

CAMERON's 'SUMMIT' ON HEALTH BILL

Exclusive: Prime Minister calls summit on 'implementing NHS reforms' - 17 February, 2012 - HSJ

The Prime Minister has called a summit to discuss the "implementation of the NHS reforms" on Monday afternoon with senior healthcare leaders.

Invitees include the presidents of some of the Royal Medical Colleges, NHS Confederation Chief Executive, Mike Farrar, and British Medical Association Chair, Hamish Meldrum.

It indicates the government intends to press on with implementing its Health Bill rather than discussing dropping it or making significant changes.

Academy of Royal Colleges Chair, Sir Neil Douglas, wrote to the Royal College Presidents earlier this afternoon, saying: "Some of you will have been invited to a meeting with the Prime Minister on Monday. This is being titled as a meeting to discuss Implementation of the NHS Reforms which would indicate where the government is coming from." He adds: "Just to clarify this is not the meeting between the Colleges and the PM that many of us discussed 3 weeks ago in BMA house but is a Downing Street initiative. We are not yet clear of the invitation list but it appears to be selective and definitely broader than the Colleges."

HSJ has learned that the BMA and NHS Confederation have been invited to the hastily arranged summit.

The colleges that have been invited include, but are not limited to, the physicians and surgeons, which have been less critical of the government's reforms than other groups.

Royal College of GPs Chair, Clare Gerada, confirmed after the story broke that her organisation - which has been highly critical of the reforms - has not been invited. The colleges of radiology and pathology have also not been invited.

The full invite list is not clear, but the news has sparked speculation that some groups have been excluded because of their highly critical stance.

The summit comes at a time when there is also pressure on colleges and other national health bodies to toughen their position against the Health Bill.
