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The Rt Hon Kenneth Clarke MP
Secretary of State for Health
Department of Health
Richmond House
79 Whitehall
LONDON
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CP?*

20 July 1989

Dear Kenneth,

GPs' NEW CONTRACT

will require prep'n.

Thank you for your letter of 19 July with which you enclosed a draft press release for issue if the ballot of GPs rejects the agreement reached on 4 May.

I agree with the line that you propose to take and enclose a news release which will issue in Scotland.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Peter Walker and Tom King.

MALCOLM RIFKIND

DRAFT NEWS RELEASE

MR FORSYTH COMMENTS ON GP BALLOT RESULTS

Mr Michael Forsyth MP, Health Minister at the Scottish Office, today gave his response to the result of the general practitioners' ballot which rejected the new contract agreed with the GPs' leaders on May 4.

Mr Forsyth said:

"Patients have a right to expect the highest quality of service from their doctor. The new contract will reward those GPs who provide that service.

"In future GPs will be required to provide extra care for elderly patients. Those who make night visits themselves or arrange for them to be made by a doctor the patient knows will be paid more than those who use deputising services.

"Doctors who perform minor surgery themselves, who specialise in the care and development of children and who run health promotion clinics will all be rewarded.

"There will be new allowances for doctors who work in areas of deprivation in recognition of the extra work they face. The new contract introduces bonus payments for doctors who ensure the maximum number of their women patients are screened for cervical cancer and that their child patients are immunised against childhood diseases.

"The new contract will also mean that all doctors will be more available to their patients - at times to suit the patient.

"It is regrettable that the GPs have chosen to reject the contract which was agreed with their national negotiators on May 4.

"The contract was agreed after detailed and lengthy negotiations with concessions on both sides to secure a fair deal. It contained all the specific points of particular significance to Scotland which were included on a GB basis following my consultation with Scottish GPs and their leaders earlier this year. There can be no sensible basis for reopening the negotiations now.

"Consultation is already underway with the leaders of the General Medical Services Committee on the detailed regulations required to implement the contract agreed on May 4.

"Once the consultation process is completed the Regulations will be placed before Parliament in the Autumn. If Parliament approves them the reforms to the GPs' contract ~~would~~ ^{will} be introduced on April 1, 1990.

"I shall be writing shortly to all GPs with an updated version of The New Contract to explain in detail how it would operate."

NHS

Doctors & Dentists pay Pt 4