



# **Kent Local Medical Committee**

**2023/2024  
Annual Report**

# INTRODUCTION

2023/24 has been another challenging year for general practice in Kent and Medway. Appointments in General Practice continue to rise, beyond the level of the resources associated with delivering General Medical Services. In 2023/24, general practice in Kent & Medway delivered 10,866,654 appointments, compared to 10,606,022 in the same period last year.

The LMC is focused on ensuring that the voice of general practice is clearly heard within the Integrated Care System, which is even more important since the dissolution of clinically led CCGs. The General Practice Board provides an effective structure for LMC GP representatives and PCN Clinical Directors to come together with the LMC office to represent the views of practices and PCNs in one forum, and discuss current challenges, seek feedback and share good practice.

The LMC has met with the Kent and Medway Members of Parliament both collectively and individually to ensure that they understand how decisions made by the Government and NHSE impact upon the delivery of general practice locally.

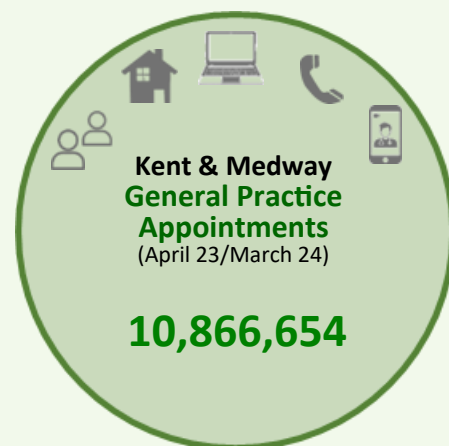
We have continued to successfully lobby each year for the additional services and earlier funding, not just into the acute providers but, into general practice to help address the patient demand during the Winter period.

A new committee was elected for the three-year term 2023-2026 and our Chair Dr Gaurav Gupta was re-elected for his third term of office.

LMC representatives attended both the England Conference of LMCs and the UK Conference of LMCs. The 9 Kent and Medway reps were regularly called to the podium in either support or opposition of the motions presented. As always Kent LMC actively represented the views of the profession.

In July 2023 the LMC concluded negotiations with the ICB for support to practices to contribute towards the impact the IT outages in March had, and the ICB agreed to compensate practices 21p per patient for the additional work created by the outage.

The LMC engaged in negotiations with the ICB on the Primary Care Quality Scheme (PCQS) and other Local Enhanced Services LES tariffs that had become unviable for practices to deliver. We needed to ensure that these existing services were stabilised, and to agree a solid foundation on which to commission other out of hospital services. The negotiations were focused on the principle of capturing and jointly agreeing all cost inputs and overheads associated with delivering each service to generate a realistic tariff. At the time of printing the negotiations have concluded on phase 1 with an agreed 30% increase in the ICB's budget, from 1st October 2024, for the services in that PCQS bundle. This is a very positive step towards sustainable general practice in Kent and Medway.



## MEET THE TEAM

Kent Local Medical Committee (Kent LMC) acts as the official democratic representative voice of Kent and Medway General Practitioners.

Kent LMC comprises a Chair, four Executive Members, Director of Operations, three Medical Directors, two Practice Management Executives and three Administrative Officers.



Mrs Liz Mears  
Director of Operations



Dr Caroline Rickard  
Medical Director



Dr Andy Parkin  
Medical Director



Dr Jack Jacobs  
Medical Director



Mrs Kay Acott  
Practice Management  
Executive



Mrs Michelle Baker  
Practice Management  
Executive



Mrs Kelly Brown  
Senior Administrative  
Officer



Mrs Loraine Kay  
Senior Administrative  
Officer (Finance)



Mrs Sophie Webb  
Administrative Officer

# OUR COMMITTEE

LMC Committee Members are elected to represent the views of their fellow GPs.

Joining the Committee is an opportunity to be part of an active GP community, with potential to pursue areas of special interest and to influence the local primary care agenda.

Members are elected for a three-year term from April 2023-March 2026. Our Full Committee meetings are held five times a year in January, April, June, September and November.

## Kent Local Medical Committee Representatives 2023/2026\*:

### Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley HaCP



Dr Ian Jones  
LMC Executive Member  
The Cedars Surgery, Swanley



Dr Siva Nathan  
Redwood Practice,  
Dartford



Dr Saijit Shetty  
Braeside Surgery,  
Farningham



Dr Ann Yearwood  
Springhead Health,  
Gravesend



Dr Luma Saad  
Sessional GP

### East Kent HaCP



Dr Senthil Balasubramaniam  
Northgate Medical Practice,  
Canterbury



Dr Theo Bennett  
Whitstable  
Medical Practice



Dr Dharson Dharmasena  
Northdown Surgery,  
Margate



Dr Gaurav Gupta  
LMC Chair  
Faversham Health Centre



Dr Manoj Jha  
Bethesda Medical  
Centre, Margate



Dr Ginika Laz-Onyenobi  
New Hayesbank Surgery,  
Ashford



Dr Thilla Rajasekar  
Kingsnorth Medical  
Practice, Ashford



Dr Vanessa Short  
Newton Place Surgery,  
Faversham



Dr Ganapathi Subbiah  
LMC Executive Member  
The Limes Medical  
Centre, Margate



Dr Jonathan Bryant  
New Lyminge Surgery,  
Folkestone



Dr John Neden  
Sessional GP,  
Ramsgate



Dr Mark Speller  
Sessional GP,  
Ramsgate



Dr Alicia Watts  
Sessional GP,  
Canterbury



Dr Julian Mead  
Sessional GP,  
Dover

### West Kent HaCP



Dr Richard Claxton  
Warders Medical Centre,  
Tonbridge



Dr Jed Herman  
Weald View Medical  
Practice, Cranbrook



Dr Kaushal Kansagra  
Amherst Medical Practice,  
Sevenoaks



Dr Vijay Koshal  
Claricarde Medical  
Centre, Tunbridge Wells



Dr Andrew Swindlehurst  
West Malling Group  
Practice



Dr Alexandra Scott  
Yalding Surgery,  
Maidstone



Dr Zishan Syed  
LMC Executive Member



Dr Connor Gorrard-Smith  
Sessional GP



Dr Mark Ironmonger  
Sessional GP



Dr Suzanne Jones  
Sessional GP



Dr Sarah Westerbeek  
Sessional GP Chair



Dr Neil Potter  
Sessional GP

### Medway & Swale HaCP



Dr Dan Kerley  
Thorndike Partnership,  
Rochester



Dr Naveen Rishi  
Gillingham Medical  
Centre



Dr Julian Spinks  
Maidstone Road  
Surgery, Chatham



Dr Reshma Syed  
LMC Executive Member  
Grovehurst Surgery,  
Sittingbourne



Dr Reza Mehr-Ghorbani  
Sessional GP  
Rochester



Dr Lola Savage  
Sessional GP  
Rochester

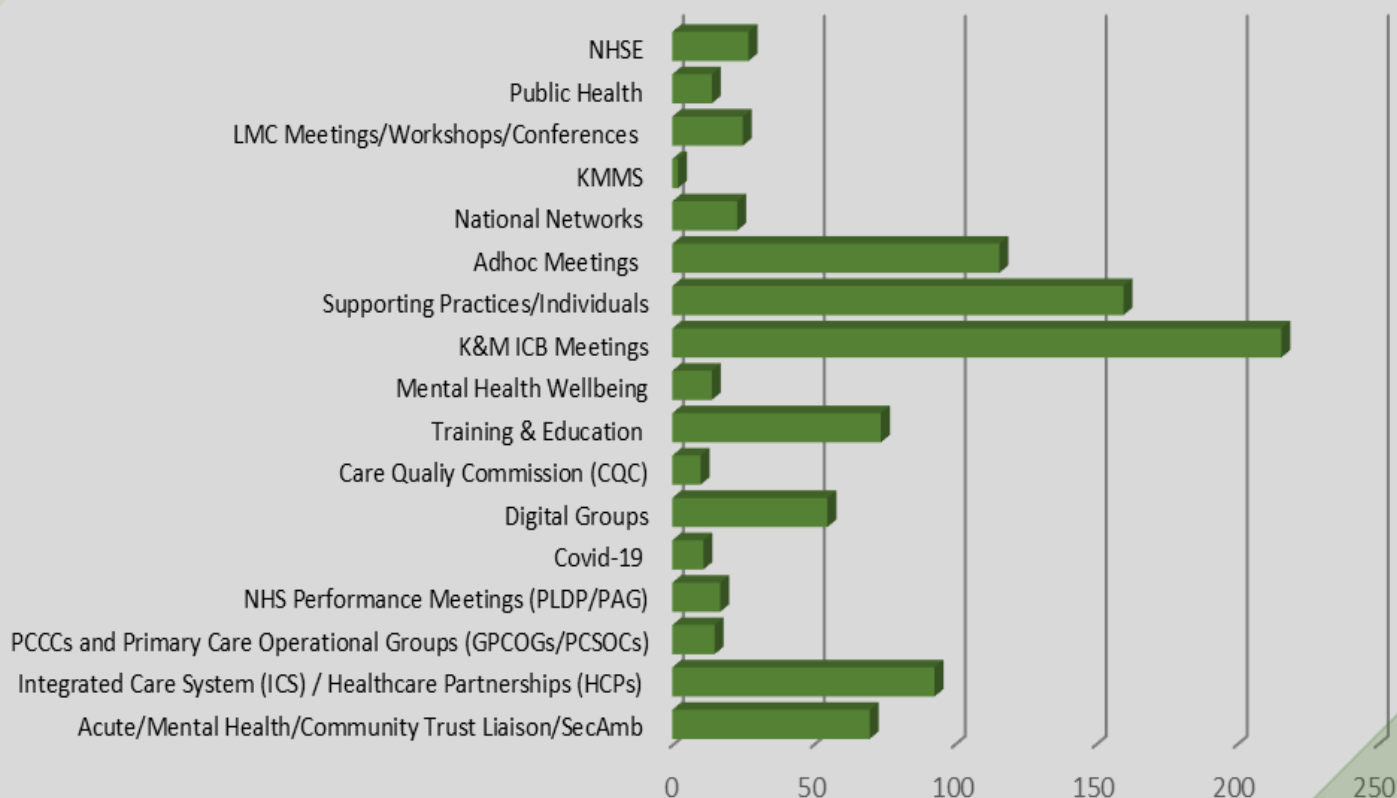
\* Information correct on 1st April 2024

## YEAR AT A GLANCE

2023/24 has been an extremely busy year for our team and the Committee.

The Chart below provides an overview of more than 942 meetings that the LMC have facilitated or attended on behalf of our members, which excludes general enquiries and internal LMC meetings.

### Meetings and Events: April 2023 - March 2024



## KENT LMC GENERAL PRACTICE SURVEY 2023

We received 229 responses to our General Practice survey which ran across 5 weeks in Summer 2023. The survey results highlighted below have enabled us to show the ICB what we know is happening in General Practice. We launched the results with a press release which led to coverage which was sympathetic to General Practice on local TV and radio. The results have also helped our discussions with local MPs highlighting the challenges and potential solutions.

Declining GP numbers look set to worsen as surging workloads correlate with significant GP stress levels. Fairer and immediate funding redress, urgent infrastructure investment, and manageable workload are critical for the survival of General Practice in Kent and Medway.

### Key Concerns

- 1 Workforce Dynamics:** We face a black hole of GP attrition – up more than 10% since the last survey in 2017, 30% nearing retirement age and a further 27% planning to reduce hours or voluntarily leave the profession within five years. Compounding the crisis is the high vacancy rate, lack of applicants, financial challenges and estates leading to 44% of responding practices to stop advertising roles.

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2 | <b>Patient Care:</b> Particularly concerning is the GP to patient ratio in Kent and Medway, which trails the national average by a staggering 18%. Estates challenges widely reported by GPs mean that expansion of premises to support more staff and increase capacity is being stifled.                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 3 | <b>Overburdened GPs:</b> General Practice staff reported working 38% above their contracted hours in a typical week with GP partners working a staggering 53% above their contracted hours and an alarming 82% of respondents reporting significant stress – improving work-life is the most powerful lever to keep GPs in their roles.                                                                                                                                      |
| 4 | <b>Complicating Factors:</b> Inappropriate workload transfers from secondary care, increased regulation, increased bureaucracy linked to the changing funding landscape and multiple information requests have exacerbated GPs' workload. Moreover, with inflation and wage cost pressures, general practice funding is felt to be increasingly lagging behind. Inconsistent and inadequate NHS funding support for premises and IT infrastructure is deepening the problem. |
| 5 | <b>PCNs and Their Impact:</b> The implementation of PCNs has brought additional administrative and clinical burdens as well as complex financial and legal arrangements. PCN's, coupled with the global pandemic and NHSE restructuring, have added to the complexity, bureaucracy and challenges of general practice.                                                                                                                                                       |

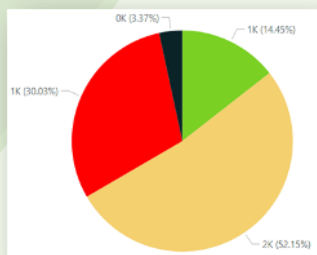
## We urgently call for:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <p>1</p> <p><b>Workforce</b></p> <p>Expand recruitment and retention schemes to cover the whole of Kent and Medway; simplify educational requirements to support the development of GP trainers; improve retention of our existing workforce with funded training opportunities; continue to develop peer support networks.</p> | <p>2</p> <p><b>Estates</b></p> <p>Whether it's about the physical premises where GPs work or the digital infrastructure supporting them, there needs to be a significant increase in investment in both. Make existing funding such as S106 and CIL funding easily accessible to General Practice. Support practices with expertise, funding and by streamlining processes to plan and meet their estate needs.</p> | <p>3</p> <p><b>Funding</b></p> <p>Reduce the administrative burden of managing multiple and opaque funding streams. Increase funding in enhanced services in Kent &amp; Medway in line with the national average; ensure primary care under-spend is reinvested in primary care.</p> | <p>4</p> <p><b>Digital</b></p> <p>Recognition of the impact of inadequate IT infrastructure and its impact on capacity on general practice; prioritisation of current performance problems with ICB commissioned IT providers.</p> | <p>5</p> <p><b>Workload</b></p> <p>Other providers to be held to account to deliver their contractual obligations and reduce their inappropriate transfer of work to general practice. Practices must have control over online consultation platforms to enable responsive approaches to demand and capacity. The ICB need to review all requests to practices to minimise bureaucracy.</p> |
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We thank all participants that took the time to complete our survey and to share their feedback and join them in calling for recognition of the continued, unsustainable pressures on general practice and for support for a patient-centric approach to general practice, underpinned by appropriate and urgent investment.

## GENERAL PRACTICE ALERT STATE (GPAS)

Kent LMC continue to produce weekly General Practice Alert State (GPAS) reports to highlight the state of resilience across Kent & Medway and help system leaders understand the pressures being experienced and compare them to those in the rest of Primary and Secondary Care.

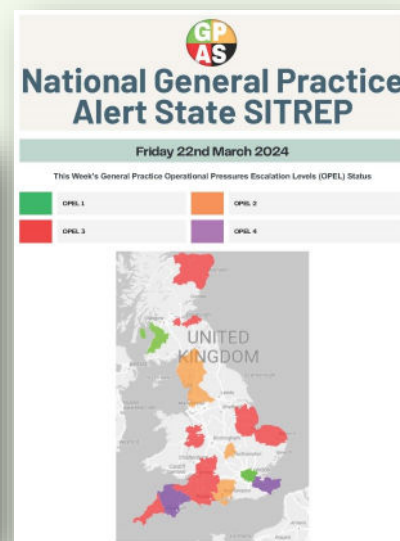
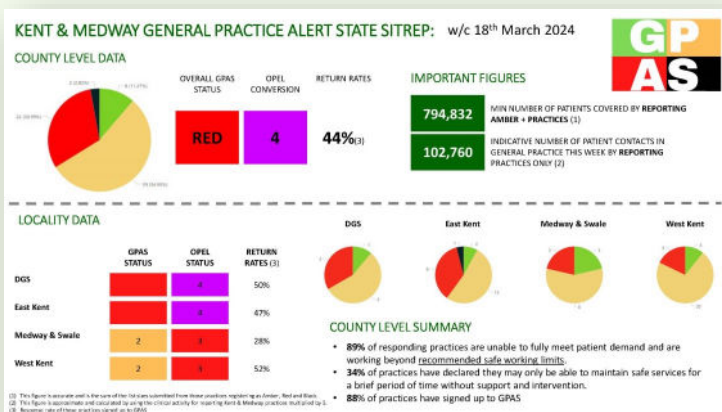


Currently 88% of practices across Kent & Medway have signed up to GPAS. On average over the 12-month period Kent LMC reported red/Opel 4 status, and a county level summary shows 86% of practices were unable to fully meet patient demand and were working beyond recommended safe working limits and 33% of practices declared they may only be able to maintain safe services for a brief period of time without support and intervention.

By completing a single weekly return practices provide Kent LMC with high quality data to evidence the pressures on general practice.

GPAS gives a real time picture of the pressures faced and has formed the basis of discussions with the ICB and our system colleagues to identify support that can be provided to practices (eg. winter pressures, IT failure, QoF Support).

Our reports are shared weekly with practices and stakeholders alongside the National GPAS report that we contribute to.



## EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT 2023/24

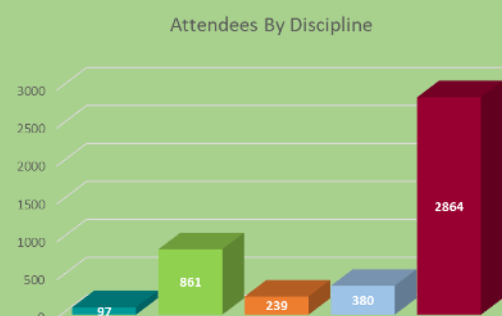
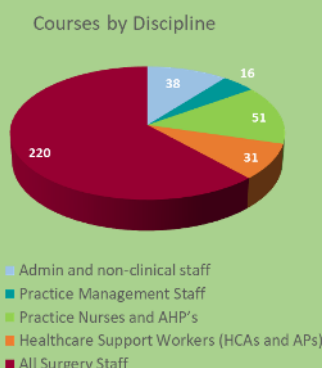


Kent LMC commissions Invicta Health Learning to provide education services for administration and non-medical clinical general practice staff in Kent and Medway, including PCN and ARRS staff. The service is funded by the LMC Voluntary Levy and provides training intended to equip staff to deliver core General Medical Services (GMS/APMS).

The service is monitored by an Oversight Board, chaired by the LMC, which works with Invicta Health Learning to ensure delivery is within budget and to advise on course content.

Staff and their managers have access to training records via the [Learning Pool website](#) which enables them to obtain certificates and track completed courses.

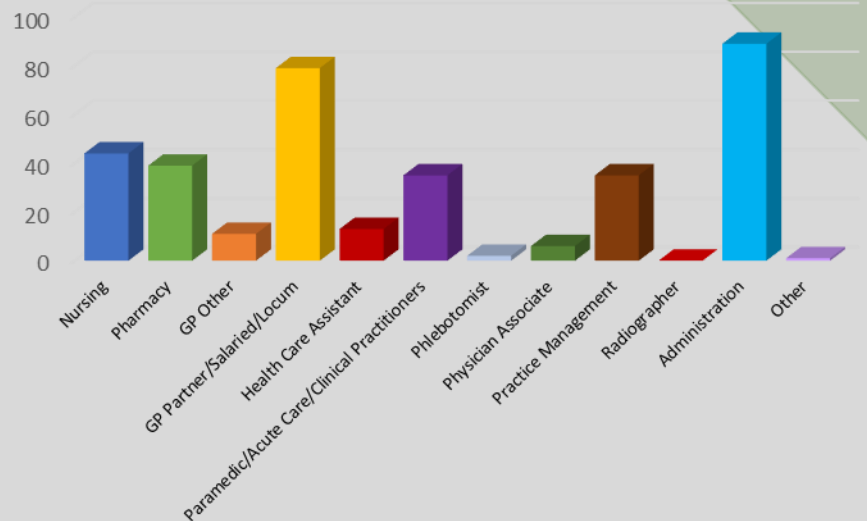
The training is delivered with a mix of face to face and virtual courses. In 2023/2024 Invicta Health Learning delivered around 152 face to face (+ 28 face to face from non-recurrent funding) and 178 virtual (+ 25 virtual from non-recurrent funding) courses.



# PRACTICE STAFF VACANCIES APRIL 2023-MARCH 2024

Over the past 12 months the Kent Local Med-way Committee have advertised more than 353 vacancies via our website. This service is provided FREE of charge. Practices will need to [register on the Kent LMC Website](#) (or log in for existing users) to submit a vacancy.

\*All vacancies are subject to approval by the Kent LMC and will usually appear on the website within one working day.



## TEMPLATE CONTRACTS AND POLICIES

Kent LMC commission Clarkson, Wright & Jakes Solicitors to provide template contracts and policies for use by GP practices. The contracts and policies are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they comply fully with current employment law and practice and CQC requirements. It is our view that these documents represent a high-quality set of employment policies and procedures and would recommend that you give due consideration to their use within your practice.

The following contracts and policies are available on the Invicta Health learningpool website:

### Template Policies

- › Social Media Policy
- › Retirement Policy (No Fixed Retirement Age)
- › Retirement Policy (Fixed Retirement Age)
- › Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- › Anti Harassment and Bullying Policy
- › Flexible Working Policy
- › Capability Procedure
- › IT and Communication System Policy
- › Data Protection Policy (GDPR PRIVACY STANDARD)
- › Employee Privacy Notice GDPR
- › GDPR Candidate Privacy Notice
- › Time off for Public Duties Policy
- › Compassionate Leave Policy 2024
- › Time off for Dependents Policy 2024
- › Parental Leave Policy
- › Time off to attend antenatal appointments policy

- › Time off to attend adoption appointments policy
- › Grievance Procedures
- › Disciplinary Rules
- › Disciplinary Procedure
- › Maternity Policy
- › Paternity Policy
- › Shared Parental Leave (Birth) Policy
- › Shared Parental Leave (Adoption and Surrogacy) Policy
- › Adoption Policy
- › Whistleblowing Policy
- › Sickness Absence Policy
- › Health and Safety Policy
- › CCTV Policy
- › Substance misuse Policy
- › No Smoking Policy
- › Stress and mental wellbeing at work policy
- › Holidays policy (due to be updated following changes coming into force 1 April 2024)

- › Time off for training policy
- › Relationships at work policy
- › Parental bereavement leave policy
- › Homeworking policy
- › Lone working policy
- › Menopause policy

### Template Contracts

- › Casual Worker Contract
- › Template Contract for Employee Working Annualised Hours
- › Template Letter Offer of Employment
- › Template Contract for Full Time Employee
- › Template Contract for Part Time Employee
- › Template Contract for Fixed Term Full Time Employee
- › Template Contract for Fixed Term Part Time Employee

## To access the Template Contracts & Policies

Go to the GP Staff Training website and log in using your usual username and password:

<https://invictahealth.learningpool.com/login/index.php>

Select 'Resources' and 'Practice Manager Resources' and scroll down to Employment Policies & Contracts - you should then be able to access and download the documents.

If you are not currently registered you will need to create a new account. To do this click on 'Create new account' under the Login button and fill in your details. A confirmation email will be sent for you to click and complete the registration process. To access the employment law documents you will then need to obtain authorisation by contacting the LMC office on 01622 851197 or emailing the Staff Training Team on [learning@invictahealth.co.uk](mailto:learning@invictahealth.co.uk)

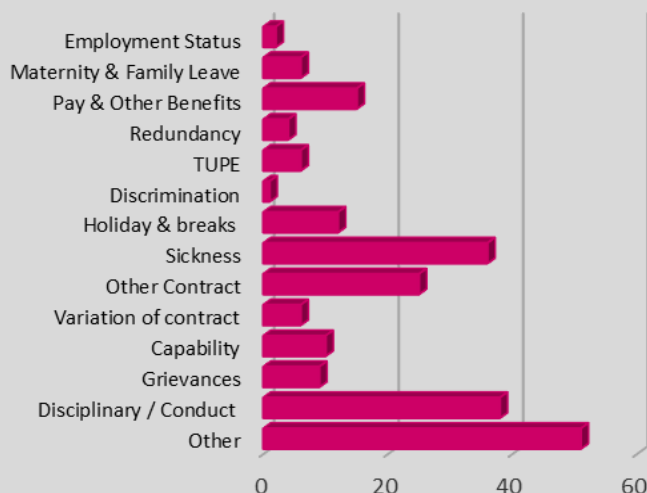
## EMPLOYMENT LAW HELPLINE

We would like to remind practices that Kent LMC commission an Employment Law Helpline from Clarkson, Wright & Jakes to assist General Practice in employment law matters. Practices are able to access *FREE* advice from a team of Employment Law specialists on all employment issues. Advice will be given over the telephone and/or by short email communication and includes; one off advice; step by step guidance on dealing with a specific employment issue; review of short letters; or communications with employees.



To contact CWJ Employment Law Helpline  
telephone 01689 887840 or email  
[cwj@cwj.co.uk](mailto:cwj@cwj.co.uk)

Contacts by Category: April 2023-March 2024



## MINDFULNESS & WELLBEING

General Practice is facing unprecedented challenges as it struggles to meet increasing demands and expectations. We are seeing more GPs with stress related problems, partnership and performance issues and more practices and managers getting into difficulties.

Kent LMC have developed a wealth of resources to help GPs and practice staff with the pressures they face on a daily basis [GP and GP Staff Wellbeing](#). Please take time to look at the resources available, and do contact us if we can be of any assistance. We have also listed below some of the organisations you can contact directly for support. For a full list please go to the link above.

Sick  
Doctors  
Trust

DocHealth

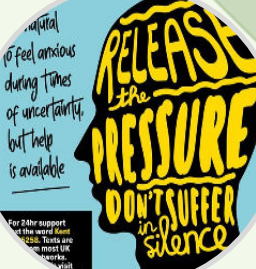
NHS  
Practitioner Health

  
The **Cameron Fund**  
*The GPs' own charity*

You  
okay  
doc?

  
*Help me, I'm a doctor*

Looking after you too

  
RELEASE  
the  
PRESSURE  
DON'T SUFFER  
in  
silence  
For 24hr support  
...the most UK  
...work.

## KENT LMC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2024 1.15pm-5.00pm  
(Buffet and refreshments available from 12.30)

Village Hotel, Castle View, Forstal Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 3AQ

Look out for further updates on our website and via our weekly bulletins!

SAVE  
THE  
DATE