

LMC Update Email

15 March 2019

Dear all

### **Setting up a Primary Care Network guidance**

This week we have launched the BMA's [PCN handbook](#) which marks the start of a series of resources we will provide over the coming weeks to support practices in establishing primary care networks. The handbook provides detailed guidance for those starting discussions about forming a network, with considerations, options risks and opportunities, and should be used to inform decisions around governance, structures, employment models, funding flows etc. Over the coming weeks we will provide practices and PCNs with practical tools and advice to tailor the content of the handbook to your specific needs. Read Krishna Kasaraneni's blog [here](#).

### **GP Contract roadshows**

The GPC England executive team continue to hold roadshows to explain [the contract changes for practices in England](#). See more details about the remaining venues of these roadshows [here](#).

### **2019 Contract changes: GPDF support for local events organised by LMCs**

The GPDF is conscious that many LMCs are organising special local events for GPs to help them understand and implement the significant changes to the GP contracts in 2019, and that this places an unexpected burden on an LMC's resources. The GPDF would therefore like to help LMCs with these local events by offering sponsorship for venue hire, appropriate refreshments and external professional speakers. This would be capped at 50% of the cost of the event or £1,000 per LMC; and any other sponsorship must not lead to an event being funded at more than the cost. GPDF need the LMC to sign a simple sponsorship agreement with the GPDF; for the LMC to have paid its 2018 levy in full; and to acknowledge the role of the GPDF in funding the event including use of the GPDF logo on material. The event must be separate from any nationally organised "GPC Roadshow".

If you are interested in taking up this offer, please complete the attached proforma and return it to [mail@gpdf.org.uk](mailto:mail@gpdf.org.uk) or, if you have any questions on the arrangements, please email John Canning at [doo@gpdf.org.uk](mailto:doo@gpdf.org.uk) with your question, or to arrange a phone call.

### **BMA/GPDF partnership working**

Positive discussions have been taking place between the BMA and the GPDF about their ongoing and future partnership working, and I am pleased to report that good progress is being made to reach an agreement that will allow them to continue to work closely together for the benefit of GPs and practices. The aim is to finalise the agreement and develop a positive and productive working relationship, working with LMCs, to improve our support offer to GPs and practices. I will keep you updated on progress.

### **LMC UK conference 19-20 March**

The LMC UK conference will be held next week in Belfast on 19 and 20 March. This year the conference will be supported by the BMA events app, which is available for iOS and Android devices, and includes the conference agenda. [Download the app here](#). The twitter hashtag will be **#LMCconf**

The Conference will also be webcast and available via on the [LMC Conference page](#), along with the Agenda and further information. The direct links to the webcasts are:

Tuesday 19 March, from 2pm: <https://bma.streameventlive.com/event/76> and Wednesday 20 March: <https://bma.streameventlive.com/event/77>

### **BMA's NHS pension challenge**

The BMA has [written](#) to the Secretary of State of Health and Social Care in England, Matt Hancock, and the governments of the devolved administrations, informing them of our intention to support members in bringing age discrimination claims in an employment tribunal in respect to the discriminatory impact of the 2015 NHS Pension Scheme. The action, by the BMA's legal team, comes in the wake of the Court of Appeal ruling last year which stated that the Government discriminated against judges and firefighters on the grounds of age, race and equal pay in relation to changes to their pension schemes. Although the schemes are different, the BMA believes the underlying legal principles are essentially the same. The outcome of the legal challenges to the judges and firefighters ruling could influence any legal challenge brought on behalf of younger doctors to the legality of the 2015 NHS Pension Scheme. The story was covered in the [Financial Times](#), [FT Adviser](#), [Mail Online](#), [Pensions Expert](#), [Law 360](#), [AOL](#), [Yahoo News](#), [Pulse](#), [GP Online](#), [Money Observer](#), [National Health Executive](#), [Pensions Age](#), [Moneywise](#) and [On Medica](#).

### **Annualisation of pensions**

The government's recent [consultation](#) response on the NHS pension scheme contained positive news about fully covering the increase in employers superannuation payments. However it also included much more concerning plans to no longer ignore breaks of up to three months when setting an annual rate of pay for pensions purposes, with the result that GPs' annual rate of pay will now be based on the number of days of pensionable service that they have undertaken during the relevant scheme year. We believe this will have a major and unfair impact on GP locums' pension contributions and thus reduce the availability of GP locums resulting in an impact on patient care. We will be raising our concerns about the impact of these changes directly with government.

### **Major reduction in indemnity costs announced**

Medical defence organisations are now contacting their members with rates for the coming year. Following our successful contract negotiations there has been a large reduction in the cost of indemnity cover, with MDOs confirming that GPs in England and Wales will pay significantly less for their indemnity cover from 1 April as the state-backed indemnity takes effect. The [GP online](#) article contained a statement by the MPS, and statements have also been published by the [MDDUS](#) and [MDU](#).

### **Locum register in Wales**

The Welsh government has announced that they intend to introduce a locum register from April this year. They have linked this to access to the Welsh state-backed indemnity scheme. In response to this announcement, Dr Charlotte Jones chair of the BMA's Welsh GPs committee said: "GPC Wales has been informed that the purpose of a separate locum list is so that the Welsh Government can undertake due diligence to ensure it has an accurate up to date list of those it is covering as part of the state backed indemnity scheme. This does raise the question as to why another list is needed separate to the Medical Performers List as it would make far more sense to ensure this list is fit-for-purpose as all GPs in Wales have to be on it before they can work within Wales and in order to access appraisal and revalidation.

Dr Nimish Shah, sessional Welsh representative said, "We are concerned that this proposal is the start of a process of attaching conditions to sessionals working in Wales which would be concerning given the announcements from the Minister that no GP in Wales will be at any disadvantage to their counterparts in England." Read our full press statement [here](#). It was also reported [in GP online](#).

### **Locum practice agreement**

We have published the [locum practice agreement](#) this week which has been developed jointly by GPC and the sessional GP subcommittee with the help of BMA Law. It consists of terms and

conditions and a work schedule which together form a legal contract that can be used by locum GPs and GP practices for locum engagements. It is intended to minimise common disputes between locums and practices and clearly outline the type of work that will be undertaken by a locum when working at a practice. It is also intended to protect against locums being categorised as an employee or worker by HMRC for tax purposes or by an employment tribunal for the purposes of statutory employment protection, as well as ensure that there are appropriate arrangements in place for compliance with GDPR.

BMA members who use the locum practice agreement can check any terms and conditions they are offered with the BMA [contract checking service](#) to ensure they align with the BMA model terms and conditions. Members can also [contact the BMA](#) to get advice and support with resolving any disputes if they occur. Background information and FAQs are available on the website, as well as Work schedule and model T&Cs.

### **ICP contract in England consultation**

NHS England have published their [response to the consultation on the proposed ICP contract](#). This highlights the concerns raised by the BMA during the consultation and proposes to make changes to the contract to increase accountability and transparency of ICP organisations. However we would continue to caution any practice considering this option as the risks to their future contact remain.

### **Call for prescription drug helpline**

Following its investigation two weeks' ago on the rising opioid crisis in Britain, [The Sunday Times](#) reported on calls from health experts, including the BMA, for the Government to set up a dedicated helpline for those addicted to prescription drugs. This is something the [BMA has been campaigning for](#) since 2016. In response to this, Andrew Green, GPC clinical and prescribing lead, said that the NHS 111 line is ill-equipped to deal with prescription drug addiction. "You can't expect call handlers dealing with everything from a broken hip to heart pain to an ingrowing toenail to have the expertise needed to deal with people addicted to opioids who are often suffering in silence."

### **GP appointment data**

There was regional coverage of recent GP appointment data released by NHS digital, which showed that January 2019 saw an increase of more than one million face-to-face appointments with GPs in England compared to the year before. It also found that the percentage of people attending an appointment more than 28 days after booking rose from 2.3 % to 3.7 % over the same time period. I commented saying: "While we know that many patients are frustrated at having to wait too long to be seen, this data shows that the largest proportion of appointments continue to be made and attended on the same day, while the majority are seen within a week of booking. And though these figures show some patients being seen more than 28 days after making their appointment, it is important to note that many of these will be appropriately booking ahead for return visits or regular check-ups." This was reported in [Coventry Telegraph](#), [Derby Telegraph](#), [Birmingham Mail](#) and [Medical Health News](#)

### **Prescribing of medicines over the counter**

GPC England has updated its guidance on prescribing over the counter medicines, with an amendment to acknowledge the '[letter of comfort](#)' issued by NHS England regarding the contractual implications of not providing FP10s for recommended treatments that are available over the counter for minor self-limiting conditions. You can read the guidance [here](#).

NHS England has also published [CCG guidance](#) on routine prescribing in primary care of OTC items, for treatment of conditions which are self-limiting or which lend themselves to self-care. At the request of the GPC, Professor Stephen Powis, National Medical Director, NHS England, also

published a [letter](#), providing reassurance the commissioner will not find practices in breach of the GP contract if they follow the CCG guidance.

### **Continuity of supply of medicines**

The GPC has drafted the attached guidance for distribution to practices on proposed changes to the Human Medicines Regulation 2012 to ensure the continuity of supply of medicines (including in a 'no deal' EU exit).

### **Sandimmun (ciclosporin) capsules supply issues**

The DHSC has sent an update on the supply issue affecting Sandimmun (ciclosporin) capsules due to a manufacturing site transfer at Novartis. Sandimmun 50mg and 100mg are currently out of stock and resupply is expected early May 2019. Limited supplies of the Sandimmun 25mg are available but supplies likely to be depleted imminently. Novartis have sourced supply of all strengths from their Italian market to meet the gap during this period. This unlicensed stock is now available from their distributor, Clinigen. Please see further information in the attached letter from Novartis.

### **Medical Academics Conference**

Registrations are still being taken for the [COMAR 2019](#) to be held on 29 March. It's your opportunity to set the policy priorities for the [Medical Academics Specialist Committee](#) in 2019-2020 and take part in electing the new committee. Read the [blog](#) from Conference Chair, Marcia Schofield.

Read the latest GPC newsletter [here](#).

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

Read the latest GPC trainee newsletter [here](#).

Have a good weekend

Richard