

GPC Media Coverage Report – July and August 2009

Swine flu dominated the news agenda during the summer months. During a normally quiet period BMA representatives and the BMA press office were busy trying to put across sensible public health messages and dampen the hysteria expressed in many parts of the media.

BMA mentions in national and regional media for July

| | National | Regional | Total |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Print: | 68 | 89 | 157 |
| Broadcasts: | 71 | 114 | 185 |

| SUBJECT | National broadcast | National print |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Swine flu | 67 | 62 |
| Alcohol / binge drinking | - | 2 |
| Charging for GP appointments | - | 2 |
| Assisted suicide | 1 | 1 |
| Cervical cancer jabs for under 25s | - | 1 |
| Single handed GP practices | 2 | - |
| GP patient survey | 1 | - |
| TOTAL | 71 | 68 |

| SUBJECT | REGIONAL MEDIA |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| Swine flu | 170 |
| Screening | 10 |
| NHS Admin | 9 |
| Polyclinic | 3 |
| End of life | 3 |
| Patient survey | 2 |
| Fees | 2 |
| Public health | 1 |
| NHS funding | 1 |
| Pay | 1 |
| IT | 1 |

BMA mentions in national and regional media for August

| | National | Regional | Total |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Print: | 18 | 28 | 46 |
| Broadcasts: | 19 | 21 | 40 |

| SUBJECT | National broadcast | National print |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Swine flu | 17 | 9 |
| Disability allowance | 1 | - |
| Salaried & locum GP discuss splitting from BMA | 1 | 3 |
| Doctors running for parliament | - | 1 |
| GP pay | - | 5 |
| TOTAL | 19 | 18 |

| SUBJECT | REGIONAL MEDIA |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| Swine flu | 30 |
| Pay | 6 |
| NHS admin | 3 |
| Privatisation | 2 |
| Violence | 2 |
| Insurance | 2 |
| Alcohol | 1 |
| Politics | 1 |
| Polyclinic | 1 |
| Obituary | 1 |

Press Releases issued:

13/7/09 See general practice in action – BMA invites MPs to visit their GP surgery
13/7/09 GP dies after contracting swine flu – BMA statement
20/7/09 GPs hope the National Pandemic Flu Service will help in fight against swine flu

Letters to the press include the following:

| Date | Signatory | Publication | Subject of letter |
|-------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| 9/7/09 | Dr Hamish Meldrum | Pulse | Bridlington Centre contract |
| 16/7/09 | Dr Hamish Meldrum | Guardian | Lord Darzi's resignation and his drive for commercial involvement in the NHS |
| 21/7/09 | Dr Laurence Buckman | Daily Express | Swine flu and GPs' response |
| 21/7/09 | Dr Andrew Green | Daily Express | Swine flu and GPs' response |
| 22/7/09 | Dr Laurence Buckman | Health Service Journal | GP services unfit for 21 st century – and front of house services |
| 22/7/09 | Dr Laurence Buckman | Daily Mail | GP pay and swine flu jabs |
| 23/7/09 | Dr Michael Ingram | Daily Mail | GP pay and swine flu |
| 4/8/09 | Dr Laurence Buckman | Daily Mail - letters | GP pay - £380K pa |
| 4/8/09 | Dr Laurence Buckman | Daily Mail – Paul Dacre | GP pay - £380K pa |
| 20/8/09 | Dr Hamish Meldrum | Daily Mail | GP revolt – GPs and their salaried colleagues |
| 20/8/09 | Dr Laurence Buckman and Dr Vicky Weeks | Pulse | Salaried GPs and split from BMA |

Scotland Communications report – July/August 2009

BMA Mentions in the Scottish Press

We do not currently have a monitoring service to pick up on broadcast mentions. The following includes BMA quotes or interviews relating to GP and public health issues.

Although summer is traditionally a quiet news period for us, the Swine Flu story generated a significant number of BMA mentions in the press and we set up a number of interviews on the subject. The ongoing debate on alcohol, primarily minimum pricing, also generated a significant level of coverage in the print and broadcast media.

| Subject | Scottish Press | Scottish Broadcast |
|----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Alcohol Misuse | 28 | 6 |
| HPV Vaccine | 1 | |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----|---|
| Swine Flu | 37 | 9 |
| Extended Hours | 2 | |
| Health Checks for 40 year olds | 1 | |
| Sexual Health | 8 | 1 |
| Organ Donation | 1 | |
| GP Earnings | 1 | 1 |
| GP Lists | 1 | |
| Sunbed Regulation | 1 | |
| Total | | |

Press Releases issued:

26 August Scotland's doctors elect new leader (Brian Keighley)
8 September Scotland should call time on alcohol promotion says BMA Scotland (Brian Keighley)

Articles:

| Date | Author | Publication | Title |
|-----------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 1 July | John Garner | Scotsman | NHS 24 sucks up money like a Hoover |
| 7 July | John Garner | Scotsman | Fab four days with BMA, but its money can't buy you lunch. |
| 4 August | John Garner | Scotsman | Isolation the answer to overabundance of swine flu advisories. |
| 6 August | John Garner | Scotsman | Indulgence is fine, just don't let it become a habit. |
| 14 August | Martin Woodrow | Herald | Boxing |
| 14 August | Peter Terry (Interview) | Aberdeen Evening Express | I'm the man who got cigs banned now I want to blitz binge boozing. |
| 5 Sept | Brian Keighley (Interview) | Scotsman | BMA warns frontline staff must not be cut. |
| 8 Sept | Brian Keighley (Interview) | Herald | A rabble? Doctors aren't that organised. |
| 11 Sept | Dean Marshall | Scotsman | New approach to heart disease paid healthy dividend. |

GPC Wales Communications report – July/August 2009

Press releases issued

BMA Cymru Wales welcomes Health Minister's decision to extend free accommodation for junior doctors indefinitely

Action needed now to stop NHS Wales becoming unsafe for staff and patients says BMA Cymru Wales
30 more lives potentially lost in Wales – doctors' leaders now demand action on organ donation
GPs in Wales can cope with swine flu

GP media work

Issues Welsh GPs have commented on in the media in May include; measles, swine flu, GP patient access survey.

Blog

The Public Affairs team has used BMA Cymru Wales' blog to highlight the following issues and BMA policy; obesity, swine flu, revalidation, sunbeds, measles and MMR, EWTD, tamiflu, stroke services, GMC Licensing campaign

Media coverage

| Subject | Welsh Press | Welsh Broadcast |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Welsh GP patient access survey | 2 | |
| Stop closing swimming pools – ARM | 2 | |
| Doctors' leaders slam targets culture | 1 | |
| Devolution is healthy option - ARM | 1 | |
| GPs readiness for Swine flu | 1 | 1 |

| | | |
|---|-----------|----------|
| Swine flu spreading in Wales | 2 | 4 |
| Should Wales get swine flu helpline | 1 | 1 |
| Swine flu – buying tamiflu over the internet | 1 | |
| Are doctors still needed? | 1 | |
| Swine flu could swamp NHS this winter | 2 | |
| Doctor shortage - Hywel Dda NHS Trust | 2 | 2 |
| GPs can cope in swine flu outbreak | 4 | |
| Testicular cancer | 1 | |
| Doctors attack “unqualified” swine flu advice | 1 | |
| TOTAL | 22 | 8 |

GPC Parliamentary and Assembly Activity Report

WESTMINSTER

The Parliamentary Unit in London keeps in contact with MPs across all the political parties. The Westminster Parliament is currently in recess until w/c 12th October.

MP-GP practice visit scheme

More than 300 MPs have contacted the BMA's Parliamentary Unit since the MP-GP practice visit scheme was introduced in October 2008. So far, the BMA has helped organised 147 MP visits to GP practices in their constituency with many more being planned. Feedback has been positive with the majority of MPs reporting a better understanding of general practice following their practice visit.

If you would like to get involved with the MP-GP practice visit scheme, please contact Susan Solanki, Parliamentary Liaison Officer at ssolanki@bma.org.uk

Party Conferences

The BMA will be attending autumn political party conferences, which are due to begin in mid-September. In conjunction with the Royal College of Nursing and the King's Fund, the BMA will hold fringe meetings at all three conferences on whether health will be a vote winner at the next general election. There will be other fringe meetings that the BMA will speak at including a Policy Exchange fringe meeting on 'Profit in the Public Services' at the Liberal Democrat Conference; 'Is health care corrupted by market forces?' at the Labour Party Conference; and access to medicines at the Conservative Party Conference. Furthermore, the BMA will be participating in numerous events as a part of the 'Health Hotel', which is a collaboration of 45 health organisations co-ordinating their activities at the party conferences. Further details can be viewed at www.healthhotel.org.uk

In advance of the party conference season, MPs were issued with the Parliamentary Unit's latest newsletter, outlining topical issues.

Meetings with MPs

A 'primary care' seminar between the GPC negotiators and the Liberal Democrat Health Team will be held in October.

BMA Parliamentary Unit
September 2009

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Due to the parliament being in recess for the duration of this monitoring period, no parliamentary activity is recorded in this report.

Gail Grant
Senior Public Affairs Officer
September 2009

WELSH ASSEMBLY

Political meetings

Dr Richard Lewis met with Mr Paul Williams (Director General of NHS Wales) to discuss NHS reorganisation and primary care and the resourcing of revalidation

Dr Richard Lewis met with the Royal College of Nursing regarding the Community Nursing Strategy Task and Finish Group

Dr Richard Lewis and Dr David Bailey met with the Director Community Health Councils in Wales

Dr Richard Lewis and Dr David Bailey met with the Wales Audit Office regarding a national survey into unscheduled care

Dr Richard Lewis met with Dr Tony Jewell, Wales' Chief Medical Officer regarding primary care Issues and a Community Care Strategy for Swine Flu

Consultations

BMA Cymru Wales has responded to the following Welsh Assembly Government consultations;

26 July – Amendments to the Community Health Council regulations

31 July – Climbing Higher – creating an active Wales

3 August – options for changes to Wales' organ donation system

21 August – Rural Health plan

Blog

The Public Affairs team has used BMA Cymru Wales' blog to highlight various issues including swine flu, GMC's licensing campaign, stroke services, revalidation, measles outbreak and vaccination, organ donation.

The National Assembly for Wales has been in recess throughout August and most of July, returning on September 21st.

BMA Wales
September 2009