



Update from the Consortium of Lancashire & Cumbria LMCs

Tuesday 1st February 2022

Update: Vaccination as a condition of deployment (VCOD) for all healthcare workers

As you know, the Government passed legislation requiring VCOD which was due to come in from 1 April 2022. However, yesterday the Secretary of State announced that this is being reconsidered.

This change in Government policy requests that employers do not serve notice of termination to employees affected by the VCOD regulations.

The Government's decision is subject to Parliamentary process and will require further consultation and a vote to be passed into legislation.

Please see letter [here](#) for more information.

If you have any specific queries, please get in touch with our LMC HR Service Lead - [Stevie Simpkin](#).

PCSE Update

PCSE provided a webinar update to LMCs and CCGs 26th January. See a summary of the update [here](#).

GP pressures and GP appointment data

On the 13th of December, the Prime Minister put out a call to arms, making the booster campaign the national priority in the fight against Omicron. General practice responded to the call and delivered 3.9 million vaccination appointments that month.

As a result, [GP appointment figures](#) for December were a staggering 20% (4.9 million) higher than two years ago, pre COVID. 2021 saw GP practices in England book more appointments than ever before, with an unprecedented 367m appointments.

The growing burden on general practice is particularly stark given the [ongoing failure to deliver](#) on GP recruitment and declining GP numbers (with the equivalent of 1,756 fewer fully qualified full-time GPs compared to 2015), while at the same time the average number of patients each GP is responsible for has increased by around 16% - to more than 2000 - since 2015.

Read the [full BMA statement](#) by Dr Farah Jameel, GPC England chair.

National Standards of Healthcare Cleanliness 2021

On last week's Brieflet we stated that NHSEI confirmed the [National Standard of Healthcare Cleanliness](#) is not a mandatory requirement in Primary Care. However, we would like to highlight that it is a requirement of CQC, so practices are still required to do this in line with CQC regulations.





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PCN DES - Examples of good practice

99% of practices are signed up to the PCN DES and are working in collaboration with neighbouring practices. In some areas there have been huge problems recruiting ARRS staff, and PCNs have failed to give practices the benefits that were promised, and the LMC England conference has very clearly articulated those problems. GPCE would like to not only understand more about the problems being encountered, but also see examples of where PCNs are working.

GPCE are asking if colleagues could share examples of effective local collaboration and transformation that have come about due to the PCN DES. This will allow GPC to share innovative and useful ways of working with colleagues across the country and inform discussions with NHSE/I on PCNs. They want to be able to highlight the difficulties and challenges of PCNs, but also demonstrate where GPs and PCNs have made the system work well for them and their patients. Please email any examples to info.lmcqueries@bma.org.uk

Engaging with underserved communities and priority groups about COVID-19 vaccination

These resources will support engagement with priority groups and underserved communities to help answer their concerns and boost uptake of COVID-19 vaccine:

- [Fact cards](#) featuring trusted health professionals for use in presentations, websites, and digital messaging channels to help counter misinformation.
- [NHS letter from Dr Nikki Kanani](#), available in 24 translations, and [graphic cards](#) encouraging people without an NHS number to access COVID-19 testing, treatment and vaccination without charge and, if they wish, register with a GP.

Your opportunity to inform staff training in general practice

NHSEI are invited you to take part in a [survey](#) as part of their work with Health Education England on training needs to support general practice staff working with remote triage, care navigation, online, telephone and video consultations. They would like to hear from those working in general practice on what types of training would help you work with these digital tools more confidently. Your input will be crucial in designing effective training for staff. The survey closes 23 February.

How can GPs effectively care for patients with long-term conditions in the current climate?

[UCLPartners has built a suite of comprehensive search tools for EMIS and SystmOne](#) that help primary care to safely prioritise care for patients with long term conditions at the same time as responding to the COVID surge and the vaccination programme.

Teaching in Practice - Medical Student GP and Community Placements virtual event

Lancaster University are running a free virtual course for GPs who are medical student supervisors/clinical educators in practice, or for those who are interested to learn more about placing medical students in their GP practices: 2nd March 2-5pm. For more information or to register please see [here](#).





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Fit testing of FFP2 and FFP3 respirators

Current [IPC \(Infection Prevention and Control\)](#) guidance advises that clinicians seeing patients with any known or suspected respiratory infections should wear FFP3 respirators to prevent nosocomial transfer. It is also a requirement of the [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#) that FFP2 masks are fit-tested in the same way as FFP3 masks. HSE advises against the use of FFP2 unless in contingency measures as these provide a lesser filtration rate than FFP3.

GPCE has persistently made the case that COVID-19 is transmitted by airborne means and that effective respiratory protective equipment (RPE) is of vital importance to protect healthcare staff and patients. GPC have worked hard with NHSEI in order to protect colleagues and patients. This latest guidance acknowledges these facts and provides a framework by which practices can access appropriate RPE.

Practices can access FFP respirators, including FFP3s, via the [PPE portal](#) if they have risk assessed their environments and require these. In addition, practices can access fit-testing for their FFP respirators through their local commissioners, and CCGs have been informed that where risk assessments have shown it to be necessary, fit-testing should be provided by the CCG.

NHSEI have asked CCG/Integrated Care Systems (ICs) to identify fit testing capacity that may be available in their system, to consider the need across the whole system and ensure demand is prioritized according to clinical need and the type of procedures that local providers are carrying out in line with IPC guidance.

A list of fit testing training providers is available [here](#) and there is also additional support via two dedicated *Fit Test Helplines* for NHS / healthcare providers, which can be contacted on: 07376 304545 or 07376 304546. The legal duty is to take all reasonably practicable actions. If there is no availability of fit testing or there will be delay, risk is still reduced by moving from surgical masks to either FFP2 or FFP3 respirators.

Read BMA [guidance](#) for practices to use about making risk assessments and on infection control protocols.

LMC Vacancies

We have several GP vacancies available on the following committees:

- Lancashire Coastal LMC – Far North
- Morecambe Bay LMC – Barrow and Furness & South Lakeland
- Lancashire Pennine LMC – Blackburn with Darwen
- Cumbria LMC – Eden & Allerdale

If you work in the above areas and are interested in representing your constituents as a committee member, please get in touch [Mikaela](#).

To see a list of your current LMC representatives, please visit our [website](#).

Members of the LMC office can be found [here](#).

