



# GMC Recognises Doctors are Facing Increasing Pressure

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Each year for the past 9 years, the GMC has published its state of medical education and practice report, highlighting trends in the delivery of healthcare in the UK. This year, the trends show the pressures on medical professionals remain critical and there is evidence that these pressures are having a direct impact on patient safety.

Year on year, the UK demand for healthcare increases, with mental health concerns and dementia among illnesses more prevalent in today's society. The report shows that this increasing demand is building on the existing pressures faced by medical professionals. The GMC's recent report confirms that doctors are increasingly at risk of burnout. GPs in particular are at risk, with 65% of GPs reportedly working beyond their rostered hours on a daily basis and 90% doing so weekly. The risk of burnout is closely linked to dissatisfaction in doctors' day to day work. According to the report, 45% of GPs reported dissatisfaction, often because of high workloads and long hours.

The GMC's workforce report published earlier in 2019 reported that 7 out of 10 doctors said they were likely to make a career change in the next year. Those questioned indicated they were considering reducing their hours, taking a break or leaving the profession permanently.

The report sets out five key areas where action is required:

1. Retain and build on the workforce.
2. Increase flexibility in training and working patterns.
3. Reduce system pressures and ensure doctors are practising in work places that support their wellbeing.
4. Enable regulatory reforms to make regulation more efficient and fit for purpose.
5. Create more multi-professional teams made up of medical associate professions such as physician associates.

The GMC states that the focus in 2020 is to respond to the trends identified. As part of that focus, the GMC should use its powers to ensure increased flexibility and robust support is provided to all medical professionals. The government has placed the NHS at the top of its 'to-do' list and has promised increased funding and recruitment. It is hoped that the "*biggest ever cash injection*" in the NHS's history will start to alleviate the system pressures, but it will not be a quick fix and with winter in full swing, it probably seems difficult to see beyond the long appointment lists and A&E queues.

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