# Institute of General Practice Management Statement on Utility Price Rises – September 2022

The Institute of General Practice Management (IGPM) writes this letter on behalf of our members, and the practices that they work for.

The cost-of-living crisis is being keenly felt amongst our practices, our staff, and our patients. However, we write to raise awareness and ask for support with the rising energy bills that we are facing.

Practices are run as independent business and as such receive no financial support from the NHS or the government in regard to the cost of gas and electricity. We have also not seen an inflationary increase added to our core funding since 2019, despite inflation reaching record levels. As businesses we are liable for the costs of the things, we need to keep our practices running – medicines, clinical equipment and consumables, printing and postage, IT equipment, furniture, maintenance of our premises etc.

With the cap on energy prices rising, with another rise scheduled for October, practices are seeing price rises that our income is unable to keep up with and they are understandably concerned.

Our members have reported increases of up to 665% for a fixed rate tariff, or 362% for a variable rate tariff. One member has reported an annual rise from £9,900 to £32,000. This is for a small, rural dispensing practice of 4,500 patients.

The impact of these price rises with no additional support in many cases will mean surgeries closing their doors as they no longer become financially sustainable. This will lead to staff unemployment and patients having to join other practices which may be further away and may even lead to more practice closures as they struggle to manage the increased demand.

We are already doing what we can to limit energy usage, but we also care for some of the most vulnerable in society. We cannot continue to provide this care without hot water and heating during the winter months. We cannot run our computer systems, lighting, or telephones without electricity.

Along with many other industries, we are asking the government to bring down the price cap or to provide additional funding support to GP practices to enable us to keep our doors open this winter and beyond.

We ask that this matter is considered as a matter of urgency, especially as we are about to embark on a difficult winter period where we are not only providing our usual services but are also helping deliver the flu and Covid vaccination booster programmes.

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**Directors of the Institute of General Practice Management Associate Director for Wales**