



Update from the Consortium of Lancashire & Cumbria LMCs

Monday 30th November 2020

2020 Conference of England LMCs

The 2020 Conference of England LMCs was held Friday 27 November as a virtual event. The event was webcast via this [link](#) and a recording of the event and the resolutions is published on the BMA [website](#). They are also [attached](#). Read the [agenda here](#). Dr Andrew Littler, Chair of Central Lancashire LMC, contributed to the debate on Motion 13 regarding remote consultations.

COVID-19 vaccination programme guidance

NHSEI has published a [letter](#) about the outcome of General Practice site designation process to provide commissioners and practices with more information to help with planning. This follows on from a [letter that NHSEI sent to NHS Trusts](#), outlining the wider COVID-19 vaccination deployment strategy and operational readiness for mass immunisation sites.

The letter sets out that NHSEI aims to give all designated sites at least 10 days' notice of the first vaccines becoming available to ensure sites can be prepared and clinics arranged. It also suggests practices may wish to use this opportunity to invite the extended flu vaccination programme cohort of 50-64 year olds to their single designated site, to test arrangements.

In addition, NHSEI has published [FAQs on their FutureNHS platform](#) (sign in required) based on the information known at present about eligible cohorts, appointment booking, administration of the vaccine, workforce and funding, to help answer any question that practices may have. It is also expected that the COVID-19 vaccination programme specifications will be published imminently.

Please see the BMAs recent [guidance](#) about the COVID-19 vaccination programme which has FAQs throughout to answer some questions practices will have. This will be regularly updated.

Public Health England have produced two videos in which Wei Shen, chair of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation, explaining the vaccine prioritisation and the rationale for the age-based approach. The videos can be found on the [Public Health England twitter page](#).

COVID-19 winter plan and exiting lockdown

The BMA launched a ['blueprint' for leaving lockdown](#), to help save lives and prevent the collapse of health services this winter, outlining major reforms to sustainably control the spread of COVID-19.

Last week, the Prime Minister set out [the COVID-19 winter plan and announced the return to a three-tiered system](#) when England ends lockdown this week on 2 December. He also confirmed that that mass testing will be introduced in all England's tier three areas, the highest alert level. Read the BMA statement in response to this [here](#).

The full COVID-19 winter plan is available [here](#) and information about the local restriction tiers can be found [here](#).





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Guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people

From Wednesday 2 December, once the current national restrictions are replaced with a regionally differentiated approach of the country, the government is planning to communicate updated guidance with all c.2.3m people on the Shielded Patient List (SPL) via a letter. The government has provided [specific guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people at each local tier](#). This letter will be available on the GOV.UK [website](#). Letters may start arriving with patients from Saturday 28 November, and throughout all of this week.

COVID-19 select committee: digitalisation of physical health services and impact on wellbeing

Farah Jameel, GPC England executive team member, gave evidence to the [Lords' COVID-19 select committee](#) regarding the digitalisation of physical health services and the impact on our future wellbeing. Watch Dr Jameel giving evidence to the committee [here](#).

Integrated Care Systems consultation

NHSEI has published a [consultation](#) inviting comments on the next steps for ICSs. The consultation raises some fundamental issues about how the NHS will be structured and work in the future and invites a discussion about how ICSs could be embedded in legislation or guidance.

This national consultation will accelerate local discussions on the future of CCGs. Currently we have a proposal on the table (temporarily paused by COVID) to amalgamate the 8 CCGs, across Lancashire and South Cumbria, into one strategic commissioning body. Depending on the results of this national consultation the proposal may have to change. At the same time, we have a local narrative emerging on the scope and function of Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs). This is closely related but separate to the national consultation.

We will be putting out guidance material as soon as a clear model emerges.

QOF system suppliers update

As practices will be aware QOF 2020/21 has been [revised to reflect the impact of COVID-19 on General Practice](#). It is recognised that practices need to reprioritise aspects of care not related to COVID-19 and the QOF requirements have been modified for 2020/21 to support and help release capacity in General Practice. Practices and commissioners have been asked to work together to confirm that any population stratification is clinically appropriate for their local population.

Clinical system suppliers have recently updated QOF indicators and prompts. In some instances, this may have impacted on Practices' records of progress to date. Practices should be reassured that the indicators affected by this update are those that are subject to income protection as outlined in 2020/21 QOF guidance. Practices are not expected to re-code or re-review patients for indicators affected by this system update, unless there is a clinical need to do so.





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Government spending review

Last week, the Chancellor announced funding plans for the NHS during his spending review speech. The announcements fall short of what is needed to improve GP practices/ estates and expand the GP workforce. Read the BMA briefing on the [announcements](#).

GP appointment data

The latest [appointment data](#) for October was published last week. There were nearly 1.6 million more appointments in October than September, and October also had the highest number of appointments of any month in 2020 (28,236,193), and the highest since October 2019. There were 1.8million more face-to-face appointments in October than September and the highest number since February.

This data continues to show that General Practice remains open and is delivering a high number of appointments during the second wave of the pandemic.

GMC State of medical education and practice in the UK

The GMC has released its annual survey findings in its [State of medical education and practice in the UK report](#). Last year they looked at General Practice in detail. This year they have found that 80% of GPs said they were working remotely more often, with fewer face-to-face consultations. Of concern, 34% reported seeing situations where patient safety or care was compromised. However, 59% felt the pandemic has had a positive impact on the speed of implementing change. 38% of GPs responding said they were satisfied or very satisfied in their day-to-day work, up from just 20% in 2019.

RCGP call for suspension of GP appraisal during the COVID-19 pandemic

The [Royal College of GPs' Council has passed a motion to call for suspension of GP appraisal](#) for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the College was pleased to see the introduction of a 'lighter touch' approach to appraisal, they remain concerned that many GPs simply do not have the capacity to engage even with a simpler process. Read the full statement [here](#).

Other Bulletins/ Newsletters

See the most recent NHSE GP bulletin [here](#).

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

