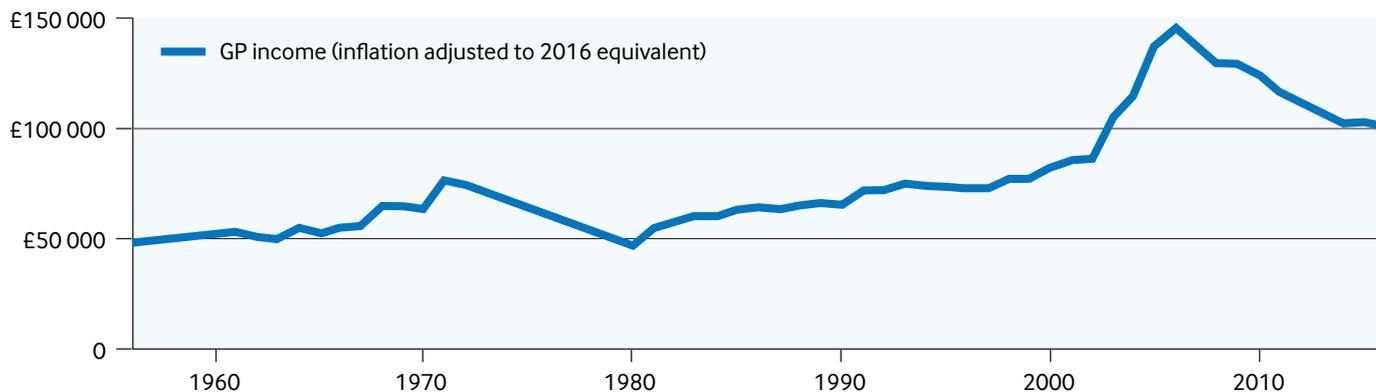# How GP pay has risen and fallen

In 2015-16, GP partners earned an average of £101 300, figures released this month by NHS Digital show.
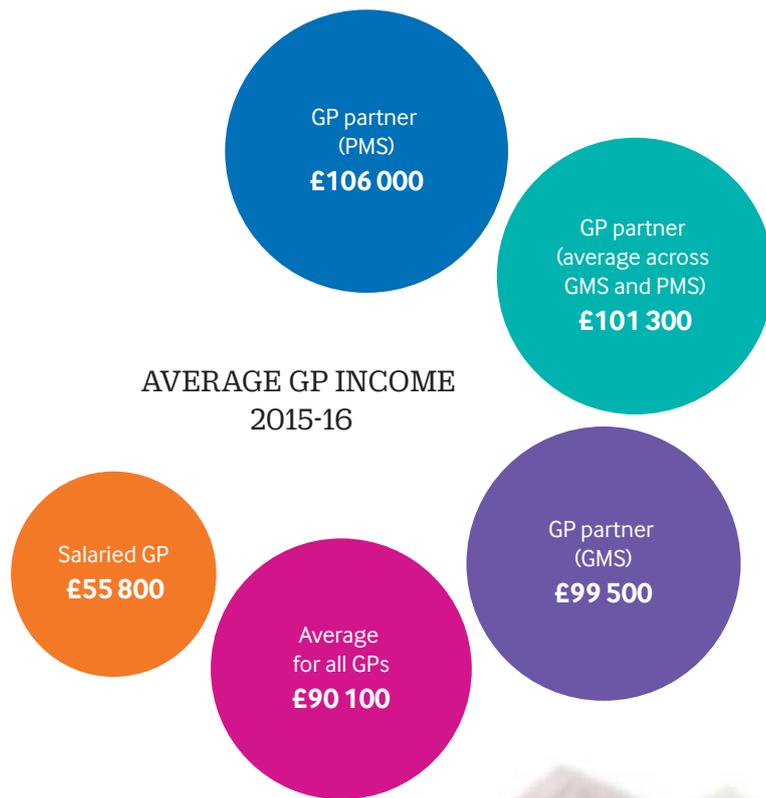
The figures also show that, over the past decade, the average incomes of GP partners have fallen by 8%, from £110 004 in the 2005-06 financial year to £101 300 in 2015-16. Over this period inflation ran at an average of 2.9% a year, according to data from the Bank of England. Taking this into account, the average incomes of GP partners fell in real terms by over 30% between 2005-06 and 2015-16.

This fall followed a steady rise since 1979-80, when average GP incomes sat at £11 902. Between 1979-80 and 2015-16 inflation ran at 3.9% a year on average. Taking this level of inflation into account, average GP incomes in 1979-80 would be equivalent to £46 836 in 2015-16's money.

Before 1971-72, GPs' average incomes had risen steadily since 1955-56, when data on doctors' incomes were first collected for the Royal Commission on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration 1957-60 report. But between 1971-72 and 1979-80, GPs' average incomes failed to keep pace with inflation which ran at 15.1% a year on average over this period.

The £101 300 figure reported above for 2015-16 is the average annual earnings for GP partners, and covers those working under either a general medical services (GMS) or a primary medical services (PMS) contract. Those working under a GMS contract earned an average of £99 500, while those working under a PMS contract earned an average of £106 000. Among salaried GPs, average taxable income in 2015-16 was £55 800.

Tom Moberly, UK editor, *The BMJ*
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AVERAGE GP INCOME 2015-16

GP partner (PMS) £106 000

GP partner (average across GMS and PMS) £101 300

GP partner (GMS) £99 500

Average for all GPs £90 100

Salaried GP £55 800

Ben Maruthappu, 29, is a public health registrar in northwest London and cofounder of Cera, a technology enabled social care provider. Cera aims to link patients and care workers more swiftly through an online platform, which also uses artificial intelligence to predict their likely future needs. Launched in November 2016, it already provides home care in a population of six million people. Educated at Oxford, Cambridge, and Harvard universities, Maruthappu recently completed a three year assignment as a senior fellow advising Simon Stevens, chief executive of NHS England, on technology. He was listed in *Wired* magazine's top 10 innovators in healthcare.

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Ben Maruthappu
Caring about technology

What was your earliest ambition?
As a child I wanted to be an engineer. I really enjoyed inventing and building devices, from electrical circuits to small vehicles.

What was your best career move?
Becoming senior fellow to NHS England's CEO, Simon Stevens. The role transformed my understanding of health services, policy, and politics.

What was the worst mistake in your career?
Not learning how to code, the language that will truly revolutionise medicine. At Cera I've been lucky enough to work closely with our tech team to build our platform, but knowing how to do this at first hand would have been invaluable.

How is your work-life balance?
It can be a challenge to balance the two. I'm frequently abroad for meetings and speaking engagements, but I always try to prioritise time with friends and family.

How do you keep fit and healthy?
I try to stick to a relatively low carbohydrate diet, avoiding refined sugar. I go to the gym three times a week and run often.

What single change would you like to see made to the NHS?
Divisions between the NHS and council funded social care services can preclude integration of these sectors and, more acutely, lead to bed blocking. One step towards tackling this is to merge funding budgets between the NHS and social care, incentivising better collaboration.

What do you wish that you had known when you were younger?
Sometimes I wish I'd known earlier that it's OK to be adventurous and take the path less trodden, even in medicine.

Which living doctor do you most admire, and why?
My mother: after my father passed away she raised me as a single parent while practising as a geriatrician. It wasn't easy.

What unheralded change has made the most difference in your field?
I can probably narrow this down to three sources of change: genomics and personalised medicine; data and digital; and hardware and wearables.

What new technology or development are you most looking forward to?
I'm excited by the prospect of widespread, but careful, deployment of artificial intelligence in healthcare, which will certainly happen in our lifetimes. At Cera we've started to trial its use to anticipate and predict patient deterioration.

What book should every doctor read?
The 4-Hour Workweek by Tim Ferriss. Valuable advice on work-life balance.

What is your guiltiest pleasure?
I'm a big movie buff: my secret favourite pastime has to be watching the *Rocky* boxset while eating a Domino's pizza (Texas BBQ, if you must know).

What personal ambition do you still have?
To transform healthcare and social care through technology.

What is your pet hate?
Inefficiency.