

GPC Media Coverage Report- July and August 2010

The Health White Paper dominated coverage in the media in July and the BMA's position was covered widely across all media. Broadcast interviews included Newsnight, BBC Five Live, BBC Breakfast, the Six O'clock news, the News Channel and the ITV evening news. There were 27 BMA mentions in the national newspapers and 46 in the regional media.

BMA mentions in the national and regional media for July:

	National	Regional	Total
Print:	45	59	104
Broadcasts:	9	20	29

SUBJECT	Print	Broadcast
White Paper / GP commissioning	27	8
Electronic medical records / SCR	4	-
GPs' pay and conditions	3	-
NHS: Private provision	4	-
Outcomes consultation	2	-
Swine flu	2	1
Out of hours	2	-
Revalidation	1	-
TOTAL	45	9

SUBJECT	Regional media
Commissioning	46
Complementary medicine - homeopathy	6
Privatisation and commissioning	6
Out of hours	5
Shipman inquiry - 10 years on	5
Job cuts - commissioning	4
Drs pay - commissioning	2
Workforce numbers	2
General practice	1
General practice - Enfield surgery closure	1
Living wills	1

Press releases issued:

2/7/10	BMA proposes fifth option for reforming practice boundaries
2/7/10	BMA invites MPs to come and see general practice at first hand
12/7/10	BMA response to health white paper
30/7/10	BMA leader writes to the profession about "curate's egg" white paper
22/7/10	BMA comment on 'Commissioning for Patients'

Letters to Press from GPs include the following:

Date	Signatory	Publication	Subject of letter
5/7/10	Dr Laurence Buckman	Daily Mail	GPs working in the NHS
13/7/10	Dr Vivienne Nathanson	Daily Telegraph	Overseas doctors and language testing

BMA mentions in the national and regional media for August:

	National	Regional	Total
Print:	13	31	44
Broadcasts:	6	3	9

SUBJECT	Print	Broadcast
Contraception prescribed to young girls	4	3
Out of hours / GPs' pay	3	-
NHS Direct / 111	1	-
NHS: Private provision	1	-
Electronic medical records / SCR	1	1
Maternity care	2	1
Online consultations	1	-
White Paper: GP commissioning	-	1
TOTAL	13	7

SUBJECT	Regional media
Reconfiguration - maternity services	5
Government White Paper - future of NHS	4
Privatisation - in relation to commissioning	4
Swine Flu	4
Commissioning - general	3
Electronic patient records	3
Out of hours	3
Complementary medicine	2
Contraception	1
General Practice - workforce numbers	1
Infectious diseases	1
Self diagnosis	1
Sexual health	1
Verbal abuse at work	1

Press releases issued:

4/8/10 BMA comment on King's Fund report on maternity care
 20/8/10 BMA outlines fundamental principles for GP commissioning

Letters to Press from GPs include the following:

Date	Signatory	Publication	Subject of letter
5/8/10	Dr Laurence Buckman	Daily Express	GP pay and out-of-hours care funding

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
Patient Confidentiality	5		3
NHS Cuts	12	3	4
Alcohol – Reward Points	4		
Alcohol Misuse/Minimum Price	15	1	10
Fit Notes	1		
Tobacco	1	1	
Organ Donation	2		
Forensic Medical Practitioner (Pay)	3		
Homeopathy	1	1	
NHS 24	1		
GP Experience/Access Survey	5		3
Obesity			1
Cremation Forms/Fees	2		
Population Growth	6		1
Life Expectancy	2		
Emergency Department /OOH	5		2
Quality in Primary Care	1		1
HPV	1		
Access	1		
Total	68	6	25

Press Releases issued:

8 July	Stop the tobacco industry targeting the young, say doctors (Andrew Thomson)
21 July	BMA Scotland response to NHS Health Scotland reports on alcohol price and consumption
27 July	High levels of patient satisfaction 'testimony to hard work of GPs', says BMA Scotland
29 July	Health service workers should not bear responsibility for failures in the banking system, warns BMA Scotland
3 August	Minimum pricing for alcohol only credible option available, says BMA Scotland
4 August	BMA Scotland response to Cross Party Statement on Alcohol
6 August	Growing population and health inequalities places additional pressures on NHS says BMA Scotland
12 August	BMA Scotland response to Audit Scotland report on emergency departments
20 August	Leading campaigners endorse Sheffield modelling on minimum price for alcohol
31 August	BMA Scotland comment on Labour Alcohol Commission report

Northern Ireland

GPs in Northern Ireland have spoken out about the need for better support for carers and against the recent cut of £3.6m to GMS funding. In addition, concern has been raised once again by GPs about review appointments and drink driving.

Dr Frances O'Hagan continues her monthly "Doctor's notes" column in the Newsletter, while in the Sunday Life, Dr Brian Patterson has taken over the "Ask the Doctor" slot.

In addition to press releases for the main daily newspapers, press releases have been targeted at weekly newspapers using local GPs as spokesperson. This has resulted in approximately 80% of the total coverage on GP issues being featured in a range of local newspapers.

GMS funding cuts

The withdrawal of £3.6m in funding from GMS services has been the main issue of concern for NIGPC.

A press release was issued on Thursday 12 August to all media outlets outlining cuts to general practice funding (p4)

In addition, Dr Brian Dunn spoke to Lisa Smyth, Belfast Telegraph health correspondent and a full page of coverage was generated. There were interviews on GMTV and Good Morning Ulster.

Press releases were tailored to weekly newspapers using members of NIGPC as spokespeople.

GPC Parliamentary and Assembly Activity Report

WESTMINSTER

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

Parliament was in recess from 29th July. Only the Commons will sit from 6th September for two weeks before a short break for the political party conferences. Both the Commons and the Lords will return on 5th October.

MP-GP practice visit scheme

More than 130 MPs from all political parties have responded to the BMA's MP-GP practice visit scheme. The scheme, which was re-launched in July 2010, aims to give Westminster MPs the opportunity to spend some time in a GP practice in their constituency. The purpose of the scheme is to help MPs better understand how GP practices work and the key issues facing primary care at both the local and national level. GPs interested in arranging a MP visit to their practice should contact Susan Bahl at: sbahl@bma.org.uk

Health Questions

At Health Questions on 7th September, ministers responded to numerous questions related to GP issues such as GP commissioning of mental health, GP commissioning in rural areas, GP consortia etc. More information is available at: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmagenda/ob100907.htm

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. Details of the inquiry are available at: 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. Details of the inquiry are available at: www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/health-committee/inquiries/public-expenditure/

Home Affairs Committee – Immigration Cap inquiry

The Committee is currently undertaking an inquiry to investigate the Government's current proposals to cap migration through Tiers 1 and 2 of the points-based system by implementing a permanent limit. The Government's proposals could impact on medical staffing and the BMA believes that it is important that the system remains flexible to allow employers to recruit for outside the EU if no doctors are available from the resident labour market. Details of the inquiry are available at: www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/home-affairs-committee/inquiries/immigration-cap/terms-of-reference/

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. Details of the inquiry are available at: 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. Details of the inquiry are available at: 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. Details of the inquiry are available at: www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/science-and-technology-committee/inquiries/scientific-advice-in-emergencies/

Party Conferences

The BMA will be attending the autumn political party conferences, which are due to begin in mid-September. Jointly with the Royal College of Nursing, the BMA will be hosting a series of stakeholder roundtables at the conferences to discuss health, the economy and the workforce.

In advance of the party conference season, MPs were issued with the Parliamentary Unit's latest newsletter, outlining topical issues. This can be viewed at:

www.bma.org.uk/images/parlnewsletterseptember2010_tcm41-199614.pdf

**BMA Parliamentary Unit
September 2010**

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

July – August 2010

The Scottish 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.

Gail Grant
Senior Public Affairs Officer
BMA Scotland
September 2010