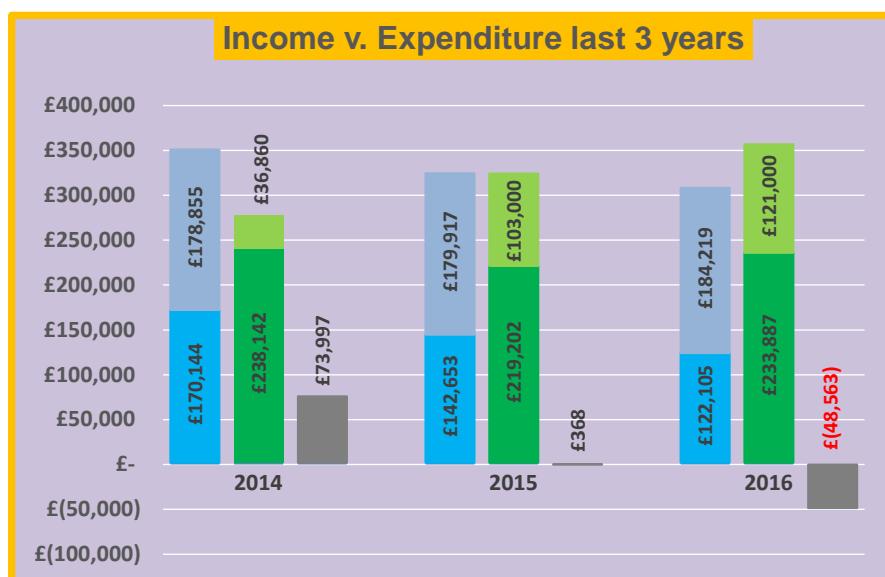
In January, NHS England launched the [GP Health Service](#), its focus to provide free, confidential specialist mental health support to GPs suffering burnout and stress, or more complex mental health conditions. GPs and GP Trainees – registered on the Performer's List or looking to return to work after a period of mental ill-health – can self-refer through a regional network of clinicians and therapists across England. This service will provide them with psychotherapy assessment, treatment and rehabilitation.

The Fund was invited to speak at a GP Health Service event, the *UK Physician Health Summit 2017*, held on 29 March. The conference aimed to give Medical and Clinical Directors an increased understanding of the issues facing doctors who are unwell, the best strategies to support them and minimise ill health in the medical workforce. Chief Executive David Harris referred to the Cameron Fund's case book, which showed that in 37% of applications to the Fund there is a GP or another individual suffering mental ill-health. When retired GPs, GP dependents and widows and widowers were taken out of the equation, 22% of the cases involved a working-age GP. Whatever an individual's circumstances are, mental illness can cause financial hardship and this hardship will only lead to further stress and anxiety.

Annual Report & Accounts 2016

The Fund's report and accounts for the year ending 31 December 2016 have now been prepared ahead of the Fund's AGM on 18 May at the LMC Conference 2017 in Edinburgh.

This graph highlights a substantial deficit of income over expenditure of nearly £50,000 – following an increase in the amount of grants and loans authorised by the Trustees. However, another large drop in donations causes us much concern. We are committed to a fundraising drive in 2017 and hope all LMCs will continue to support the Fund in its vital work.



Marked improvements for GP Returners – but some being let down by needless delays

While supporting numerous GPs through their return to practice, we have actively highlighted the problems GP Returners are experiencing, including delays in receiving the GP Induction & Returner Scheme bursary and having to use a commercial medical indemnity provider at significant cost following their rejection by the mutual insurers.

In November, improvements were made to the I&R Scheme. These included increasing a monthly bursary to up to £3,500 and a top-up of £1,250 to assist with the cost of indemnity insurance. Each GP Returner



now has access to a dedicated Account Manager to guide them through the process. Further changes this month will address how the process could be made simpler and quicker. Recently we became aware of a few beneficiaries who are experiencing serious delays to the clearing system (run by Capita), with their application to go back on the Performer's List, which is impacting on their starting the Scheme.

We are very aware of how stressful it is for a GP to return to work after a long break out of general practice, and how long it can take until they are able to reach an even keel financially. Whether it was a planned career break, serious illness or suspension, those joining the I&R Scheme have not worked as a GP for at least two years. For an individual returning after illness full-time work would not be an option. The scheme needs to be as supportive, straightforward and inexpensive, to encourage and support GPs to rejoin the workforce. To find out more go to: <http://www.gpreturner.nhs.uk/>

We require some information

To assist in our discussions with the NHS and the MDDUS – concerning returning GPs being refused medical indemnity insurance by the mutuals – we would appreciate your assistance. Could you let us know the number of GP Returners in your LMC area who have had difficulty in obtaining insurance cover with the MPS, the MDU or the MDDUS. Please email david@cameronfund.org.uk

Our figures for 2016 show that 38% of our applicants were working age women

This year is the 100th Anniversary of the Medical Women's Federation. When the Cameron Fund was originally set up in 1970 a lot of applicants would be elderly widows of male doctors, but nowadays, with the GP Register comprising of 51.9% female GPs and 48.1% male* our case file reflects these figures.

Often having their own issues and concerns which impact upon their financial position, they may have been the breadwinner of the family, they may be a single mother who can only work limited sessions around childcare or caring for a relative, or perhaps the dependents of a male GP who is unable to support his children at present. Recently published analysis by the House of Commons Library shows that 86% of the burden of austerity since 2010 has fallen on women.

*current GMC statistics covering the period of 2007 to 2016

Help me, I'm a doctor

With support from NHS England, the Cameron Fund – together with BMA Charities, the Royal Medical Benevolent Fund, the Royal Medical Foundation and the Society for the Assistance of Medical Families – have worked together to launch a Joint Medical Charities Portal, which will act as a single access point for doctors searching online for financial help, as well as a useful sign-posting tool for LMCs and other organisations who may be trying to help a doctor access confidential support.

Please go to: <https://www.doctorshelp.org.uk/>

