

Prit Buttar (GPC rep) comments on the DES after the Britnell letter

Dear Colleagues

Mark Britnell letter to all SHA chief executives (30.1.08).

To read the letter, please see <http://www.bbolmc.co.uk/britnelllet301008.pdf>

This letter makes it clear that the extended hours DES will require you to offer appointments above and beyond those that you currently offer. My own practice was planning to have a compensatory drop in daytime appointments, but it is clear from this letter that this will not be acceptable.

For my practice, this makes the DES unaffordable. I would urge all practices to carry out the following calculation:

1. The payment for the DES will be a maximum of £2.95 per patient. Multiply your list by this figure.
2. Calculate the hours you will have to work. Remember that the appointments, if offered in the evenings, will need to be in minimum blocks of 90 minutes. I recommend that you add in 20-30 minutes per evening worked, for 'wash-up time' after surgery is finished. Multiply this figure for hours per week by 52.
3. Calculate your reception staff costs. Build in whatever additional payment that you think you will need to add to compensate for 'unsocial hours'.
4. Calculate the cost of doctor time. Unless you are prepared to work the additional hours for no pay - and remember that the Britnell letter makes it impossible for you to, for example, not come in until lunchtime and then work until 8.30pm - and add this cost to the figure for staff costs.
5. Multiply the total cost for doctors and staff per hour by the figure from step 2 to determine your overall costs.
6. If the figure from step 5 is less than the proposed income (step 1), then it is worth doing the DES. Otherwise, you will lose more money if you do the DES, than you will lose if you don't do it.
7. And remember, you cannot impose a change of terms and conditions on salaried staff, who may not want to work evening hours that are not family friendly

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