



**All GP Practices  
England**

February 2016

BAAS reference: R01010

Dear Colleague

**Help us plan for the right people and skills in healthcare**

On behalf of Health Education England, the Department of Health, NHS England and the Health and Social Care Information Centre, we would like to thank you for your cooperation in completing the workforce Minimum Data Set (wMDS) return as of 30 September 2015, the results of which will be published this March.

The next data collection will take place at the end of March with submissions required by mid-April. We recognise that practices are under tremendous pressure and that having a qualified workforce available in the right numbers is an important part of the solution, and therefore, if you haven't already, we strongly encourage you to engage in the process and ensure you play your part in helping us plan a future workforce that meets the needs of all patients.

This is the first year, as part of a continuing process, when the latest live data fed directly to Health Education England local teams to inform their workforce and investment plans. The collection is now more comprehensive than previously, with more data being added from primary care

The purpose of this letter is to remind you of the value of collecting this data and signpost further information and help to support you in this process.

**Why do we need this data?**

Primary care is currently under severe workforce pressures, as you will know, and the provision of this data will be vital in helping us to address these pressures and secure a well-trained workforce for the future to deliver the new models of care.

We need to form an accurate picture of your current workforce so that we can get a clear understanding of the current available skills and capacity in primary care. Analysis of that data will help Health Education England and its Local Education and Training Boards (LETBs) to identify local gaps in skills and capacity and allow us to commission training and education in

the best way possible. This data will also underpin the delivery of the joint (BMA, RCGP, NHS England, Health Education England) 10 point plan and helping to address workforce pressures in general practice.

This is the first year, as part of a continuing process, when the latest live data fed directly to the *Workforce Plan for England*. The collection is now more comprehensive than previously, with more data being added from primary care. This rich data gives us an even better understanding of the current workforce and ensures we can plan more effectively for a transformed workforce.

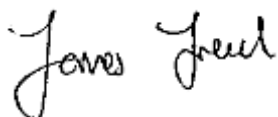
### **Next steps, guidance and further information**

The Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) is the organisation collecting the workforce Minimum Data Set and they will be in touch shortly with details of the next data collection which opens on 1 April 2016 closing on 20 April 2016 for staff details as at 31 March.

Practices can visit the HSCIC website at <http://www.hscic.gov.uk/wMDS> to access guidance documents and for information on accessing the Primary Care Web Tool for submitting data at <https://www.primarycare.nhs.uk/>.

Alternatively, practices may continue to use existing LETB tools where available. If you have any further questions about this collection, please refer to the frequently asked questions at <http://www.hscic.gov.uk/wMDS> or email the HSCIC at [gp-data@hscic.gov.uk](mailto:gp-data@hscic.gov.uk) with 'Workforce Collection' in your subject heading.

Thank you for your continued cooperation.



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Chair of Workforce Information Systems Group  
Health Education England