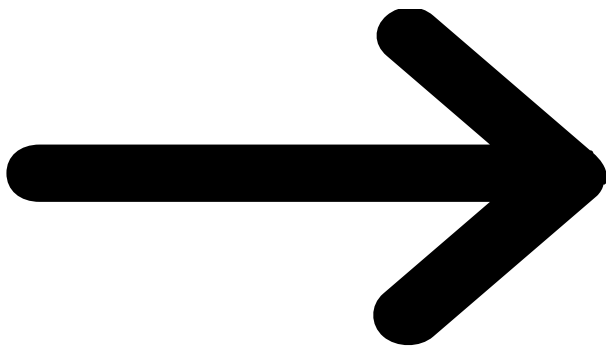


# GPs need funding boost now

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The SNP government must accelerate pledges for increased funding for family doctors before the GP crisis gets any worse, the Scottish Conservatives said.

Experts have predicted that Scotland could be short of nearly 1000 GPs in coming years unless urgent action is taken.

And today at First Minister's Questions, Scottish Conservative interim leader Jackson Carlaw said a huge budget boost provided by the UK Government could be used to help practices.

Last week, Chancellor Philip Hammond revealed a £550 million Barnett bonus as a result of increased health spending south of the border.

However, Nicola Sturgeon refused to speed up the promise to commit 11 per cent of the NHS budget on primary care, claiming it would "destabilise" the health service.

Investment in GPs is lower in Scotland than other parts of the UK.

Last month, the Scottish Conservatives revealed the spending gap under the SNP has grown to £660 million, while the Royal College of GPs talks about a "long-standing underfunding of GP practices".

**Scottish Conservative interim leader Jackson Carlaw said:**

"There's absolutely no doubt that more NHS resource should be going to general practice.

"It's what the doctors are calling for, and patients are crying out for.

"A larger slice of funding for GPs will help our NHS, keep people out of hospital, and reduce demand on other critical services.

"But as it stands, they won't see this for another three years.

"We want to see action now.

"The First Minister needs to use the extra investment from the UK Government

to plan properly for the long-term, not squander it on sticking plasters.”