



Consortium of Local Medical Committees

449-451 Garstang Road (Ambulance Service HQ)

Broughton, Preston, PR3 5LN

Tel: 01772 863806

Email: Enquires@nwlmc.org

Important Information – Community Dermatology Services (Email sent 01.09.23)

You may already be aware that there has been a reprocurement of Community Dermatology Services and the new provider Omnes Healthcare is due to take over from 1st November 2023 across the whole of Lancashire & South Cumbria.

The commissioned model to be provided relies heavily on a 'triage and return to GP with advice' model where the provider is only expected (and we assume) paid to see approximately twenty percent of the total referrals.

The ICB haven't put any additional funding into the commissioned 'digital triage' part of the model with the assumption being that GP practices would be happy to send in photographs (normal and dermatoscopic) to assist with triage at the time of referral. There was a suggestion that the provider would 'gift' practices a smartphone and a dermatoscope to assist with this unfunded work.

Most disappointingly the LMC were not asked to be involved at any stage of the commissioning of the service. We were only made aware of the outcome of the procurement process when it was complete. The service is meant to go live in 2 months time!

The LMC position on this is that the expectation of digital triage will put a huge workload burden on practices who are already struggling and will not be able to accept any more unfunded work. Without any additional funding for doing this work the LMC will refuse to endorse it. We feel the provider needs to stick to the original specification of the contract and IF they think there is scope to get practices to "help out" – then they need to cost this up and come up with an amount of money per patient episode that they would be willing to pay practices. It would then need to be put to individual practices to see if they agree to adopt this model for the fee being offered. If there is no money to pay for this, then there is no point in approaching practices with the ask to help out – this is what we have communicated to the ICB.

We wanted to give you a heads up as there is a possibility that the provider may try and bypass the LMC and approach practices directly with their proposals of digital triage. We **strongly urge you** to reject any such approaches and direct them back to the LMC so that we can take a collective stance against the ever-increasing expectation that 'the GP will do it'.

General practice is on its knees and it's time to push back against the ever-increasing demands on our time, especially if it's unfunded - and as in this case - an afterthought.

The LMC team are happy to discuss this with individual practices if they have any questions/concerns.