

The Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon
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Dear First Minister

The Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow write on behalf of our Fellows and Members throughout the UK to urge you to exert pressure on the Prime Minister to lift the imposition of the junior doctors' contract in England and enable negotiations to resume.

We are already seeing the detrimental impact the threat of an imposed contract is having on the NHS and we are extremely concerned about the impact on patients now, as we move towards all-out strike action by understandably aggrieved trainees, and on the future delivery of safe patient care.

While we very much welcome the commitment from your Government not to impose the junior contract in Scotland, we believe that imposition in England will have far-reaching and unintended consequences for healthcare across all nations in the UK for the foreseeable future.

The priority of all Colleges is high-quality patient care, achieved through the highest standards of education, training and assessment. This largely depends on the retention of a world-class medical workforce. The imposition of the contract in England risks jeopardising our shared ambition for the future of the NHS by undervaluing and demotivating a group of doctors already under significant pressure. They represent the future and we risk alienating such able doctors from training or losing them to international health systems.

As you know, junior doctors intend to hold an all-out strike this week. The BMA has offered to call off the strike if the Government will lift imposition of a new junior doctor contract and return to negotiations. Through the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges we have urged the Government to accept this offer and for both sides to show a genuine commitment to reaching a negotiated settlement.

We would welcome your support on this matter to encourage the Prime Minister to intervene in order to avoid strike action and to put an end to this ongoing and damaging uncertainty in the NHS, not only in England but in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely,



Prof Derek Bell, President of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh

Prof David Galloway, President of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow

Mr Michael Lavelle-Jones, President of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh