



Wednesday 9th November 2022

Notes from Your LMC Chief Executive

Future Contract Negotiations

By now, negotiations on changes to the contract (last year of the 5-year deal) should be well under way. However, with all the machinations within the government, and our fourth Secretary of State for Health this year, there is no clear steer to NHSE on what they want out of General Practice next year. Negotiations cannot start until then and GPC negotiators are frustrated that they can't begin discussions. Maybe, with such a late start, and this being the last year of the 5-year deal, any changes will be minor. You will remember last year's contract changes were imposed and not agreed with GPC. Of far greater significance will be the contract changes that will come in from April 2024 when the 5-year deal expires. This is the deal that set up PCNs and all that followed, such as the DES and ARRS roles. The national conference of LMCs being held later this month (24th & 25th November) will be exploring this issue with the GPC listening to LMCs on their thoughts for the future. As ever we would welcome your views on what would work for you and will be exploring these issues in more depth at the road shows mentioned last week. We are currently finalising venues and dates.

National Representation

There has been some criticism in the past about the effectiveness of the GPC in their negotiations with NHSE. No doubt this is being driven by frustration that no-one in government is listening to our concerns and there is only so much our national negotiators can do when met with a stone wall on the other side of the negotiating table. Since the Meldrum reforms in 2016 there has been reduction in the amount of support provided to GPC to carry out its essential national duties. There has been significant criticism of the General Practice Development Fund (GPDF) from LMCs for holding on to significant reserves (£16 – 20m) which could have been used to “Defend” general practice in its most severe hour of need, yet at the same time incur excessive internal management costs for very little output. An emergency meeting of LMCs was held on 22nd September at which 88 LMCs were represented and came to a unanimous conclusion that they had no confidence in the current Board of GPDF and were seeking significant change. Your LMC nominees to GPDF (essentially the shareholders) will be voting at a General Meeting of GPDF on 18th November with the aim of focusing GPDF on its core function (that of a banker to support GPC through a grant, fund our national LMC conferences and fund high profile legal cases of national significance) At the same time LMCs will be looking to significantly slim down the management costs of GPDF and improve its accountability to LMCs, which it purports to serve. On a separate note, you may have read in Pulse that the Chair of GPC England, Dr Farah Jameel, is not currently performing her role. We have no further information as to why this is the case and are seeking urgent information to clarify the situation from the BMA.

National Coverage of the Pressures on General Practice

Some of you may have seen Newsnight last Thursday which was covering the growing inequalities within general practice where less money and fewer staff were available in more deprived areas. Two of our local GPs were prominent in this report – Dr Susan Green from Blackpool and Dr Andy Knox from Morecambe Bay. Both gave an excellent explanation of what was happening in general practice and are to be commended for speaking up about this unacceptable disparity in funding to our most deprived patient populations. You can see the report at [here](#).

GP Voice at ICB Level

We now have our first meeting of GP leaders from across Lancashire and South Cumbria on 22nd November and we have a good cross section of GP leaders from across PCNs, local ICB Leads, Federations and the LMCs attending this event. We will be agreeing the most important issues facing general practice and how we need to take this forward with the ICB and with secondary care and Community /Mental Health providers.





Update from the Consortium of Lancashire & Cumbria LMCs

Accelerated citizen access to records

There has been concern about the roll out and we previously advised of several options including asking your system supplier to delay the roll out by using a template letter.

The Rt. Hon Steve Barclay MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, announced last week that the Citizens' Access to Records programme would be going live. NHS Digital are now suggesting the switch on will occur for all by November 30th and the BMA GPC are challenging this as major concerns have not yet been addressed. As a reminder you can inform your supplier to pause the roll out by using the template letter in [this guidance](#) and [email it to your supplier](#).

In response to the announcement, the BMA issued a [statement](#) calling for clarity over the deployment of the programme and assurances that practices who do not yet feel ready, have ample time as they deem necessary to make preparations in order to ensure patients are protected.

Please see the following guidance from [NHS Digital](#):

- ***For those practices that ask EMIS by 5pm on 4 November 2022 to not enable the change we (NHS Digital) have instructed both suppliers to pause.***
- ***For all other practices that will not have informed EMIS to pause by 5pm on 4 November we (NHS Digital) will continue to work with EMIS and TPP to implement the change as planned, with prospective data entered into patient records from 1 November 2022 automatically becoming visible in a phased way.***

You may still wish to send in the template letter even if you missed the deadline above. We will keep you updated as this issue develops.

Snapshot Survey

What are your views on the [Health and Social Care Select Committee report on the future of general practice?](#)

Answer the BMA GPC brief survey [here](#)

Punitive pensions tax rules

The BMA Pensions Committee sent a newsletter providing an update on their continued lobbying of Government to fix punitive pension tax rules. Please see the newsletter [here](#).

Network Contract DES guidance – pay codes updated 1st November

When NHSE published the October variation to the Network Contract DES, and [associated guidance](#), there were a number of placeholders in the payments section of the guidance while they waited for new pay codes to be produced.

This reflected the transition from Calculating Quality Reporting Service (CQRS) and manual payments to automated payments via PCSE Online, as well as the short notice introduction of the new PCN Capacity and Access Payment. The new automated pay codes are now in place and ready for use, in the updated [guidance](#). Please contact england.gpcontracts@nhs.net with any questions.





Update from the Consortium of Lancashire & Cumbria LMCs

NHS Property Services settlement letters

Many NHS Property Services (NHSPS) practices across England have recently received 'invitation to settle' letters, ostensibly from credit controllers, seeking to encourage NHSPS practices to settle disputed historical debt with respect to non-reimbursable service charges. Some partners may read these letters with alarm, especially as they involve a common pressure tactic of requiring a response within a tight timeframe.

Practices that engage with NHSPS on this issue should do their own due diligence. The BMA GPC wanted to [reiterate their guidance for NHSPS practices](#) in dispute with NHSPS; in short, practices should:

- seek independent advice about their occupancy arrangements and what they believe is recoverable by way of service charges
- seek to engage with NHSPS on a good faith basis, and make clear where amounts are in dispute
- allow NHSPS an opportunity to provide evidence to support its claims with respect to the disputed amount, and
- make payments or agree to settle where they agree with the legal basis on which NHSPS have charged them, and where they believe these charges are accurate.

Employment Law Update Webinar

We have arranged an [Employment Law Update webinar](#) taking place on Wednesday 23rd November 2022 2pm – 4:30pm via Microsoft Teams.

If you would like to attend, please let [Rebecca](#) know.

Sessional GP Newsletter

Read the BMA sessional GPs newsletter [here](#).

LMC Buying Group

Did you know the LMC Buying Group deliver savings to practices without creating any additional work or inconvenience?

Membership entitles practices to discounts on products and services provided by the Buying Group's suppliers.

Membership is free and there is no obligation on practices to use all the suppliers. You can save thousands of pounds a year just by switching to Buying Group suppliers. To view the pricing and discounts on offer you need to log-in to the Members section of the [Buying Group website](#).

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