



Update from the Consortium of Lancashire & Cumbria LMCs

Tuesday 31st August 2021

Blood bottle shortages

NHSE/I have issued further [guidance](#) last week about the impact of the national shortage of BD test tubes. This follows the serious concerns the BMA GPC have been raising with them and the impact this is having on the ability of practices to complete QOF and other national and local contractually related blood tests and the concern that practices will be held liable for any clinical untoward incidents that occur as a result of delayed tests and investigation. The BMA GPC also called on them to step up public information to ensure patients are informed of this shortage and practices are not blamed by patients for this situation.

The new guidance tells practices that this situation could continue until 17 September and until then they should not do any routine blood tests. Urgent blood investigations can still be done as supplies allow. The national indemnity scheme will cover this situation. National communications to patients will also be delivered.

The BMA issued a [press release](#) featuring Dr David Wrigley, deputy chair of council, and Dr Farah Jameel, GPCE executive member, shared her experience with [BBC News](#).

Further local guidance is being considered urgently by the ICS in Lancashire and South Cumbria. The LMC is also engaged in these discussions and further updates will follow shortly from the ICS.

Vaccinations for NHS staff entering care homes

New government [regulations](#) come into force 11 November 2021, requiring all CQC regulated care home staff to refuse entry to anybody who cannot prove that they have had two doses of COVID-19 vaccine, or that they are exempt.

NHSE/I has issued a [letter](#) and [FAQs](#) on how this will be delivered operationally. All providers delivering NHS-funded services into a care home will need to have actively supported staff to have their first COVID-19 vaccine by 16 September 2021 and to carry out proactive workforce planning to ensure that only staff who are vaccinated, or exempt, are deployed to enter a care home from 11 November. The FAQs, which will be updated on a regular basis and should be read alongside [DHSC operational guidance](#).

Standards for health and care records

The Professional Records Standards Body (PRSB) has been commissioned by NHSE/I to develop standards that will enable key information about a person with diabetes to be shared between them, their carer and professionals to support self-management and to enable the best care to be delivered by those supporting them. There will be wide consultation between 20th-30th September 2021 to ensure views from professionals and service users across the UK are considered. If you would like to be involved please contact info@theprsb.org for joining information.





Update from the Consortium of Lancashire & Cumbria LMCs

Primary Care Networks – plans for 2021/22 and 2022/23

Following the [letter](#) from NHSE/I which acknowledged the pressures facing the profession, NHSE/I has [published guidance](#) outlining the changes to, and support for, practices working in PCNs as part of the wider GP contract agreement. The key points are:

- £43m new funding for PCN leadership and management in 2021/22
- PCNs to decide how their IIF achieved money is spent – not CCGs
- While CVD and Tackling Neighbourhood Health Inequalities services will commence from October 2021, these will be much reduced allowing practices and PCNs to focus on managing pressures over the winter period
- The anticipatory care or personalised care, which was due to be implemented from April 2020, has now been deferred again until April 2022 - allowing practices and PCNs to focus on managing pressures over the winter period
- Significantly reduced requirements for all four service specifications from April 2022
- PCNs will deliver a single, combined extended access offer funded through the Network Contract DES from April 2022
- [Full details of the IIF indicators for 2021/22 and 2022/23](#), providing advanced information for PCNs and practices to be able to prepare

Practices will be auto enrolled into the revised PCN DES, but with an option to opt-out for one month from 1 October – which is what the BMA GPC had previously stipulated should happen when there are any changes to the PCN DES and which NHSE/I has chosen to implement.

These changes are further evidence that NHSE/I has begun to listen to the BMA by pushing back these service specifications and delivered an additional £43m to support those GPs and practice managers who are working hard with their local practices in PCN leadership and management roles. However, there are still concerns about some of the IIF indicators and the approach of micromanaging practices and PCNs in this way.

Following [recent pronouncements](#) about its gratitude to general practice and its recognition of just how hard GPs and their colleagues are working, it is now a positive sign that this change in tone is beginning to be backed up with more tangible action. However, even with these specifications deferred, this winter will still be incredibly difficult for all working in general practice, and assurances are needed that individual practices, as well as PCNs, will be given all of the support and resources needed to care for their communities in the coming months.

New Community Pharmacy Contract and Hypertension Case Finding

The contract changes for Community Pharmacy for 2021/22 were announced last week. Starting in October 2021, or as soon as possible thereafter, it is expected that Hypertension Case-Finding Service as an advanced service will be introduced to support the NHS Long Term Plan ambitions for prevention of cardiovascular disease. This service will have two stages. The first is identifying people at risk of hypertension and offering them blood pressure monitoring (clinic check).





Update from the Consortium of Lancashire & Cumbria LMCs

The second stage, where clinically indicated, is offering ambulatory blood pressure monitoring (ABPM). The blood pressure test results will then be shared with the patient's GP to then inform a potential diagnosis of hypertension. This scheme, therefore, links to the PCN service specifications, highlighted above. The details of the contract are available [here](#)

L&SC Spirometry SOP

Practices in Lancashire and South Cumbria may have seen a copy of an ICS wide Spirometry standard operating procedure. This has been developed locally without LMC input and we are currently reviewing the details to give our feedback on this. The SOP is there to support colleagues looking at recommencing spirometry and we welcome the fact that that consideration is being given to how this can be achieved via separately commissioned services/working collectively. We will be engaging with the ICS further on this.

Appraisal fees

NHSE/I has confirmed that the appraisal fee in 2020-21 was £530 (i.e., the 2020 uplift of 2.8% applied to the 2019 fee of £515) and the 2021-22 appraisal fee is £546 (i.e., the 2021 uplift of 3% applied to the 2020 fee of £530). There is a discrepancy with the fees quoted by the DDRB, which the BMA have drawn to their attention and asked them to correct.

NHSE/I is in the process of calculating and paying arrears for appraisals in the current financial year but this process is not complete yet, so GP appraisers will not yet have seen the uplift in any fees since April.

Survey of GP practices' experiences of using the PCSE payments and pensions portal in August

There is national acknowledgement regarding the unacceptable level of problems that practices have faced when using the new online portal since 1 June. BMA GPC have challenged PCSE throughout and continue to work towards a system that does what is required.

BMA GPC will be launching a survey on 2 September, aimed at capturing the experiences of practice staff's use of the portal through August. The purpose will be to measure the progress of solutions to the big issues that those staff have been facing. There will also be a section on resolution times for issues practices have raised with PCSE since the launch of the portal in June.

A link to the survey will be included on next week's Brieflet and we would encourage practice managers to respond.

LMC Conflict Management Training

See our new and upcoming LMC Conflict Management training events on our [website](#).





Update from the Consortium of Lancashire & Cumbria LMCs

Sessional GPs BMA webinar – contracts

A BMA webinar will be held 21 September, 6.30-8pm, about key contract issues for sessional GPs, including what to look out for when reading a new contract and common pitfalls to avoid. There will also be an update on NHS 111 contracts. Questions can be submitted in advance and there will also be an opportunity to ask questions during the event. Register your place [here](#).

Support Your Surgery Campaign

The BMA have launched their latest campaign - [Support Your Surgery](#). This follows the unfair criticism being levelled at general practice in the news and across social media due to the necessary restrictions that COVID-19 has brought about, and the subsequent abuse that GPs have received, which the BMA has been highlighting through features in [The Doctor](#) magazine and evidenced in their latest [survey results](#).

To counter these perceptions and to pressure the Government to act to do more to support general practice, the new campaign provides GP practices with the [tools](#), such as posters and social media graphics, to manage expectations and to provide patients with the reality of issues facing general practice. The BMA encourages Practices to display these posters to use as part of the campaign to raise awareness to the public. Alongside this, the BMA has also launched a [new petition](#) asking GPs and the public to support their call on Government to provide the resourcing need to increase the number of GPs in England.

Lancashire and South Cumbria ICS and the LMC are also in the process of creating communications to patients to raise awareness of the pressures of General Practice and to manage expectations.

GP survey - help us to help you

The BMA have launched a major survey to hear about your experiences working as a GP in England. Answers to the [survey](#) will tell the BMA about the issues affecting you most, including your workload, recruitment, and your future career plans. The survey is primarily aimed at fully qualified GPs who are currently working.

The survey will support negotiations and lobbying as part of the [#Support Your Surgery](#) campaign. Responses will also help better understand the issues affecting GPs and ensure the BMA are representing the profession effectively.

The [survey](#) is open until 20 September and will take around 10-15 minutes to complete.

Challenging media critics

A [letter](#) Dr Richard Vautrey, Chair of the BMA GPC, sent to the Daily Telegraph was published last week in response to [an unacceptable and demoralising column by Allison Pearson](#). This was the latest in a series of damaging articles which seriously misrepresent the reality of what hardworking GPs and their teams are doing to care for and protect their patients. Read the full letter in the [press release](#).

