

**Letter to all Junior Doctors in Psychiatry from the
Royal College of Psychiatrists**



12 February 2016

Dear colleague

We are writing to you following the imposition of the new contract for Junior Doctors yesterday. We regret this and of course would have much preferred a negotiated settlement, as we said in our media [statement](#) yesterday.

However we do feel we can offer you some reassurance about the future for Junior Doctors in psychiatry. We already know that some of the leading Mental Health Trusts are keen to ensure that the new contract does not reduce pay or increase hours for Junior Doctors. The shortage of Junior Doctors in psychiatry is a huge problem for Trusts and the majority have no desire to make the situation worse.

We are aware of the significant concerns that exist amongst Junior Doctors in psychiatry about the suggested remuneration for 'non resident on call' and that it is seen as very unfair given many rotas involve Junior Doctors working all night in geographically disparate locations. It seems that in this light, the term non-resident on call is, in psychiatry at least, a misnomer.

The actual structure of rotas is for Trusts to design. Although as a Royal Medical College, we are unable to get directly involved in the terms and conditions around the new junior doctor contract, we are in contact with Trusts that are committed to supporting Junior Doctors and have no wish to increase weekend working or reduce pay.

Trusts know that the suggested rate for 'non resident on call' would be unfair due to the way that Junior Doctors in psychiatry work out-of-hours, and we are hearing of plans to badge these rotas as resident by providing a bed in a hospital. We will listen carefully to what these Trusts are proposing and will encourage them to share plans with others via the College.

We understand the unprecedented strength of feeling over the current situation and please be reassured that we will do all we can to support you during this difficult time.

Professor Sir Simon Wessely, President of Royal College of Psychiatrists

Dr Wendy Burn, Dean of the Royal College of Psychiatrists

Dr Matt Tovey, Chair, Psychiatric Trainees' Committee, Royal College of Psychiatrists