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Michael Matheson MSP
Cabinet Secretary for NHS Recovery, Health and Social Care
The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

15 June 2023

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Re: Gracemount Medical Centre

I am writing to you regarding the dire situation at Gracemount Medical Centre, a GP service in my constituency of Edinburgh South.

You will know that I have written to you before concerning GP services in South East Edinburgh, and over 2,600 constituents have signed my 'Build Better Places' petition which asks the Scottish Government to ensure that public services keep up with housebuilding in the area. We are 20,000 GP places short and your government has taken the decision not to fund any GP service expansion despite there being sites available with NHS Lothian business case approvals.

I am now writing to you regarding the Gracemount GP practice, where patients receive messages on Fridays informing them that the practice will only see emergency cases due to only one GP working on that day.

This situation is unsustainable and a direct effect of your government's sixteen year mismanagement of primary care.

A GP practice only seeing emergency cases defeats the entire purpose of primary care and will cause problems for already stretched Accident and Emergency services later down the line. The A&E at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary is a stones throw from Gracemount and no doubt receiving their patients.

Once proposed housebuilding is completed, over 20,000 residents in South East Edinburgh will have no access to a GP. This is completely unacceptable and unsustainable, yet when you were presented with the opportunity to fund a new service in Liberton, your government and the current First Minister as Health Secretary pulled the funding.

IAN MURRAY MP
Labour Member of Parliament for Edinburgh South

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The 'priority plan' that you outlined to me in your last letter has no plan for GP services in Edinburgh, even though effective primary care reduces the burden on NHS services further down the line and improves patient health outcomes.

As I have said previously, the situation is completely unsustainable and my constituents deserve better. I hope to see the situation resolved as quickly as possible and put a proper plan in place that actually deals with the issue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Murray". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end of the name.

Ian Murray MP
Member of Parliament for Edinburgh South
Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland