



# British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin

\*\*\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\*\*\*

## **BAPIO urges Home Secretary to grant extension of visas to stranded overseas doctors**

BAPIO and fellow medical organisations British Medical Association, Association of Pakistani Physicians of Northern Europe, British International Doctors' Association, Medical Association of Nigerians Across Great Britain and Nepalese Doctors' Association have today written to the Home Secretary to grant an extension to doctors who arrived in UK to appear for GMC exams and have become stranded in as a result of COVID-19.

There are over 220 doctors from twenty different countries, who are supported by BAPIO in various ways, such as providing suitable accommodation and food supplies to some, pastoral support, liaison with the General Medical Council and other statutory organisations, but these stranded, qualified doctors are unable to work in the NHS until they can appear for their examinations which will be scheduled later this year. BAPIO and our fellow medical organisations are urging the Home Secretary to give them a further automatic extension so that they can appear for the exams, fulfil their dream of training in the NHS, and help the current medical workforce crisis.

President Ramesh Mehta said "The GMC has been working hard with us to support these doctors who got stranded for none of their fault. They are quite traumatised psychologically and financially. Unless the Home Secretary extends their visas, many will be forced to return to their home country without taking the test to qualify to work in the UK. That will be a big loss to the NHS."

Dr JS Bamrah, BAPIO Chairman said, "It's been a tough time for these doctors being locked down since March, away from their parent and partners. But they have one wish, which is to pass their exams and work in the NHS. I hope the Home Secretary will listen".

Prof Parag Singhal, BAPIO Secretary and Director of BAPIO Training Academy, said, "Immigrant doctors have been the backbone of the NHS, so we need to ensure that these doctors enter our training schemes so that they can become the GPs and consultants of the future. We need them as much as they need us."

*Dated 3 June 2020*

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## Notes for Editors

Since its inception in 1996, British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (BAPIO) has actively promoted the principles of diversity and equality. Over the years the Association has grown in stature and influence. It is represented through active Divisions covering all the English Regions as well as Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It is now one of the largest organisations of its type in the country. BAPIO is committed to ensuring that the NHS provides the best patient outcomes. By promoting professional excellence and leadership, BAPIO adds value in enhancing the skills of the medical workforce. BAPIO also contributes to the cause of promoting access to better health care globally and responds to aid victims of natural disasters in the world.

### *Further information*

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