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**Dr Rosie Benneyworth**

Chief Inspector of Primary Medical Services and Integrated Care  
Care Quality Commission  
Citygate  
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6<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Rosie,

**Re: Supporting general practice during a period of unprecedented pressure**

Thank you for your letter of 28<sup>th</sup> September. It was deeply disappointing that CQC did not act on the genuine concerns shared in my letter of 24<sup>th</sup> September and proceeded with the introduction of its transitional regulatory approach for general practice – moving away from its previous Emergency Support Framework. You did, however, commit to remaining responsive to the changing situation brought about by the pandemic, and to continue to monitor its impact and adapt your approach where needed.

Since we last corresponded, the country has rightly entered its second national lockdown following a surge in Covid-19 cases, with the NHS again being put into the highest level of emergency preparedness. The general practice workforce is being physically and psychologically drained by its current heavy workload, with no time to recover from its experiences during the first wave of Covid-19 – all while patient demand and expectations are rising.

In addition, although under huge pressure (with GPs expected to deliver flu vaccinations to 30 million patients in England this year) it is right that GPs will lead the upcoming Covid-19 vaccination campaign, building on practices' proven track record of delivering widespread immunisation programmes to patients in their communities. GPs are under no illusion that this will be an easy task. Not only are these very complex vaccines, but a campaign of this scale will be a huge undertaking for practices already struggling to cope with the impact of the pandemic, as well as supporting the large number of patients with other healthcare concerns.

With these pressures in mind, GPs and their teams must be supported and enabled to provide care that best serves the needs of their patients, in a way that adds most clinical value and keeps patients, clinicians and staff safe. It is imperative that they are not distracted from their primary focus of ensuring the ongoing care of their patients. While reducing the regulatory burden on



general practice is a key long-term aim of the BMA and NHS England and Improvement, the current circumstances faced by practices require more urgent action – I would therefore again urge CQC to immediately halt all non-essential inspections and practice monitoring to allow GPs and their teams to focus on the job at hand.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R M Vautrey'.

**Dr Richard Vautrey**  
Chair, BMA general practitioners committee, England