



Update from the Consortium of Lancashire & Cumbria LMCs

Tuesday 2nd March 2021

Lockdown restrictions loosening

Ahead of the [announcement](#) by the Prime Minister this week of a four-step end to the lockdown in England, the BMA published a [paper](#) setting out the principles and policy ideas which it believes should inform a sensible and safety-first approach to easing the current lockdown.

The BMA warned the Government to take 'cautious approach' to lifting lockdown restrictions as otherwise the NHS will be overwhelmed. Easing restrictions must be connected with measurable metrics and targets on virus circulation. Read more [here](#).

COVID-19 vaccination programme

NHSE/I has sent a [letter setting out the additional steps being taken to support the vaccination of cohort 6 - adult carers and individuals added to the shielded patient list](#) - as a result of the COVID-19 Population Risk Assessment tool (QCovid). The letter also includes information on the availability of the national booking system for these groups.

This follows the letters to [people identified as high risk by COVID-19 Population Risk Assessment Model – under 70 years of age](#) which was sent out recently. BMA GPC have since raised concerns with the Department of Health and Social Care about the impact this letter has had on some patients who have subsequently contacted their practice seeking more information. Although the letter clearly states, on BMA GPC's insistence, that patients do not need to contact their GP about the letter, many anxious patients are still clearly doing so, so BMA GPC have asked whether modifications can be made to any future letters sent.

COVID-19 Clinical risk assessment tool (QCovid®)

A [new online tool](#) that can help clinicians better understand how at-risk a person may be admitted to hospital or dying as a result of being infected with coronavirus is now available. The COVID-19 Clinical Risk Assessment Tool is powered by [QCovid®](#), a coronavirus risk prediction model created by the University of Oxford.

Clinicians can use the tool to risk assess individual patients or review those added to the [Shielded Patient List \(SPL\)](#) as part of the [COVID-19 Population Risk Assessment](#). There is though no requirement or expectation for practices to validate the latest update to the shielding list following the application of the QCovid® tool.

There are some instructions for individuals and organisations to follow [before using the tool](#), including the requirement for a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) and privacy notice in place that covers the tool's use. A template [DPIA](#) and [privacy notice](#) have been provided to support you to do this.





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Vaccinating people with a Learning Disability

As we know, multimorbidity is very common for those with a learning disability and BMA GPC are encouraging all practices to contact all people on their learning disability practice register to offer an early appointment for vaccination.

Vaccinating people with Severe Mental Illness (SMI)

As people with SMI people face reduced life expectancy of 15-20 years when compared to the general population and have also been disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, this group is also included in cohort 6 prioritisation list. Note that the Green Book defines SMI as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, or any mental illness that causes severe functional impairment, and also includes people with an eating disorder and those with a diagnosis of 'personality disorder'.

Tailored invitation letters for local vaccination sites to invite these groups are available on the [FutureNHS platform](#).

Vaccinating people who are HIV Positive

People living with HIV, at all stages of infection, should be offered the vaccination due to the associated immunosuppression, and are as such part of cohort 6. Most of these patients will be invited for vaccination by their GP, however, for the small proportion who has declined sharing their HIV status with their GP, HIV clinics should encourage and support these patients to share their HIV status with their GP.

Vaccinating those aged under 18

As the AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccine is not licensed for use in those under the age of 18 – if any young staff members or volunteers (aged 16-17) present to a vaccination centre for vaccination, they should be referred to their GP or local hospital hub where they can access the Pfizer vaccine which is authorised for this age group. If the Pfizer vaccine is unavailable, JCVI have recommended that the AZ vaccine can be used as an alternative in those aged 16-17 years. This is outside the license and must therefore be done under a PSD and cannot be done under a PGD or National Protocol.

Vaccinating Cohort 5

Patients in cohort 5 (people aged 65 and over) have received a letter from the national booking system stating that they are now eligible for vaccination, with information about how to book into a mass vaccination site or a pharmacy. The letter also states that if the patient wishes to be vaccinated by their GP then they should wait to be contacted by their practice. Practices, however, have been told to prioritise patients in cohort 6.





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Annual allowance repayment scheme 2019/20

The annual allowance repayment scheme, which was introduced in England and Wales following BMA lobbying, guarantees that any annual allowance tax charge for eligible clinicians will be compensated for at the time of retirement. Under the scheme, if an eligible clinician who is a member of the NHS England and Wales pension scheme incurs an annual allowance tax charge, they must elect to pay this through scheme pays - and you must not pay this tax bill using cash.

GPs retiring by 31 March 2021 who are eligible to apply for the [2019/20 Pensions Annual Allowance Charge Compensation Policy](#) can submit their application form via [PCSE](#) until 21 March 2021. Application windows for other GPs will open after the mandatory scheme pays election deadline for 2019/20 closes on 31 July 2021. To qualify for the policy you must first submit a scheme pays election ([SPE2](#)) form for 2019/20 to [NHSBSA](#). The BMA has further information [here](#).

Medicine Delivery Service

Following the announcement last week for [Clinically Extremely Vulnerable \(CEV\) patients to continue to self-isolate](#), NHSE/I will continue to commission the Community Pharmacy Home Delivery Service and the Dispensing Doctor Home Delivery Service until 31 March 2021.

NHSE/I has sent a [letter](#) to Dispensing Doctors and community pharmacies setting out the details. The [Service Specification](#) has also been updated to make it more generic so that it can be applied in other situations moving forwards e.g. if a therapeutic agent for COVID-19 suitable for supply in Primary Care is identified. Read more on the [NHSE/I webpage for community pharmacy](#)

LMC HR Training Events 2021

Please see our upcoming HR training events below:

- Disciplinary Procedures – 17th June, 2pm
- Grievance Management – 16th September, 2pm
- Effective Appraisals – 15th April, 2pm
- Recruitment & Selection - 11th November, 2pm
- Poor Employee Performance – 21st October, 2pm
- Change Management – 20th May, 2pm
- Sickness Management – 9th December, 2pm

All our events are on our [website](#) which includes further information.

