



Royal College of
General Practitioners



FSRH The Faculty of Sexual &
Reproductive Healthcare



Royal College of
Obstetricians &
Gynaecologists

**Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard MBBS, PhD FRCGP
Chair of Council**

Steve Brine MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department of Health
39 Victoria St
London
SW1H 0EU

1st May 2018

Dear Steve,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Royal College of General Practitioners and with the support of my colleagues at the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare. I want to express concern about the continuing problems with the provision of sexual and reproductive healthcare services in England.

As you will be aware, the RCGP released its *Time to Act* report in August 2017, which found that vulnerable patients are prevented from accessing the sexual and reproductive healthcare that they need. This is exacerbating healthcare inequalities in England and costing the NHS more money in the long term.

The issues outlined in our report are still pressing. Funding has been cut in many areas and the commissioning of sexual and reproductive healthcare in England is complicated and fragmented. Services across the country are provided inconsistently and provision of care in one area can be vastly different to another. This has led to disrupted, disconnected and ultimately disappointing experiences for patients.

GPs want to provide person centred care; however, the lack of planning and clear pathways in sexual and reproductive healthcare means the patient journey is disjointed. Frequently, related services do not refer between or communicate with one another. In some areas, for example, family planning services do not link up with contraceptive advice services.

It also continues to be the case that GPs, nurses and clinicians in primary care cannot access funding for training to provide the quality services that patients need. A prime example of this is the reduction in funding and training for the provision by GPs of long acting reversible contraceptives. The College is continuing to call for urgent investment in sexual and reproductive health services.

I would be grateful to meet with you to discuss pragmatic swift improvements as well as longer term solutions to this crisis.

Yours sincerely,



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A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'HSL'.

Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard
Chair of RCGP council

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