

**Wednesday 27 September 2023**

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **Patients in South of England want their family doctor back – new poll**

- New survey finds most people in South of England want to see the same GP each time, in a surgery near where they live.
- Rebuild General Practice campaign calls for an end to decades of neglecting the profession – so that GPs can meet the public's desire for a return of the family doctor.
- GPs are calling for a proper plan to retain the workforce, keep patients safe and protect the NHS.

People in the South of England want to see a return of the 'family doctor', according to a new poll released today.

The survey of over 4,000 Britons found the majority in South (56%) think it is important that they see the same GP each time they visit their local surgery.

And nine in ten say that having a GP who can offer long-term support for their medical conditions (95%) and has the ability to treat a wide range of medical issues (94%) is important to them. Patients also value elements of general practice such as being listened to (97%) and being seen in a friendly environment (90%).

GPs from the Rebuild General Practice campaign – which commissioned the YouGov poll – have said today that this is a clear indication of the need to invest more in a proper plan for general practice in order to deliver for patients.

As well as wanting to see the same doctor when they visit their GP, the majority of patients (55%) would prefer to visit their GP for a minor ailment over other primary and secondary care services like A&E (4%) or walk-in centres (18%).

The GPs say that there is a crisis in general practice caused by lack of funding and failure to retain doctors in the profession, leading to an inability to deliver the continuous, community-centred care desired by patients.

### **Rachel Ward, a GP on behalf of the Rebuild General Practice campaign:**

*"Patients want a 'family doctor' style general practice back at the heart of their communities. This is what GPs want too. But decades of NHS neglect and underfunding has made the family doctor a service of the past."*

*“Services are overrun and there are not enough GPs to meet patient demand. We’re seeing on average [37 patients](#) within a full-time day, despite guidance on safe working recommending we see [no more than 25](#).”*

*“General practice at its best provides not just medical care, but a wrap-around support for families that helps to keep them well, for longer.”*

A majority (56%) of patients also want the Government to prioritise funding general practice – more than any branch of the health system other than A&E. GPs currently treat [around 90%](#) of patient contacts for [under 10%](#) of the national budget.

Of those who said it was important to see the same doctor every time, 74% said this was because they didn’t need to explain their medical history each time, while 55% said they believed this would mean more accurate diagnoses.

Amongst those who gave an ‘other’ response, popular reasons were consistency and continuity of care, with one anonymous respondent saying: “A GP who knows their patients well is always going to be able to do a better job of managing their care.”

GPs from across England, Scotland, and Wales are calling for more support to Rebuild General Practice and bring back the family doctor, which must include:

1. **Retention:** Tackling the factors driving GPs out of the profession such as burn out
2. **Safety:** A plan to reduce GP workload and in turn improve patient safety

Support #RebuildGP  
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**-ENDS-**

## Media contacts

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## About Rebuild General Practice

We represent GPs from across England, Scotland, and Wales, and are calling for support to Rebuild General Practice.

Patient safety must come first, and patients should be receiving the best care possible. To do this, we need a proper plan for recruiting, developing, and retaining greater number of GPs.

This campaign is funded by the GPDF on behalf of the General Practice community.

## Polling

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 4,097 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 13th - 15th September 2023. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

## South of England data

- 56% of patients want the government to prioritise funding general practice.
- 56% of patients want to see the same family doctor when they visit the GP.
- The poll also unveiled the elements of general most valued by patients, stating the importance of long-term support for any medical condition (95%), ability to treat a wide range of medical issues (94%), being listened to (97%) in a friendly environment (90%) and understanding their community (50%) and culture (43%).
- Most (55%) of patients would prefer to visit their GP for a minor ailment.

## Total GB

- 57% of patients want to see the same family doctor when they visit the GP.
- The poll also unveiled the elements of general most valued by patients, stating the importance of long-term support for any medical condition (95%), ability to treat a wide range of medical issues (96%), being listened to (97%) in a friendly environment (90%) and understanding their community (52%) and culture (44%).
- More than half (55%) of patients would prefer to visit their GP for a minor ailment.
- Of those who said it was important to see the same doctor every time, 73% said this was because they didn't need to explain their medical history each time, while 56% said they believed this would mean more accurate diagnoses.
- Amongst those who gave an 'Other' response, popular reasons were consistency and continuity of care, with one anonymous respondent saying. 'A GP who knows their patients well is always going to be able to do a better job of managing their care'.
- A majority (52%) of patients also want the government to prioritise funding general practice. GPs currently treat around 90% of patient contacts for under 10% of the national budget.

Full table of results: [click here](#).