



Our ref: WQ89581

Jane Dodds MS
Senedd Regional Member for Mid and West Wales

Jane.Dodds@senedd.wales

29 November 2023

Dear Jane,

Thank you for your recent written question asking me what consideration the Welsh Government has given to the implementation of a national standard for a maximum number of patients that GPs can reasonably deal with during a working day.

GPs, as independent contractors, are responsible for the staff they employ and the systems they operate in providing services to patients. The number and mix of staff employed by each practice will vary according to local practice need.

GP practices have a variety of tools available to manage their daily workloads and many practices are embracing, for example, telephone triage to make an assessment of clinical need and to ensure workloads are managed effectively. This allows GPs to target resource appropriately to fulfil heterogeneous patient needs.

Health boards have responsibility for contract management and the services provided to patients. Alongside the new General Medical Services Unified Contract introduced in October, an Assurance Framework has been developed to provide health boards with a holistic range of measures on which to monitor and improve contract delivery. These indicators include contractual compliance, patient safety and quality of delivery as compared to other practices in Wales. The Assurance Framework has been aligned to the Health and Care Quality Standards to support Health Boards in discharging their duties under the Duty of Quality. The framework is intended to provide a national, consistent set of criteria against which practices can be measured, and improvement targeted where required.

Since April 2022 we have provided £4m additional capacity funding recurrently to help GP practices improve access to services for patients. A workstream of the Strategic Programme is also looking at tools to support demand and capacity planning in primary care.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

Eluned Morgan AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services