Within a period of 2 months, while working across primary and secondary sectors in North West London, I have seen patient cases from houses with severe mould or damp.

In some GP settings, locality dependent, we are fortunate to have social prescribing link workers who are assigned to the practice and can assist patients in navigating the resources available to raise concerns with their landlord. Campaigns such as ‘Make Things Right’ provide toolkits and strive to support our patients in challenging their landlords. However, several months down the line, these patients are either remaining on the waiting list for better, alternative accommodation or their landlords have failed to resolve the issue within the property.

In the interim, we as healthcare providers are faced with limited options but to escalate clinical management and wait alongside them in the hope they will find more suitable accommodation soon. Despite our best medical efforts to treat these patients, they continue to present in poor health for a cause that is reversible. As Michael Marmot said, ‘What good does it do to treat people and send them back to the conditions that made them sick?’

The Social Regulation Bill has been amended earlier this year with the addition of Awaab’s Law after the tragic case of a 2-year-old boy’s death secondary to extensive mould. It hopes to later this year provide a timeframe by which landlords are legally required to have resolved damp and mould when requested by tenants. In the meantime, we can empower patients with the tools and legislation on how to challenge their landlords through the support of the Housing Ombudsman Service to demand better housing and therefore better health.

A wider discussion across integrated care boards that brings housing to the forefront, engagement and data from local communities, and discussions with housing organisations and local councils will bolster our patients. These steps will work towards ensuring landlords are more regulated on the living conditions they provide for their tenants in order to conform to safe, liveable standards.

**REFERENCES**


