



Update from the Consortium of Lancashire & Cumbria LMCs

Monday 13th July 2020

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update

Update on GP services for 2020/21

NHSE/I has released its next [letter regarding arrangements for practices for the rest of 2020/21](#). Please see attached [BMA GPC's outline summary of the letter](#). Further guidance will be provided in the coming weeks, specifically regarding appraisal, QOF and funding arrangements, following further discussions with NHSE/I.

LMC believe the letter contains some positive statements about the next phase. We do question some aspects of the letter as it does not provide all the clarity practices need and we will keep you updated on the further detail and guidance that is due to follow. Our LMC Consortium Advisory Board will be considering the local implications of the letter early this week and we will be looking for levels of consistency to be agreed across the patch. A position statement from the LMCs will follow this week.

Easing lockdown measures and the need for local infection data

After Leicester became the first place to be put in local lockdown due to a surge in infections, the BMA has issued a [statement](#) calling on the government to share timely, comprehensive and reliable information on local infection rates, confirmed cases and known instances of contact to all those involved with local government officials and public health leaders. Although weekly rates of infections per 100,000 people are published by PHE, this is not very easy for the public to find or interpret.

The BMA has urged Ministers to set clearly defined metrics of 'trigger points' around infection rates so that a consistent, clear and objective approach to introducing local lockdowns can be applied preventing a second spike. Read more about the case for decisive action to protect lives as lockdown is eased in the recent [Focus blog](#) by the BMA Chair of Council, Chaand Nagpaul.

GP patient survey results

The latest [GP patients survey results](#) have now been published by [Ipsos MORI](#). The report shows that the public continue to have a positive view of general practice, with the majority (82%) of patients reporting that they had a good overall experience of general practice, and 95% have confidence and trust in the healthcare professional they saw. It is worth noting that the survey was undertaken in January to March this year, and although it relates to the experience of patients prior to the current pandemic, GPs and practice teams have been working harder than ever to provide services to patients in one of the most challenging times the NHS has ever seen in its history.

A summary of the results is available in this [infographic](#)

NICE indicators consultation

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published a [consultation on proposed new QOF indicators](#), on vaccinations and immunisations, obesity and cancer, which BMA GPC will be submitting a response to. Please see above link if you would like to contribute.





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Social Prescribing Link Worker report

The National Association of Link Workers has published a [report on Social Prescribing Link Workers](#), which raises issues about quality, safety and sustainability. In response to this, Dr Richard Vautrey, Chair of the BMA GPC, said: 'It's disheartening to hear that 29% of social prescribing link workers plan to leave in the next year due to a lack of clinical supervision and support, especially when we know how many patients and practices are already benefiting from their work. Social prescribing is a key and growing part of primary care though, which is why it's vital that they are provided with the training and support they need, but also that PCNs and practices are provided with the resources needed to provide appropriate clinical supervision'. Read more on the [NALW website](#).

RCGP report - General Practice in a Post-COVID World

The Royal College of GPs has published their report [General Practice in a Post-COVID World](#), which outlines how GPs will be on the frontline of dealing with the physical and psychological health consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need for urgent government planning and funding to prepare general practice services for facilitating the recovery of local communities.

It echoes the BMA GPC's recent report [Trust GPs to lead: learning from the response to COVID-19 within general practice in England](#), and supports the call for a reduction in bureaucracy and regulation, and an increase in investment for digital technology to support the new ways of working and by doing so both improve access and work towards a greener way of delivering general practice.

Both GPC and the RCGP are using their reports and the evidence of the experience of recent months in submissions to the Ministerial Working Group established as part of our 20/21 contract agreement to reduce the bureaucratic burden on general practice. This was reported by the [Times](#).

NHSE/I bureaucracy review

NHSE/I and the government are reviewing how to reduce bureaucracy to free up frontline NHS staff and to improve experience at work. They would like to hear directly from [practice staff and managers](#) specifically to better understand the things you spend time on which could be streamlined or removed, allowing you to spend more time with patients. They are looking for expressions of interest to participate in a series of virtual focus groups in weeks commencing 20th and 27th July 2020.

If you would like to participate and find out more about the discussion topics, please contact the review team directly by noon Monday 13 July at: england.gpbureaucracyreview@nhs.net. Please let the LMC know if you will be getting involved.

NHS Health Check: Restart Preparation

PHE has published a document [about restarting NHS Health Checks](#), which advises that the previous advice by NHSE/I to stop NHS health Checks during the pandemic, expires on 31 July 2020. The decision on when to restart NHS Health Checks is one for local authorities to take. This is not something that GPC was consulted on, and they have raised concerns directly with PHE. We expect further local discussion on this issue.





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Faulty PPE

As reported last week, a product recall notice has been sent to practices and care homes with safety warnings, notices for destruction and distribution stoppages for Cardinal Surgical masks. Read the full BMA statement [here](#)

Practices are reminded that they can obtain PPE supplies via their supplier of the original stock or the Local Resilience Forum (LRF). Practices can also place register and orders via the [Portal](#), which can be delivered within 48 hours. More information is available on the [DHSC PPE Portal guidance page](#) and the Portal customer service team can be reached on 0800 876 6802 for enquiries or registration support.

Clinical guidance on maintaining immunisation programmes during COVID-19

PHE has published [Clinical guidance for healthcare professionals on maintaining immunisation programmes during COVID-19](#)

The advice for general practice, which BMA GPC support, is that the routine immunisation programme should be maintained. This is in order to protect the individual patient, as well as to avoid outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases that could further increase the numbers of patients requiring health services. Non-scheduled vaccinations should still be given, e.g. for control of outbreak of vaccine preventable conditions as well as opportunistically, e.g. missing doses of MMR.

BMA GPC are in discussion with NHSEI about the forthcoming influenza immunisation campaign, including the significant logistical and PPE requirements that will need to be considered.

Patients being redirected to NHS111

If a patient needs an antigen test, they can be directed to the dedicated number of 119. More information about coronavirus testing is available [here](#). Practices are reminded that if a patient who calls/attends the practice is symptomatic they should be assessed rather than redirected to NHS111.

The [latest version of the SOP](#) includes a flowchart on the interface between NHS111, CCAS and GPs.

GP appointment data

The recently published [GP appointment data](#) showed a large increase in remote consultations during lockdown - 48% of GP appointments in May were carried out over the telephone, compared with 14% in February. In response to this Dr Richard Vautrey said: 'There has been a massive change from the vast majority of consultations in general practice taking place face to face, to now the vast majority taking place by telephone or increasingly by video consultation'. This was reported by the [Guardian](#).

COVID-19 care home support service

NHSE/I have published a [transition note](#) clarifying that under the COVID-19 care home support service training will be provided for personalised care staff.





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Transition between COVID-19 care home support and the Care Homes service in the PCN DES

From 31 July 2020, the interim COVID-19 care home service will transition into the Enhanced Health in Care Homes service as described in the [Network Contract Directed Enhanced Service \(DES\)](#). BMA GPC have agreed with NHSE/I that to provide some continuity and stability the Network Contract DES will be amended so that when appropriate the clinical lead role for the service may, as now, be held by a clinician, other than a GP, with appropriate experience of working with care homes provided this is agreed by the practices in the primary care network, the CCG and the relevant community provider.

LMC HR feedback

Over the past two weeks the LMC have run three 'HR Implications during COVID- 19' which have received great feedback so far:

- Overall satisfaction – Satisfied 100%
- Topics covered – 91% agreed the topics were relevant
- Overall opinion – 4.5 out of 5
- Recommended – 100%

All our HR events will be moved online, so please watch out for upcoming dates.

Mental health and wellbeing

The BMA has published a [new report](#) which warns of a mental health crisis as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic and outlines key recommendations for the Government to take, including the recruitment of more mental health staff. This follows the latest [tracker survey](#) which revealed high levels of exhaustion and stress amongst doctors. David Wrigley, BMA deputy chair of council and former member of GPC, spoke to [BBC Radio Lancashire](#) (about 7.10am)

Read the BMA's report on the [mental health and wellbeing of the medical workforce](#) which sets out ten recommendations to be addressed to protect staff during the pandemic and in the future.

The LMC continue to offer the [GP Support Scheme](#) which is a confidential pastoral support service for all GPs in Lancashire and Cumbria. You can also visit our [website for health and wellbeing videos](#) and supporting documents and guides to accompany the videos.

BMA COVID-19 guidance

The BMA continue to regularly update their [toolkit for GPs and practices](#), which includes a large range of topics relating to COVID-19. There is also guidance on the following topics:

- [Model terms of engagement for a GP providing temporary COVID-19 services](#)
- [Terms and conditions for sessional GPs](#)
- [Guidance on risk assessments](#) which includes specific information for practices.

For further information, see the BMA's [COVID-19 Webpage](#) with all the latest guidance including links to the BMA's [COVID-19 ethical guidance](#) and [priorities for easing lockdown](#).

