

Rt Hon Frank Field MP

Chair, Select Committee on Work and Pensions
Work and Pensions Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

05 April 2019

Dear Mr Field,

Re. BMA meeting with DWP and the ESA65B letter

Thank you for your email dated 26 March 2019 regarding the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) letter (ESA65B) to GPs regarding people who have failed Work Capability Assessments (WCA) and meetings between DWP, RCGP and the BMA where this letter was discussed.

By way of background the BMA attends meetings with the RCGP and the DWP where information is shared with the aim of improving working practices between the DWP and clinicians. While the BMA may act in an advisory capacity it does not have the authority to clear, approve or otherwise sign off any DWP correspondence or policies and would see this as being clearly outside of our remit.

With regards to the specific questions raised in your letter:

1. Whether the BMA agreed to the change of wording in the ESA65B letter as it currently stands;

At a meeting with the DWP and RCGP a BMA representative was given sight of the ESA65B amended letter. The BMA considers that sight of this letter was for the purposes of information sharing and did not agree or otherwise sign off the content of the letter.

2. Whether the BMA offered any feedback on the current choice of wording at the time of the decision;

We did not offer any formal feedback or amendments to the letter.

3. Whether you consider the wording suitable now, given the evidence we have received, and if not what further revisions you might suggest.

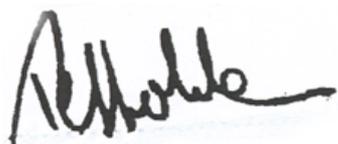
The BMA understands the concerns raised regarding the revised wording of the ESA65B and given these concerns, we consider that it would be helpful to revise the wording of the



ESA65B to ensure greater clarity. We believe that DWP should consider consulting with a range of stakeholders, including the BMA, to achieve this aim.

Please do let us know if you have any further questions or require any additional information.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Peter Holden
Chair, BMA professional fees committee



Dr Mark Sanford-Wood
Deputy Chair, BMA General Practitioners Committee