

Correspondence from BMA Cymru to the Committee, 3 October 2014

In relation to your request for further information on how much revenue funding is required (e.g. to cover training costs) in addition to the capital spend required for introducing new technologies, we are regrettably not in a position to provide you with an appropriate pan-Wales estimate.

We feel it is important, however, that Welsh Government fully recognises the extent to which general practice in Wales is currently overstretched with regard to the allocation of resources and the severe challenges it faces in the delivery of core services as a result. We hope that Welsh Government would therefore accept that new, additional funding is required to facilitate increased access to new technologies within primary care. Such funding needs to be genuinely additional and not drawn from any existing funding pots. It should therefore come from outwith current GMS funding. We would also propose that it should be ring-fenced.

We would certainly agree that this additional funding should cover both the capital and revenue costs of introducing and adopting new technologies. Altogether, it should cover:

- procurement (which could be undertaken centrally to reduce costs);
- installation and maintenance; and
- training and updating.

Funding could perhaps be made available by Welsh Government as a pot from which health boards and trusts could bid. It should cover areas such as the development of improved central ICT systems, in addition to covering the costs of procuring individual items of equipment for practices and patients.

We would consider that it may be helpful for individual health boards and trusts to map out suitable proposals and plans, but would request that Local

Medical Committees (LMCs) and/or GP clusters could also be involved in bids for such funding in order to maximise the effectiveness of the approach taken in terms of on-the-ground results.

We also believe it is important that any procurement of new technological solutions concentrates on what could achieve the maximum impact in terms of improving patient care and/or improving capacity within primary care. We should strive to ensure that such technologies can as far as possible be available to all those who would benefit from them, but also be aware of limitations that might impact on their use – such as the lack of access to good quality cellular or broadband internet services in certain rural parts of Wales.

Yours sincerely,

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