



Dear Patient,

Lincolnshire GPs are aware that some patients are finding it increasingly difficult to get the appointments and services that they need from us, and feel you should be made aware of some of the reasons this is happening.

Demand for general practice appointments has doubled in a decade. GP surgeries provide six appointments per year per patients on average, compared to three appointments per year a decade ago. UK general practice provides over one million appointments per day.

Bureaucracy has also increased, with ever more regulation from NHS England, Clinical Commissioning Groups, and the Care Quality Commission.

Increasing workload, increasing bureaucracy, and reduced funding to provide services, has caused low morale of general practice staff, doctors, nurses and administrators alike. GPs are concerned about patient safety, as they can no longer cope with the increased workload with reduced workforce. As a consequence, doctors are retiring early, or leaving the profession to work in other roles or other countries. There are currently over forty GP vacancies in Lincolnshire.

Despite the government's target that fifty per cent of doctors should be GPs, fewer junior doctors are coming into general practice training. Of thirty places on the Lincolnshire GP training scheme, only six have been filled.

GPs and surgeries want to provide patients with the best services that they can, and we are disappointed that the current climate does not allow us to do so. Please accept our apologies for this, and support us in our efforts to make general practice stronger and sustainable for the future.

We would like your help to improve this situation. Please contact your Practice's Patient Participation Group (PPG) to get more facts and figures. Please write to your MP to insist that they address this crisis in general practice. Your PPG will be able to tell you how to lobby your MP.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Kieran Sharrock, Medical Director, Lincolnshire LMC Ltd

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Partners at Welton and Nettleham Medical Practices