



15 March 2021

Covid-19 Crisis: One year later

It is hard to believe that we are now at the first anniversary of the Covid-19 pandemic. The past year has seen three lockdowns and a change to working practices. GPNs and in fact all practice staff have found it challenging.

I would like to thank all the nurses and practice teams, who continue to work in these extraordinary circumstances and make such an amazing contribution to the UK's Covid-19 response.

A recent survey carried out by Nursing in Practice found that Practice nurses feel undervalued for their work during the Covid-19 crisis and 35% are considering leaving the profession.

The survey of 184 general practice nurses, carried out online last month, showed workloads had greatly increased – either 'greatly' (52%) or 'slightly' (29%) – during the pandemic.

Nurses say they are not being valued, particularly for the face-to-face appointments they are doing.

They also told *Nursing in Practice* they are being left out of important decision making despite doing most of the vaccination work. The findings back up *Nursing in Practice's* in-depth piece, [which found nurses were the 'forgotten frontline' during Covid](#).

Many of you will be working in extremely difficult circumstances and I know that this can have a real impact on your own health and wellbeing. While you're caring for others it can be challenging to find the time to take care of yourself, but it is so important that you do.

Somerset LMC and STH are here to support you and your teams.

https://www.somersetshouse.co.uk/nurses_treatment_room.php

The General Practice Safe House is a virtual space providing a refuge and place of support for everyone working in primary care.

The safehouse can be accessed for self -help and an advocate area is being developed for the nurses. We would like to find more nurse advocates, please contact me if you are interested.

We are looking at developing a GPN Careers Plus Group to support nurses close to retirement or considering leaving general practice.

If you have any thoughts about how we can best support, you and your colleagues please let me know.

Nurse's voices must be heard, and I am very excited to inform you there is funding for PCN Lead nurse roles across the county. This role will help support QI projects, clinical supervision and provide Leadership training.

My sincere and heartfelt thanks for everything you are doing.



Paula Messenger
Nurse Advisor
Somerset LMC

Helpful Resources

The NMC signpost [a range of helpful resources](#) available on their website to support you, should you need them.

RCN has developed some information.

<https://www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/member-support-services/counselling-service/covid-19-and-your-mental-wellbeing>

QNI has a listening service

<https://www.qni.org.uk/help-for-nurses/talktous/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/coronavirus-and-work/being-a-nurse-during-coronavirus/>