

THIS IS NOT A STRIKE

A GUIDE TO ORGANISING PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION

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STARTING OFF

- ▶ Do it regionally- East Midlands, London wide, South West, North West etc- you need a big region to create an impact
- ▶ Identify your LMCs and have a minimum threshold of people attending- at least 50(we ended up with 150-200)
- ▶ Choose someone to take lead- you will need at least 1 GP and office/manager support
- ▶ Make sure you keep it separate from BMA and GPCE- purely so there is no political twists and risk of being branded as a trade union activity- THIS IS LOCAL GPs WHO ARE VERY CONCERNED AND WANT A THE GOVERNMENT TO WORK WITH US- KEEP IT COMPLETELY APOLITICAL

DECIDE ON A DATE and LOCATION

- ▶ This is the most important step- once you choose a date- things start happening- give it at least 3-4 weeks- we did it in 5 weeks from inception, in West Midlands
- ▶ Decide on a location- it will not be ideal for everyone, but needs to cater for most with maximum public impact
- ▶ Decide on a date and time- Saturday mornings are best- choose somewhere with heavy footfall- major city/town shopping centre- busiest on Saturday morning

COMMS, COMMS, COMMS

- ▶ Setup a whatsapp group- if not already there , for all interested LMC leaders/officers
- ▶ Create a single message to be broadcasted across all those LMCs
- ▶ Message- Start off with “THIS IS NOT A STRIKE”- You will not get GP engagement if there is a whiff of it being some sort of strike action
- ▶ It is a peaceful demonstration
- ▶ After you have sent date and location- do an early poll to see how many people want to attend- this will give you initial numbers- don't restrict to GPs only- remember- everyone is invited as “everyone is a patient”

COMMS, COMMS, COMMS

- ▶ Setup weekly meetings with your LMC group on a set date and time upto the week of the demonstration
- ▶ Feedback to the group- numbers and general theme coming from your constituents

RESOURCES

- ▶ Contact Rebuild GP- along with them- we designed our leaflets and they provided with a pre-populated letter to MPs and PPCs- as part of the leaflet- they are a brilliant resource
- ▶ We had 2000 leaflets
- ▶ They will also provide you with media contacts and follow up contacts for MPs/PPCs for future engagement.
- ▶ Identify funding source for your demonstration- we spent circa £1500 for the whole event, which was funded locally from West Midlands Group

MESSAGING TO PUBLIC

- ▶ PLACARDS- Decide on messaging on placards- short and punchy- avoid BMA orange and NHS blue- we went dark blue(Avoid Tory Blue as well)
- ▶ T-shirts- simple message - Front- Save our Surgeries- Back- Save General Practice or other way
- ▶ Leaflets
- ▶ Order these 2 weeks before the demo- you will have a clearer idea of numbers(we had 40 placards and 60 T-shirts)

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

- ▶ MOST IMPORTANT- Choose your message, share and circulate it, and make sure everyone is singing from the same hymn sheet
- ▶ Develop a press release- Rebuild very useful but think about your own message and they work with you
- ▶ Send press release with an embargo for the day of the demo- for both live and print media with contact details of the lead person
- ▶ Choose a few key people who have had some media exposure and happy to face the camera- remember- that person will be representing the profession- Be prepared for some difficult questions

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

- ▶ Contact your regional BBC office- ask them to cover this - they will- ask them for a live interview and on the day coverage- you want maximum exposure- we had BBC cover a surgery in morning, spoke to patients, then live sofa interview, before spending 1.5 hours with us on the day
- ▶ Make sure the GP surgery/Live interview and people being interviewed on the day are all different people- gives a much better impression
- ▶ Make sure you mention being on the side of patients and that we are all patients as well.
- ▶ Ask the public to join you on the day

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENGAGEMENT

- ▶ Need to inform police- make sure you mention it's a peaceful demonstration
- ▶ They will ask for a route- need to send Google maps print out- they may require a paper copy sent by post of a letter and the route, along with approx. numbers
- ▶ They need to make sure nothing else on
- ▶ Contact local council- they will advise whether its public land, private land etc
- ▶ Do this early- gives you flex of changing dates if a problem- although unlikely

COMMS, COMMS AND MORE COMMS

- ▶ Keep your constituents informed of everything that's happening- including sharing leaflets once done, share press release once finalised, placards when designed, media when contacted- this encourages people to join
- ▶ Keep harping on about- this is our future and this is our profession- no one coming to save us
- ▶ Keep going on about this not being a strike but peaceful demo- and we need is 2 hours from you on this date
- ▶ Ask them to bring families, surgery staff, patients
- ▶ **KEY- CONSISTENT, PERSISTENT AND REGULAR MESSAGING**

ON THE DAY

- ▶ Ask everyone to turn up half hour before the actual demonstration time
- ▶ Allocate people to speak to media
- ▶ Gather everyone and explain the day and process in detail
- ▶ Speak to as many members of public handing out leaflets- be prepared for some diff questions- but overall you will find public very supportive
- ▶ Make sure all placards and T-shirts are utilised
- ▶ Make it a success for the future of our profession
- ▶ MOST IMPORTANTLY- ENJOY THE DAY