
Subject: NHS pressures - update from the BMA media team

Dear member

There has been widespread coverage of NHS pressures this week, as the health service faces its busiest time of the year.

The council chair and many other elected members have been working closely with the engagement and communications directorate to ensure the BMA has a strong presence in the media and across social media on this important issue.

Below is a summary of the coverage the BMA has generated and been cited in, in which BMA spokespeople have highlighted the unsustainable pressure on staff and services, and the resulting impact on patient care. A full overview of BMA media coverage is available on the BMA's [website](#).

We are continuing to receive requests for comments and case studies from the media for the coming weekend. If you are working in a hospital and willing to provide a first-person account of your experience during this busy period, please contact the media office who are keen to gather as many case studies as possible. They are available on mediaoffice@bma.org.uk or 0207 383 6448.

Wednesday

The BMA's response to NHS England's decision to halt non-urgent operations to free up capacity was reported in the [The Guardian](#), [The Daily Mail](#), [The Independent](#), [iNews](#), [The Daily Express](#) and a number of [regional](#) publications. You can read the full press statement from BMA representative body chair, Dr Anthea Mowat, [here](#).

The press statement formed the basis of a [Twitter thread](#) that received more than 400 retweets and 300 likes and replies (at the time of writing). They were also republished by [the Guardian's politics live blog](#).



BMA junior doctor committee chair, Dr Jeeves Wijesuriya, was interviewed by Adrian Chiles on BBC Radio 5 live discussing the NHS winter crisis. Several other BMA spokespeople took part in regional broadcast interviews on the same issue, including:

- BMA council chair, Dr Chaand Nagpaul, on BBC Radio West Midlands
- BMA GP committee chair, Dr Richard Vautrey, on BBC Look North (TV), BBC Radio York, BBC Radio Sheffield, BBC Radio Cumbria and Made TV
- BMA North East regional council chair, Dr George Rae, appeared on BBC Look North (TV), BBC Radio Newcastle and BBC Radio Tees
- BMA GP deputy committee chair, Dr Mark Sanford-Wood, on ITV West Country

Additionally, a [BMA News story](#) on the issue reached more than 7,000 people on [Facebook](#), with 50 reactions and 30 shares from our followers. Comments from an emergency medicine consultant who spoke to the BMA News team anonymously for this piece were used as the basis of [Twitter thread](#) that received more than 100 replies, retweets, and likes. We also took the opportunity to [direct members](#) to our support service, [BMA Counselling](#).

Thursday

Dr Chaand Nagpaul wrote an exclusive piece for the [The Daily Mirror](#), in which he warned that short-term fixes for the NHS will only go so far. The piece highlighted the fact that problems at A&Es are symptomatic of pressures across the entire system, including in general practice and social care. In light of the focus on winter pressures, the social media team again highlighted Dr Chaand Nagpaul's New Year Message in which he said that this year must be a turning point for the NHS.



The BMA also responded to the latest NHS weekly performance figures. Our [statement](#) highlighted the fact that the winter months have always have been more of a challenge for the NHS but, in recent years, the pressure on staff and services has reached new levels with patients bearing the brunt of long waiting times and cancellations. The statement was reported in the Metro (print edition) and the BMA's concerns were reflected in articles for [Mail Online](#), [The Daily Telegraph](#), [The Northern Echo](#).

BMA honorary vice-president Dr Kailash Chand, writing in a personal capacity, reflects on the winter crisis and the health service's reluctance to embrace prevention of ill health as the care model of the future in an article for [The Guardian Healthcare Professionals Network](#).

Friday

Emergency medicine doctor and chair of the BMA junior doctors' committee in Yorkshire, Dr Lucie Cocker, wrote an article for [The Yorkshire Post](#), which appeared in print and as the top story on their website today, describing how unrelenting pressure affects frontline staff.

Dr Richard Vautrey was also quoted in the Yorkshire Evening Post raising concerns about GP shortages in a story about GPs' advice to patients in need of an ambulance.