

For Immediate release (Thursday 22th January 2009)

Press Release from: General Practitioners Committee West Midlands

Senior West Midlands GPs condemn Dawn Primarolo for cancer prescription charge exemption fiasco

Angry senior West Midlands GPs met today and hit out at the announcement by Dawn Primarolo surrounding prescription charge exemption for cancer patients.

Dr Grant Ingrams, secretary of the General Practitioners Committee West Midlands (GPCWM), said: "We fully support this long needed move to relieve the financial burden of charges from patients with cancer, but GPs have been kept in the dark by Ms Primarolos's Department about the details of the planned change."

Public Health Minister Dawn Primarolo has told patients suffering from cancer: "I would urge patients to make an appointment with their GP from this week to talk about applying for their exemption certificate." However, Dr Grant Ingrams said "telling patients suffering from cancer to struggle to our surgeries when GPs do not have any information or the forms to complete is disgraceful, and underlines that this government places a good 'soundbite' over patients' needs, even those with serious conditions like cancer."

Dr Grant Ingrams added: "Once we have the forms, we are likely to be able to complete them from the records we already have, and very few patients will need to make an appointment. I would urge anyone who believes they may be eligible just to contact their surgery with their details."

ENDS

Notes for Editors:

1. The General Practitioners Committee West Midlands is a stakeholder committee of various general practice bodies in the West Midlands.
2. Dr Grant Ingrams is Senior Partner of The Crossley Practice - a well established general practice in inner city Coventry, and Secretary of the GPCWM

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