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Dear Mr Yousaf,

I am the editor of Pulse, the biggest magazine for GPs in the UK. We have recently conducted a major investigation on GP practice closures. For the first time, we examined all the GP surgeries that had closed permanently – ie, those where a GP surgery no longer stands at that postcode.

Across the UK, we found there were 474 practices that filled this criteria. As a result of these closures, 1.49m patients were displaced. In Scotland, this amounted to at least 17 practices affecting at least 17,000 patients. This included some rural practices, for example Gardenstown Surgery in Aberdeenshire, which left patients facing a 20-mile round trip to the nearest surgery. We found:

- For more than 40% of the 162 surgeries we identified triggers for, recruitment issues were the final straw for the practice;
- These surgeries had markedly smaller list sizes than average – a median list size of 2,738.
- They were in postcodes that had a markedly lower median deprivation score than other surgeries – a score of 3.81 compared with 4.41 (with 1 being most deprived and 10 being least deprived);
- Using English data, 69% of practices that closed for good received lower funding per patient the last full financial year before they closed than the average funding for that financial year;
- A number of surgeries have closed with no other surgery within miles.

I am sure these findings would be of interest to you. I am happy to share our full data and methodology if you so wish. I would also love an opportunity to talk you through these findings, and discuss some ideas around how we can mitigate this and support GPs and patients alike. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jaimie Kaffash", written over a blue horizontal line.

Jaimie Kaffash,
Editor, Pulse