*It was with utter dismay that I read yesterday’s article suggesting a link between a rise in stillbirths in England and GP access (Lack of face-to-face GP appointments ‘causes stillbirths to spike 88%’ in England during pandemic, damning report finds).*

*Dismay because the report sought to provide clarity for the multiple and complex reasons for 37 stillbirths that tragically occurred in April to June 2020. Instead it has been used as a tool with which to falsely criticise General Practice and as such this negates the value of the report and the very important contributions made by all those involved – not least of which the women who lost their children.*

*Additionally, the article fails to make clear that GPs are not routinely involved in the care and monitoring of pregnant women, so to state that they are, particularly in this tragic context, is not only untrue but also incredibly damaging to patient trust and the wider profession. Care in pregnancy is carried out by dedicated maternity services, made up of midwifery teams and hospital-based obstetricians.*

*In fact, GPs are barely mentioned in the report, and in its concluding remarks doesn’t mention general practice once. HSIB also makes clear that they ‘never attribute blame or liability’ in their work, so to do this anyway by pointing the finger at a profession not even directly involved in this type of care, is grossly unfair. In fact, several of the report’s recommendations apply to Trusts and the need for improved national guidance from NHS England.*

*GPs have been going above and beyond throughout this pandemic; keeping communities safe and delivering the country’s biggest-ever vaccine rollout. It is this they should be recognised for, rather than being used, again, as an easy target.*