

PE1698/N

David S. Millward MBE submission of 19 November 2018

I am most concerned that the new GP contract, which has already been implemented to stage 1, could eventually see the closure of our local surgery and other rural practices due to non-sustainable budgetary allocations. I find this possibility completely unacceptable showing a complete lack of regard for our rural way of life and provision of primary health care for the residents, and voters, of rural communities throughout the country.

I would implore the Scottish Parliament to reconsider the current proposals to ensure that we have access to a real, living, medical practice which can deal with almost any eventuality without the need for triage and multi-disciplinary groups that would be required if one had to call a "one stop shop" which is the proposal. Our local remote and rural practice has served us well providing not only GP services but other associated peripheral service provided by associated healthcare professionals. The residents of our community receive the best of care and cannot countenance losing this service under any circumstances. I believe similar views will be held by other communities covered by these remote and rural practices who operate in a similar manner.

The Scottish Parliament, some time ago, committed themselves to guaranteeing "Rural Proofing" of any new legislation or changes and I would ask that our parliament honours that commitment to Rural-proof the new GP contract with fuller consultation with all stakeholders before it is too late. We need to have a significant contribution to the rural Short Life Working Group with representation by the Rural GP Association of Scotland. We need a national rural enhanced service framework to allow practices to retain work, be resourced to do it and to enable more realistic and effective dialogue between practice teams and HSCPs and, finally, we need a correction factor that adequately reflects the level of workload involved in rural practices and funds sustainable rural practice services.

The new contract has been implemented to stage 1 at this time and I am asking that stage 2 is not implemented until there has been further proper consultation with remote and rural GP practices and communities. The Scottish Parliament must listen to the concerns of the people who live, work and vote in remote and rural localities throughout Scotland.