



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY

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From the Secretary of State for ~~Social Services~~ Health

The Duty Clerk
10 Downing Street

Prise Annick²
You may like to be aware of this BMA
counter-attack on the latest Doh figures.
8 September 1989

Dear ~~Duty~~ Clerk

MS

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8/9

STATISTICAL BULLETIN ON GENERAL MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES 1977 TO 1987

A Statistical Bulletin was issued yesterday by the Department of Health which analyses the numbers 1987 statistics on General Medical Practitioners (GMPs) in England and Wales together with the major trends over the period 1977 to 1987. It was announced by means of a Press Release and a number of today's papers have picked it up. I enclose a copy of the Press Release and of the bulletin itself, as requested.

Several papers quote the BMA as saying that the 20 per cent increase in GP numbers had not kept pace with an increase of 35 per cent in the number of patient consultations. The Department has contacted the OPCS to check this figure of 35 per cent. Figures are only available for Great Britain as a whole and, separately, England alone, and only for the years 1978 to 1987. The figures available are shown below:

<u>Consultations per GP per year</u>		<u>Total consultations</u>
<u>GB</u>		
1978	<u>8560</u>	216,100,000
1987	<u>9200</u>	274,200,000
% increase 78-87	+7.5%	+27%
1988	<u>7940</u>	240,200,000
% increase 78-88	-7.2%	+11%
<u>England</u>		
	8447	177,700,000
	9291	231,500,000
% increase 78-87	+10%	+30%

[Data based on the General Household Survey and is subject to sampling error from year to year. The figures for 1988 are only provisional].

Extrapolating from the England figures, it would appear that the BMA's claim is more or less correct. I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely
Helen Shirley-Quirk

MRS HELEN SHIRLEY-QUIRK
Private Secretary