

9<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Dear Colleagues

**Re: A letter of thanks to all our Nurses**

As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has unfolded over the last six months, we have all seen a change to our work life balance.

I am in no doubt that this unprecedented crisis is having an almost unimaginable impact on your physical and mental wellbeing. You will undoubtedly face days where you feel it hard to focus on looking after yourself.

Most days, this profession feels like a calling – it is the most essential, impactful, rewarding type of work. But there's a reason why healthcare delivery is often referred to in terms of war metaphors. Nurses are "in the trenches" and "on the front lines".

As nursing professionals, I know your instinct is to care for others before yourself; nursing staff sometimes find it more difficult to ask for help. But I'd like you to take some time to put yourself first, reach out to colleagues, friends and the LMC.

Florence Nightingale once said that "very little can be done under the spirit of fear". But how do you cope in the epicentre of a battle you never realised you had signed up for?

Working for the past 17 years in primary care, I have learnt the importance of coping strategies in building resilience. For me, these have included spending time with those I love and doing something fun. Whatever the things are that bring you moments of happiness, they're vital to process difficult feelings and help switch off.

I fear all this has taken its toll on us and we are facing a challenge that could go on for many more months. No-one knows how long this will last and the only guarantee is that our work will continue.

You are all going above and beyond every single day in incredibly testing circumstances and I'd like to remind you that your health and wellbeing are of the utmost priority, now more than ever.

My sincere and heartfelt thanks for everything you are doing. Your incredible work is seen and valued by myself, my colleagues at the LMC, and the thousands of people and families you are making a difference for.

Yours faithfully



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