

Dear Editor,

Thank you for publishing our article ‘Revealing the reality of undergraduate GP teaching in UK medical curricula’ in which we highlighted the longstanding problem of under-investment in general practice teaching in the UK (1). One of our key recommendations was for “an adequate primary care tariff which reflects the cost of teaching and simplifies current payment mechanisms”. We are pleased to report that since writing this paper the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) in England has for the first time introduced a national minimum tariff for medical student placements in general practice (2). We of course welcome this development as a step in the right direction. However, the new minimum tariff of £28,000 per full time equivalent (FTE) placement per year still falls significantly short of the current tariff for secondary care undergraduate medical placements set at £33,286 (3). A primary care payment of £28,000 per FTE is also significantly lower than the actual cost of undergraduate teaching in general practice, identified by a national study in England as £41,700 per FTE (4).

Whilst there is no doubt that the health economy will be struggling in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, recent events surely present yet further evidence of the need to provide all future doctors with high quality experience in general practice and primary care. We strongly urge governing bodies to move fully to a fair and flat tariff for undergraduate placements from 2021 onwards if they are committed to training the future medical workforce that the NHS will surely need.

Authors: (same 5 as original article – 1 below)

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1. Cottrell E, Alberti H, Rosenthal J, Pope L, Thompson T. Revealing the reality of undergraduate GP teaching in UK medical curricula: a cross-sectional questionnaire study. *Br J Gen Pract* 2020 Sep 1;70(698):e644-50.
2. Department of Health and Social Care. Education and training tariff guidance and prices for the 2020 to 2021 financial year, 2020. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/healthcare-education-and-training-tariff-2020-to-2021>
3. Department of Health and Social Care. Education and Training Tariffs: Tariff guidance and prices for the 2019- 20 financial year. In: Department of Health and Social Care, editor. 2019.
4. Rosenthal J, McKinley R, Smyth C, Campbell J. The real costs of teaching medical students in General Practice: A cost-collection survey of teaching practices across England. *Br J Gen Pract*. 21 Oct 2019: bjgp19X706553. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3399/bjgp19X706553>