

Dear Patient or Carer,

You may be aware that some local surgeries have contacted their patients regarding the extreme financial pressure they are facing. Our situation at Cleveland's Medical Centre (CMC) is also becoming more precarious and so we felt it was necessary to update you.

We are facing multiple challenges:

1. On average, GP surgeries are seeing 20% more patients than before the pandemic and we too are experiencing this increase in demand yet receiving no extra funding to cover it.
2. Hospital waiting lists are increasing due to the backlog of work in secondary care. Waiting times for some services are significantly longer than they have been. This inevitably means that people continue to need our care whilst they wait, despite having complex conditions that need specialist input that is beyond our remit.
3. The reason that some surgeries are now facing a crisis is that this year's General Practice contract provides us with only a 2% increase in funding. The British Medical Association have calculated that funding would need to be increased by 8.7% simply to keep up with inflation and break even.
4. The cost of providing our services continues to increase. Like you, our energy bills have risen. It costs more to buy equipment and supplies. There were national wage increases in April this year.
5. None of these were directly addressed by the funding in this year's contract. We therefore face a precipitous shortfall in the money that pays for every aspect of your care.

You will likely experience the impact of this in longer waiting times. There is no money available to recruit additional staff to remedy this. You will receive more interactions via our messaging service, for things such as responses to questions or standard no further action test results, so that we can reserve face to face appointments and calls for where they are most needed (*Please ensure you have registered a mobile phone number with us and consented to contact on it and or email*).

<https://clevelandmedicalcentre.org.uk/navigator/change-of-personal-details/>

We are doing our best to look outside of the NHS contract for any opportunity to bring in more money. As a result, you will notice the following going forward at CMC:

- We are hosting medical students from Bristol University and intend to increase their numbers. Contributing your time to their learning experience will be invaluable.
- We are recruiting patients for research studies. We hope this will offer our patients access to promising treatments and therapies which are relevant to them.
- We have updated our charges for completing private work such as paperwork from insurance companies and letters to provide information on behalf of a patient. None of these are reimbursed by the NHS contract and so we must charge for the time it takes to complete them.

The above will go some way towards easing the pressure but it will not be enough. We would appreciate your understanding through what will be a difficult time for the practice. You can read more at

<https://rebuildgp.co.uk/for-our-patients>



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