



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



29 March 2019

Dear colleagues,

We are aware of the anxiety amongst GPs in relation to the impasse in the GP contract negotiations and are writing directly to all GPs to assure you of the commitment of both Welsh Government and Local Health Boards to negotiating agreed changes to the contract; in line with the mandate which was agreed with GPC Wales.

A formal offer of significant investment into General Practice was made early in March with the intention to finalise all changes at the same time. We understand that GPC Wales has written to GPs in Wales at this point of the negotiations.

Further to the 2018/19 uplift of 5.4% to the Welsh General Medical Services (GMS) contract – an increase above and beyond all other UK counterparts – an offer has been made for a further significant uplift to the GMS contract for 2019/2020. This includes a one-off permanent adjustment relating to indemnity costs, with no future implications for the GMS contract.

On the 25 March, after considering for three weeks, GPC Wales rejected our proposal and on 27 March a further updated proposal with increased investment was issued to GPC Wales by Welsh Government and the Local Health Boards. We are awaiting a response to that proposal from GPC Wales. The communication from GPC Wales comes at a point where we could reach agreement to proceed with significant investment into the General Medical Services (GMS) contract, which would outweigh the adjustment for indemnity funding.

We are committed to the negotiations and to investing in General Practice. It remains our ambition to reach consensus with your representatives on changes that underpin the sustainability of General Practice and the wider NHS in keeping with “*A Healthier Wales*”. This would be supported by the proposal to inject significant new funding direct to practices.

Many of the components of a new deal for General Practice in Wales have already been agreed, in principle, with the GPC Wales team during the process of negotiations. It is accepted that the funding of state backed indemnity should be partially covered by a one-off adjustment to Global Sum to avoid double funding. Our proposal in both mechanism and scale is in keeping with the arrangements being introduced in England. The adjustment made to Global Sum is proportionate, places GPs in Wales in a better place than counterparts in England and does not penalise partners for the costs of locum indemnity.

We are committed to agreeing an overall set of changes which result in a net increase in funding to all practices.

We have already agreed, in principle, changes to the Quality and Outcomes Framework, support for GP retainers, the direct funding of additional pension employer's contributions and most importantly the introduction of a premium payment for partnership particularly targeted at younger GPs.

We recognise that there are outstanding issues to be resolved in relation to support for the contractual interpretation of the recently published access arrangements and support for last person standing arrangements in relation to premises.

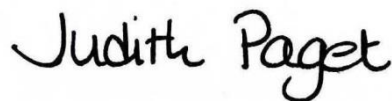
We are committed to engaging in effective dialogue with GPC Wales in the coming weeks to achieve an agreed settlement that offers fair funding and support to GPs and their staff, the sustained delivery of high quality services for patients and continuing value for taxpayers.

We look forward to the response from GPC Wales as we continue to seek a negotiated agreement.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Slade', with a stylized, cursive script.

Alex Slade
Welsh Government

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Judith Paget', in a clear, cursive script.

Judith Paget
Chief Executive, AB LHB