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BMA ANNUAL REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

Covid-19: Reward healthcare staff for pandemic work, says BMA

Abi Rimmer

Doctors and healthcare staff who have worked during the covid-19 pandemic should be rewarded to reflect their personal sacrifice, BMA representatives have said.

An overwhelming majority of doctors attending the association's annual representative meeting, held virtually on Tuesday 15 September, voted in favour of a motion commending the work of healthcare staff. It said that staff have worked outside their specialties, worked additional hours, and worked at increased risk to their health.

It asked the BMA to pursue policies to "ensure that an additional reward is made to all healthcare staff to reflect the personal sacrifices and increase in risk to health made during this pandemic."

The motion also called for reassurances that temporary changes to working patterns would not become permanent and that no long term changes to job plans or contracts would be imposed without negotiation with doctors.

The BMA should also ensure that all doctors are adequately remunerated for additional work done during the covid-19 pandemic, the motion said.

Reshma Khopar, who proposed the motion, said that healthcare staff had gone above and beyond during the pandemic, with many looking after young children or elderly relatives as well as providing patient care. Others, she said, were separated from their families for long periods of time, and many had put their career progression on hold.

"2020 has been a difficult year for the medical profession," said Khopar. "This meeting commends the extensive level of flexibility and commitment in responding to the demands of covid-19."