



Update from the Consortium of Lancashire & Cumbria LMCs

Tuesday 29th April 2025

This Brieflet includes the following topics:

- General Practice Alert State (GPAS)
- In Memory of Peter Labbett
- Lancashire Smoking Cessation Services -
No obligation for GPs to prescribe
Varenicline (Champix)
- REMINDER: EMS+ Sitrep Submissions
are no longer a contractual obligation
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- Local Collective Action
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General Practice Alert State (GPAS)

Please note that no GPAS SitRep was produced last week due to the bank holiday.

You can see the previous SitRep results [on our website](#).

Submitting your results is crucial. When we don't receive your data, it limits our ability to present a strong, accurate picture to system partners. This, in turn, weakens our case when we advocate for more resources and support for your practice.

Your input makes a difference — thank you for taking the time to help us fight for you.

[Please let us know](#) if you are a Practice Manager and do not receive the GPAS input emails.

If someone at your practice needs to be added to the distribution list please email enquiries@nwlmc.org. Submission links are sent out every Tuesday and Wednesday.

Please let us know if you have any questions/ issues

In Memory of Peter Labbett

Following the sad passing of our colleague, Peter Labbett, his family has created a JustGiving page to support Macmillan in his memory. If you would like to make a donation or find out more, please click [here](#)

Lancashire Smoking Cessation Services - No obligation for GPs to prescribe Varenicline (Champix)

We recently reported that in Lancashire, the LMCs have been receiving reports that patients are being directed to their GP for prescriptions of Varenicline rather than these being issued by smoking cessation services and explained our position on this issue.

We know that practices are continuing to receive such requests and are therefore reiterating our earlier advice: **Without a LIS/LES arrangement in place, practices are NOT funded to undertake this work.**

Varenicline was introduced onto the market as a generic medication after the proprietary version (Champix) was withdrawn in October 2021

We understand that SmokeFree Lancashire are unable to prescribe this medication but want to stress that this must not transfer prescribing responsibilities for this cohort

of patients onto practices. **There is no obligation for GPs to prescribe Varenicline (Champix)** unless or until an appropriate and funded pathway is agreed.

We are continuing to actively pursue further consultation on the resource implications for any workload shift and suggest practices continue to push back on unfunded requests. To this end we have created a [template letter](#) to assist practices in their own communications with patients, smoking cessation service providers or commissioning colleagues, where needed.

Please continue to share evidence of this issue impacting your practice to support our ongoing discussions on your behalf.

REMINDER: EMS+ Sitrep Submissions are no longer a contractual obligation (L&SC ICB area)

Colleagues in Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB area are reminded that EMS+ submissions are no longer part of the local contractual funding arrangement for GP practices in 2025/26 and as such **you are no longer required to make use of this or any other reporting system proposed by the ICB.**

Most of you have got this message, as the latest report to us has shown that only 44 of the 183 practices invited to submit a return have done so. In most areas, this reflects returns that are now in single figures, however we understand that **25 of the 68 practices identified in Pennine Lancashire have continued to submit these returns unnecessarily.**

The LMC encourages all practices in to redirect their efforts to engage with the our regular GPAS enquiries instead - GPAS, unlike EMS+, is a confidential data collection that enables us to evidence to system partners the pressures within General Practice across the patch.

Local Collective Action

GPC England's national dispute with Government is now over, following the acceptance of the 2025/26 contract agreement. However, the importance of local collective action to resolve ongoing commissioning gaps continues and indeed has been recommended to be ramped up. Colleagues across the Consortium have

collaborated with LMC recently to push back on unfair commissioning proposals, with L&SC ICB taking revised funding plans through their Board last week. In North Cumbria, practices are similarly signalling their dissatisfaction with the inadequately funded Non-Meds LIS and the lack of Enhanced Services to support core primary care work. As a result, the LMC is supporting practices to collectively stop providing unfunded, primary care-generated phlebotomy from 1st June.

BMA [safe working guidance](#) continues to be GPC England policy and is regularly updated. Newly planned 2025/26 contractual asks, such as patient access to e-consultations for routine care as well as requesting fit notes or medication queries, do not mean GP practices must offer unlimited capacity that jeopardises patient or staff safety. The safe working guidance includes [template letters](#) which help practices manage workload and limit capacity to deliver safe, high-quality care.

The BMA also feel it is important to state that you do not need to turn on 'GP Connect Update Record' which the vast majority of you turned off last summer. BMA have heard some ICBs are telling GPs to turn it on – this is wrong. It is an area they are having ongoing discussions with Government in the coming months, and the BMA will issue more guidance ahead of the proposed 'switch on' for 1 October 2025.

The BMA are aware of many of you are asking questions about the new Advice and Guidance Enhanced Service and we will be issuing guidance on this very soon. If you use A&G then you are eligible to claim the fee from April 1 2025 so it is important to keep a tally of those done and submit claims each month as per the guidance. BMA will cover more of this in their guidance document.

All colleagues are encouraged to read [GPC England's guidance on the 2025/26 contract changes](#), where additional related guidance will be added in the coming days and weeks.

Prescribing/Dispensing Update

The BMA wish to highlight two prescribing areas they are planning to develop guidance for over the next few weeks/months:

Inclisiran

NHS England has updated its [guidance for Inclisiran](#), specifically:

- Inclisiran purchased at £45 and reimbursed at £60 (profit uplift of £5 - > £15)
- secondary care restrictions removed
- offered to community pharmacy as well as GPs.

There is existing joint [RCGP/BMA guidance for Inclisiran](#) and we plan to update this, following the above update and the changes to QOF within the 2025/26 GP contract.

PLEASE NOTE: The consortium view on the prescribing and administration of Inclisiran is that unless the reimbursement value is approximately £35 this is not a financially viable activity for practices to undertake.

Tirzepatide

Tirzepatide (Mounjaro) for weight management has been [approved by NICE](#) for delivery within primary care by 23 June 2025. NHS England has delegated this responsibility to individual ICBs, and GPC England has not been consulted about this. We are clear that prescribing for weight management is not part of GP essential services and this activity must be accompanied with the additional funding. We will share more guidance when funding mechanisms are clearer.

Use of Patient Data

You may have seen reports in the [Guardian](#) this week about preparations being underway to allow the transfer of GP data to organisations like Biobank for research studies. NHS England and the Department of Health are considering repurposing the dataset, designed for pandemic planning and research, to enable the GP data of those patients who have given explicit consent to be passed over to organisations like Biobank. NHS England will assure the consent processes and will assume liability for any flows of data, should a Data Direction and suitable Data Provision Notice be forthcoming. BMA have been clear that patients who may already be enrolled in these programmes are able to opt out, should they withdraw their consent, without increasing GP workload.

Separately to this, the BMA have been in positive discussions with the Department of Health and NHS England on the forthcoming extension of [OpenSAFELY](#) to non-COVID purposes. OpenSAFELY is unique in the sense the most disclosive GP data

remains in situ in the system suppliers' systems and the analyses take place there. The BMA will share more news on the progress of OpenSAFELY in due course.

PCN DES CAIP component – “simpler online requests”

BMA guidance on CAIP (Capacity and Access Improvement Payment) has been updated and is available here: [Primary care network funding](#)

General Practice Appointment Infographics - March 2025

We have created infographics for Practices to use in your waiting rooms, websites and social media. These infographics raise patient awareness on the current state of General Practice and how practices are operating.

Some example infographics can be seen below. Feel free to pick and choose the images that are suitable for your practices needs [on our website](#).

If you would like the images in a different format [please get in touch](#).



Lancashire & South Cumbria GP Appointments

Data published April 2025 by NHS Digital

874,000

GP SURGERY APPOINTMENTS WERE OFFERED IN MARCH

601,000

69% OF ALL PATIENTS WERE SEEN FACE TO FACE

431,000

49% WERE SEEN WITHIN 24 HOURS OF CONTACTING THEIR PRACTICE



- ✓ Our Receptionists and Care Navigators are here to help! Please be as specific as possible when discussing your needs. **You may not always need to see a GP.**
- ✓ Patients will be offered appointments with the **right clinician at the right place and within the right timeframe** - based on clinical urgency and need.
- ✓ Our Practice teams are here to help, not be hurt. **Aggressive, violent or threatening behaviour towards our staff will not be tolerated #BeKind**
- ✓ Practice self-care prior to contacting NHS services for your minor illness.
- ✓ GPs have no control over hospital waiting lists or follow up appointments.
- ✓ Tests ordered by the hospital will be followed up by the hospital.
- ✓ We are working as hard as we can to **meet your needs**.
- ✓ We are grateful for your patience and support.



North Cumbria GP Appointments

Data published April 2025 by NHS Digital

208,000

GP APPOINTMENTS WERE OFFERED IN MARCH

115,000

55% OF ALL PATIENTS WERE SEEN FACE TO FACE

104,000

50% WERE SEEN WITHIN 24 HOURS OF CONTACTING THEIR PRACTICE



- ✓ Our Receptionists and Care Navigators are here to help! Please be as specific as possible when discussing your needs. **You may not always need to see a GP.**
- ✓ Patients will be offered appointments with the **right clinician at the right place and within the right timeframe** - based on clinical urgency and need.
- ✓ Our Practice teams are here to help, not be hurt. **Aggressive, violent or threatening behaviour towards our staff will not be tolerated #BeKind**
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LMC Training Events 2025

Please see a list of upcoming training events being hosted by the LMC:

- [Complaints Training](#)
- [Conflict Management](#)
- [CQC Update](#)

To book your place or find out more information, please contact Rebecca.Noblett@nwlmc.org or view [here](#).

Help Us Grow Our Audience

We understand that you are busy and are likely to receive many emails on a daily basis. However it is important for you to receive communications from us because **we can help and support you.**

We know there are many colleagues who do not receive our brieflet, so please help us by sharing this with your team and letting us know to add them to our distribution lists.

Contact Us
