Dr Mayur Lakhani, Chairman of the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP), delivered a live webcast outlining the future of general practice and fielded enquiries on issues including health inequalities, lifestyle checks and incentives for extended surgery opening hours, as well as addressing concerns about the role of ‘new entrants’ in primary care. The webcast was hosted by Doctors.net.uk, the doctors’ professional network, and is now available to the 36,000 General Practitioners that are currently members of the network.

GPs from across the UK took part in the virtual conference, which presented an analysis of the RCGP’s response to the Government’s White Paper – Our Health, Our Care, Our Say - on community services and its implications for general practice. As well as answering questions from the audience, Dr Lakhani put forward the message that GPs will continue to be essential in their role as advanced medical generalists dealing with co-morbidity, diagnoses and the co-ordination of care.

Discussing the White Paper, Dr Lakhani commented, “I would urge all doctors to see the opportunities in the White Paper and to avoid complacency. We are starting from a strong position and command the support of patients. The White Paper provides a new direction for the way in which we deliver quality services and is good news for patients. It is also good news for GPs as it reinforces our key role in community health.”

Two live opinion polls were also hosted during the webcast; one on the structuring of Practice Based Commissioning and the second on access to GP services.

Dr Tim Ringrose, Director of Professional Relations at Doctors.net.uk, commented, "This is an exciting example of a professional organisation using Doctors.net.uk's online conferencing service to reach over 36,000 GPs and give them the opportunity to give their feedback and share their experiences."
Confirming the conference’s success, Dr Lakhani agreed, “The Doctors.net.uk webcast was a powerful method of reaching out to GPs. It is essential that GPs are supported at a time of rapid and unpredictable modernisation.”

About Doctors.net.uk
Doctors.net.uk Limited was founded in 1998 by Dr Neil Bacon, an Oxford specialist, to build an electronic network for doctors that would help improve healthcare. www.Doctors.net.uk provides a secure spam and virus-protected e-mail service, advanced accredited interactive education and a wide range of online knowledge services. It has over 124,000 UK doctors as members, including 36,000 GPs and 88,000 Hospital Specialists, and a further 18,000 medical students. 20,000 doctors use the service every day. Doctors.net.uk provides highly-targeted internet campaigns for pharmaceutical and healthcare companies, the Department of Health, the General Medical Council and medical colleges, providing them with effective access to doctors for marketing, education, training and market research.

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