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Huw Merriman MP
House of Commons
London
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10 May 2016

Dear Mr Merriman,

RE: BMA and the Junior Doctor Contract Negotiations

Thank you writing to me and the secretary of state for health. I very much appreciate you taking the time to write, as I'm sure do the junior doctors from Guy's and St Thomas', with whom you met last month. I believe that their hard work and commitment to patients, as you know from your own experience, deserves to be backed by a contract in which they have full confidence, and which will allow them to provide a safe and professional level of care.

From my own conversations with junior doctors across the country, I very much agree with your comments about the need to find a negotiated agreement on the remaining terms of the contract for the good of both doctors and patients alike. It is with this in mind that I was pleased that the government agreed to pause the imposition this week and return to talks.

We believe that to achieve the best future workforce for the NHS it is important that the new contract does not directly or indirectly discriminate against any individual or group, and does not hamper recruitment into specialties that are already in crisis. We have stated that we are willing to negotiate on all aspects of outstanding issues as long as the terms of the contract meet these key principles.

It is my hope that this approach will enable talks between the BMA and government to reach an agreement for the good of doctors, patients and the future of the NHS.

I thank you once again for your helpful letter and your support, to the junior doctors who recently treated you, and the wider junior doctor workforce. I hope that we will shortly

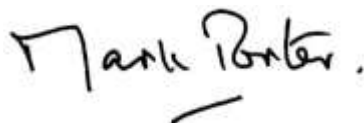
Chief executive: Keith Ward

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be able to move forward and concentrate on delivering a modern and safe world class health service.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Porter." The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Dr Mark Porter
Council chair, British Medical Association