

## GPC Media Coverage Report – September 2010

September was a relatively quiet month for GP-related stories. However, the release of the interim GP pay figures once again attracted attention, with the tabloid newspapers focussing on the small number of extremely high-earning GPs. BMA comment explained that these were GP entrepreneurs, very different from the average family doctor.

### BMA mentions in the national and regional media for September:

	National	Regional	Total
<b>Print:</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Broadcasts:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

### National coverage:

SUBJECT	Print
GPs' pay	4
Swine flu	2
Contraception	1
White Paper	1

### Regional coverage:

SUBJECT	Print and broadcast
Reconfiguration	8
GP Pay	5
General practice	3
Swine Flu	3
Commissioning	2

### Press releases issued:

09/09/10      BMA comment on review of NHS IT  
10/09/10      New GPC guidance on commissioning

### Scotland

#### BMA Mentions in the Scottish Press

*We do not currently have a monitoring service to pick up on broadcast mentions so only interviews set up by the press office are recorded. The following includes BMA quotes or interviews relating to GP and public health issues.*

Subject	Scottish Press	Scottish Broadcast	Online News
Alcohol – Minimum Price	13		7
Smoking in public places			1
Homeopathy	5		2
NHS cuts	2		
GP Earnings	2		
Assisted Suicide	6		1
Obesity Checks for Toddlers	2		
Clinical Portal Technology – Security	4		4
Patient Rights Bill			1
Organ Donation	2		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>		<b>17</b>

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Welsh Press</b>	<b>Welsh Broadcast</b>
Domestic Abuse	1	
McKinsey Report	2	1
Out of hours	2	
Legionnaires disease	2	1
Alcohol	1	
Prescriptions	1	
Flu	1	
Smoking		4
Exam data errors		
GP Access	4	5
Waiting Times		
Patient Choice		
Recruitment and retention	1	
NHS Estate	1	
Cancer screening		
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>

#### **Press Releases issued:**

- 2 September BMA Scotland welcomes announcement of minimum price for alcohol (Brian Keighley)
- 21 September BMA Scotland demands stronger measures to protect patient confidentiality (Alan McDevitt)
- 22 September Removal of minimum pricing from Alcohol Bill a 'missed opportunity', say health campaigners (Brian Keighley)
- 22 September BMA Scotland calls on MSPs to close loophole for supermarket reward points on alcohol (Brian Keighley)
- 27 September Doctors call for bold action to increase organ donation rates (Brian Keighley)
- 8 October BMA Scotland comment on Certification of Death (Scotland) Bill (George Fernie)

#### **Letters**

##### **12 September**

Scotland on Sunday: "Don't hold breath for safer cigarette" (Charles Saunders)

#### **Wales**

##### **GP media work**

Issues Welsh GPs have commented on in the media include; GP Access, Legionnaires outbreak, smoking in cars and alcohol abuse.

##### **Blog**

The Public Affairs Team have used the blog as follows; to comment on the latest Welsh Health Survey and to publicise the "sort it in one call" initiative.

## **GPC Parliamentary and Assembly Activity Report**

### **WESTMINSTER**

The Parliamentary Unit in London keeps in contact with MPs across all the political parties.

#### **Party Conferences**

The BMA held a breakfast roundtable event at each of the three major political party autumn conferences in September and October. The theme for the discussions focused on health, the economy and workforce. The events, attended by ministers and spokespeople, select committee members, peers and stakeholders, were organised in partnership with the Royal College of Nursing. In addition, BMA representatives spoke at events organised by other organisations including VSO UK, the Royal College of GPs, Cancer Research UK, NHS Confederation, the College of Occupational Therapists and the

Conservative Medical Society. BMA representatives also met with parliamentarians and representatives from other health organisations in a series of one-to-one meetings.

### **MP-GP practice visit scheme**

Since the MP-GP practice visit scheme was re-launched in July 2010, 76 MP visits to GP practices have been arranged. A further 72 visits are in the process of being arranged. GPs interested in hosting a visit from their MP should contact Susan Bahl, Senior Parliamentary Adviser at [sbahl@bma.org.uk](mailto:sbahl@bma.org.uk)

### **Select Committees**

#### *Health Select Committee – Commissioning inquiry*

The Committee announced that it will conduct a new inquiry into the implementation of policies for commissioning outlined in the Government's White Paper '*Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS*'. The Committee is following up the work of the previous Health Committee's inquiry on commissioning in order to examine how the Coalition Government intends to resolve the issues which have undermined the effectiveness of commissioning in the NHS. The Committee saw various officials from the Department of Health in its first session on Tuesday 19th October. More information is available at: [www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/health-committee/inquiries/commissioning/](http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/health-committee/inquiries/commissioning/)

#### *Health Select Committee – Public Expenditure inquiry*

Following the Coalition Government's commitment to guarantee that health spending increases in real terms in each year of the Parliament, the Health Select Committee has launched a new inquiry to examine the implications for the NHS of this commitment. The Committee saw various officials from the Department of Health in its first session on Tuesday 12th October. More information is available at: [www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/health-committee/inquiries/public-expenditure/](http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/health-committee/inquiries/public-expenditure/)

#### *Home Affairs Committee – Firearms Control inquiry*

The Committee will examine whether or not there is a need for changes to the way in which firearms and/or shotgun certificates are issued, monitored or reviewed as a means of preventing gun violence. As part of the inquiry, the Committee will consider proposals to improve information-sharing between doctors and the police in respect of gun licensing. The BMA is due to appear to provide oral evidence on 16th November. More information is available at: [www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/home-affairs-committee/inquiries/firearms-control/submissions/](http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/home-affairs-committee/inquiries/firearms-control/submissions/)

#### *Transport Select Committee – Drink and Drug Driving Law inquiry*

The Committee is investigating drink and drug driving law and the views of interested organisations following the recommendations set out by Sir Peter North's review. Alongside representatives from NICE and the academic Prof Peter Allsopp, Dr Hamish Meldrum appeared as a witness for the BMA as part of the Committee's inquiry on 12th October. More information is available at: [www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/transport-committee/news/drink-drug-tor/](http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/transport-committee/news/drink-drug-tor/)

#### *Science and Technology Committee – Scientific advice and evidence in emergencies*

The Committee is investigating scientific advice and evidence in emergencies. The Committee's inquiry follows emergencies such as the swine-flu pandemic and the Icelandic volcanic ash eruptions, which the Committee will use as case studies for the inquiry. Dr Peter Holden appeared as a witness for the BMA to give evidence on the H1N1 flu pandemic on Wednesday 20th October. More information is available at: [www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/science-and-technology-committee/inquiries/scientific-advice-in-emergencies/](http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/science-and-technology-committee/inquiries/scientific-advice-in-emergencies/)

### **Q&A session between Dr. Sarah Wollaston MP and the BMA's SW Regional Council**

The BMA's South West Regional Council held a Q&A session with Dr. Sarah Wollaston MP on 28th September 2010. Dr Wollaston, a GP, is the Conservative MP for Totnes and a member of the Health Select Committee. The Q&A session focused largely on the NHS White Paper. GPs in the audience asked Dr. Wollaston about GP commissioning, private sector involvement in the health service, PCT debts and practice boundaries.

### **All Party Parliamentary Groups**

#### *APPG Primary Care and Public Health*

This group is currently undertaking an inquiry into the NHS White Paper and professional and public engagement. The BMA has submitted written evidence to this inquiry and Dr Laurence Buckman is due to appear at an oral evidence session on 16th November.

## **New Shadow Health Team**

Following the Labour Party's shadow cabinet elections, the new Shadow Health Team has been announced as:

- Rt Hon John Health MP (Shadow Secretary of State for Health)
- Diane Abbott MP (Shadow Public Health Minister)
- Liz Kendall MP
- Derek Twigg MP
- Emily Thornberry MP

BMA Parliamentary Unit  
October 2010

## **SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT**

July – August 2010

Parliament has been in recess throughout July and August.

During this time, the BMA has submitted supplementary evidence for Stage 2 of the Alcohol Etc Bill on the updated modelling to show the impact of minimum pricing on health and other alcohol related harms. This response was a joint submission with Alcohol Focus Scotland and Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems.

BMA Scotland also submitted written evidence for the End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill – this legislation seeks to introduce physician assisted suicide in Scotland. The BMA has opposed this legislation.

BMA Scotland also submitted written evidence for the Palliative Care (Scotland) Bill. The BMA has supported the general principles of the Bill but has raised concerns about the financial implications and the risk of skewing priorities locally.

We are in the process of commenting on regulations relating to the GMS section of the Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Act which details the level of involvement in the day to day running of the practice that the contract holder will be required to undertake in order to be eligible.

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BMA Scotland

October 2010