

# Joint statement on outcome of BMA ballot for consultant industrial action in England

Last week the BMA announced the result of their ballot on consultant industrial action in England. There were 24,106 votes cast and 86% of those voted in favour of industrial action.

The choice to take part in industrial action is a deeply personal one and those consultants who have voted in favour will not have done so lightly.

We recognise that many will have made this decision because they have serious concerns about the impact of understaffing on their own wellbeing and that of the teams they work with. They are alarmed to see colleagues choosing to leave roles in the NHS because their working environment is no longer tolerable and they feel undervalued.

Most importantly, they are concerned about the standard of care patients are receiving in a wholly overstretched health service. These concerns are also likely to be just as worrisome and important to consultants who did not vote, or voted against industrial action. As we have done for trainees and other members of the surgical team, we will support consultants in their decision.

The BMA Junior Doctor Committee in England has already indicated that it will call strikes throughout the summer, with a minimum of three days of action every month for the duration of its mandate for industrial action. Five days of industrial action have been called from 13th July and the committee has said it will ballot members again to extend its mandate. The BMA has also announced that consultants in England will take industrial action on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of July unless an agreement can be reached with the government. Junior doctors in Scotland will strike from 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> July. Developments are also underway that may lead to industrial action in other devolved nations.

The prospect of both consultant and junior doctor industrial action in quick succession over many months will be worrying to patients and hospital leaders alike. If industrial action goes ahead, in the short term, it will undoubtedly setback efforts to reduce waiting times and could lead to even longer waits for patients.

For the future of the NHS, the surgeons we represent and the patients we serve, we implore respective governments and the representing unions to enter genuine negotiations in the coming weeks so that agreement is reached and further industrial action is avoided.

**Royal College of Surgeons of England**  
**Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh**  
**Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow**  
**Federation of Surgical Specialty Associations (FSSA)**  
**Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland (ASGBI)**

**British Association of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons (BAOMS)**  
**ENT-UK**  
**British Association of Paediatric Surgeons (BAPS)**  
**British Association of Urological Surgeons (BAUS)**  
**British Orthopaedic Association (BOA)**  
**Society for Cardiothoracic Surgery in Great Britain and Ireland (SCTS)**  
**Society of British Neurological Surgeons (SBNS)**  
**The Vascular Society of Great Britain and Ireland (Vascular Society)**  
**The Confederation of British Surgery**  
**Association of Surgeons in Training (ASiT)**  
**ASGBI Moynihan Academy (ASGBI MA)**  
**Association of Otolaryngologists in Training (AOT)**  
**Association of Upper Gastrointestinal Surgery of Great Britain and Ireland (AUGIS)**  
**BAUS Section of Trainees (BSoT)**  
**British Orthopaedic Trainees Association (BOTA)**  
**British Neurosurgical Trainees' Association (BNTA)**  
**Duke's Club**  
**Herrick Society**  
**Mammary Fold**  
**Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Fellows in Training (OMFS FiT)**  
**Plastic Surgery Trainee Association (PLASTA)**  
**Rouleaux Club**  
**Roux Group**  
**Society for Cardiothoracic Surgery in Great Britain and Ireland Trainees**  
**Trainees in Paediatric Surgery (TriPS)**