**Protect Your Practice to Protect Patient Care**

With 70% of eligible GP partners participating in a non-statutory ballot, an overwhelming 98.3% have voted in favour of taking collective action to save general practice. Understandably, patients are concerned about the potential actions that Pier Health Practice might take.

GPs within Pier fully support this collective action, viewing it as a crucial opportunity to unite as a profession to safeguard sustainable NHS GP services for our patients. General practice has been in a critical state for many years, burdened by an ever-increasing workload. Over the years, GPs have seen significant changes, such as the expansion of their responsibilities to include chronic disease management, the shift towards a more complex and aging patient population, and the increased administrative demands associated with digital record-keeping and regulatory compliance. The situation reached a peak during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the unprecedented demand for healthcare led many retired GPs to return to work, providing much-needed support in a time of crisis. This response highlighted both the dedication of GPs and the unsustainable pressures they face.

Wes Streeting, our new Health Secretary, has acknowledged that the NHS is “broken”, with the new Labour government committed to addressing the issues. While they didn’t create the problems, they have pledged to honour the latest DDRB (Doctors’ and Dentists’ Review Body) recommendations and fund 1,000 new GPs starting from October 1st. However, this is far from sufficient to provide the necessary investment to transform and rejuvenate general practice.

The critical questions remain: what further actions will be taken, and when?

As a responsible opposition, the new government must have been planning for these challenges for months and should be ready to present concrete proposals. Within Pier, we are taking a “wait and see” approach, anticipating no significant changes until early September. If action becomes necessary, our aim will always be to minimize disruption to our patients while applying enough pressure on the system to prompt the government to agree on a new contract that ensures the safety and sustainability of GP practices for contractors, partners, and their patients.

