



14 September 2020

Open Letter to Derbyshire General Practice

Dear All,

We are writing to thank you for your continued hard work in the face of unprecedented demand, and in light of the demoralising media onslaught in response to NHSE's letter reiterating 'the importance of providing face-to-face appointments for those who need them'.

As your Local Medical Committee, we know how tirelessly general practice teams have worked before and throughout the 6+ months of the pandemic. You have continued to provide quality care throughout the most difficult of circumstances. Derbyshire's practices have risen to the challenge by:

- Making wholesale changes in the way they work by embracing new technology to ensure patients could safely contact practices and be appropriately looked after
- Protecting the most vulnerable patients by adapting surgery spaces
- Creating 'Red Hubs' from nothing
- Managing, and implementing regularly changing Standard Operating Procedures
- Sourcing appropriate PPE to protect staff

All the time you have ***continued to provide face-to-face care for those patients who need it***, in the face of scarce PPE and whilst managing high levels of staff absence as a result of the pandemic. To highlight this fact [NHS Digital's](#) latest monthly appointment data reports that 22.8million appointments were carried out in the UK in July, 50% of these being face-to-face.

We wholly reject both the implication from NHSE that you are not seeing patients and the subsequent media 'GP Bashing'. We are appalled that this letter was reported in the media before it was sent to GPs which serves to undermine doctor-patient relationships and trust.

As your colleagues and your representative organisation, we ask that you try and ignore this further attack on your morale; we know you will continue to provide the high-quality care you always have.

Should you or your practice need additional support, please contact us or the General Practice Task Force, Derbyshire who can provide practice and individual support.

Derby & Derbyshire Local Medical Committee would like to thank patients for their understanding and thank all our front-line NHS staff for continuing to do the very best for Derbyshire's patients under very difficult circumstances.

Dr Kath Markus
Chief Executive
Derby and Derbyshire Local Medical Committee