

PRESS RELEASE



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GP MEMBERS FULLY INDEMNIFIED DURING FLU OUTBREAK, SAYS MDDUS

GP members of MDDUS can be reassured that their continuing membership and present subscription will give them full indemnity protection throughout the viral pandemic, says the Medical and Dental Defence Union of Scotland (MDDUS) today.

The MDDUS's reassurance comes after the British Medical Association (BMA) voiced fears that doctors could be sued over the care they provided if infections became widespread.

Numbers affected by the virus are small at present and do not yet appear to have had significant effects on workload, health of health professionals or ways of working.

Membership of MDDUS will always provide access to indemnity for work that is carried on as part of "normal" general practice. This applies even to work that is carried out by GPs which, in the special circumstances of a significant pandemic, may vary from accepted practice.

"If GPs follow guidance and advice offered by the NHS, GMC and MDDUS, they shouldn't fear being any further exposed to complaints or claims for damages during a pandemic," says Dr George Fernie, head of the medical division of the UK-wide MDDUS.

During a pandemic, extraordinary circumstances could mean GPs were asked to undertake work that would not normally be regarded as general practice, for example if widespread sickness left hospitals without staff and GPs were asked to treat "hospital" patients at home.

In that case, MDDUS's discretionary indemnity would allow it to cover such doctors and to allow them to work secure in the knowledge that they were protected. If a GP is employed by a health authority then NHS indemnity would normally apply.

"Our members can be reassured that they will be protected," added Dr Fernie.

Ends

For further information contact Mike Hutchinson on 020 7624 6257 or 07760 155216.

Note to editors

MDDUS is a medical defence organisation providing access to professional indemnity and expert medicolegal advice for doctors, dentists and other healthcare professionals throughout the UK. For further information on MDDUS go to www.mddus.com.