

Welcome to the first of our Sessional GPs Subcommittee newsletters for 2011.

We aim to keep you informed about the wide range of new and ongoing issues affecting salaried and locum GPs. This newsletter features updates on what the Sessional GPs Subcommittee and General Practitioners Committee are doing to represent sessional GPs' interests and **make sure your voice is heard.**

If you have any suggestions for how we might improve the newsletter, or have any ideas of articles to include in future editions, please email Joe Read at jread@bma.org.uk.

Please forward this newsletter to any sessional GPs you know.

REPRESENTATION

New Sessional GPs Subcommittee

The results of 2010's election to the Sessional GPs Subcommittee have recently been announced, marking a major step forward in improving sessional GP representation on the General Practitioners Committee. For the first time, members were elected on a regional basis to ensure representation from across the UK. The newly elected members are:

Alexandra Ames	London/Salaried
Kate Barusya	Eastern/Locum
Stephen David Bassett	Wales/Locum
Jessica Harris	Southern/Salaried
Linda Anne Jeffreys	Yorkshire/Salaried
Uday Katkar	West Midlands/Locum
Malcolm Kendrick	North West/Salaried
Rachel McMahon	North East/Locum
Mary O'Brien	Scotland/Locum
Bashir Qureshi	London/Locum
Mark Selman	South West/Salaried
Vijoy Kumar Singh	East Midlands/Locum
Victoria Weeks	London/Salaried
Lydia West	Southern/Locum
Paula Wright	North East/Salaried
Thomas McCaw	Northern Ireland/Locum (co-opted)

As we reported in our last newsletter, significant changes have been made to the way in which the subcommittee operates. Following the report of a working group set up last year to review the representation of salaried and locum GPs, the subcommittee has increased in size from 8 to 16 members, has an executive, which sits on GPC and handles day to day work, and, importantly, now has delegated authority for issues that relate wholly or primarily to sessional GPs.



This issue covers the following topics:

Representation

- GPC Sessional GPs subcommittee elections

Contractual and professional issues

- The White Paper
- Revalidation
- Contacting your LMC
- Contacting the Sessional GPs Subcommittee about issues in your area

Devolved nations

- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Wales

Making the most of BMA membership

- Contact the BMA for advice and support
- Become a BMA member

Upcoming events

- BMA Sessional GPs Conference

A record 46 candidates stood for election to the subcommittee, representing a diverse section of the sessional GP workforce. An equal number of salaried GPs and locums, both young and more experienced GPs, put themselves forward. Their election statements highlighted several common themes, including the recognition of locum and salaried work as a valid and positive career choice, the need to make revalidation a fair process for sessional GPs, and a desire for all GPs, regardless of their contractual status, to have equal opportunities in general practice.

Vicky Weeks, who has been re-elected as the Chair of the subcommittee for 2010-2013 said, "These elections represent an exciting step forward and I'm delighted that a number of fresh faces have joined the subcommittee". She said that the subcommittee would play a "fundamental role in tackling the big issues facing this expanding and important section of the workforce".

The subcommittee's first meeting took place on December 2nd 2010, at which it discussed the Health White Paper, revalidation and prescribing numbers for sessional GPs, among other subjects. Elections for the subcommittee's Executive Committee also took place at the meeting. Mark Selman was re-elected as Deputy Chairman and Jessica Harris and Stephen Bassett were elected to join him and Vicky Weeks on the Executive Committee.

NHS WHITE PAPER

CONTRACTUAL AND PROFESSIONAL ISSUES

The NHS White Paper

The NHS White Paper, 'Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS' was published by the Department of Health in July, and outlines major changes to the NHS in England. Among other proposals, it says that GP practices will be grouped into consortia, which will take control of budgets to commission services for patients.

The GPC has produced guidance on how the proposed changes will affect locum and salaried GPs and how they can get involved in commissioning, which you can find on the **BMA website**.

The changes will affect all GPs, and we firmly believe that sessional GPs should be included in local discussions about their implementation. The GPC has advised Local Medical Committees (LMCs) to communicate regularly with all GPs in their local area about how the plans are developing and to help ensure that the proposals develop in a manner that is acceptable to the local profession. It is therefore vital that you contact your LMC to ensure that you are on their mailing list. Contact details for all LMCs are available on the **BMA website**.

Sessional GPs may also find that they are well placed to put themselves forward for leadership roles in the development of the 'shadow' commissioning consortia that are expected to be in place by 2011/2012 and are already beginning to be formed in some areas. We would strongly encourage sessional GPs to consider putting themselves forward for these roles.

You can keep up to date with all of the work that the BMA is doing in relation to the White Paper, including the complete series of guidance that the GPC has produced for GPs, on the **BMA Website**.

Revalidation

General Medical Council

The General Medical Council (GMC) ran a consultation on its proposals for revalidation between March and June 2010 and has now published its response to the submissions it received. In the BMA's response to the consultation, we highlighted our concerns about how the proposals would affect sessional GPs. We were concerned, as were several other respondents, that sessional GPs, and especially peripatetic locums, would face significant hurdles in compiling the evidence required to revalidate. The BMA strongly believes that no one group of doctors should be unfairly disadvantaged by the proposals. To read the full BMA response, see the **BMA website**.

The GMC's response was published on October 18th 2010. We were pleased to see it acknowledge our concerns regarding sessional GPs, and affirm a commitment to ensuring that revalidation is sufficiently flexible for all types of doctor to access. It acknowledged that the current proposals for the evidence doctors will be asked to submit, with their focus on clinical audit and feedback forms from patients and colleagues, would present significant challenges for GPs who were not based in one practice. However, the GMC response lacked significant detail on the future shape of revalidation, including how it might be adapted to meet the needs of sessional GPs. You can read the full response on the **GMC website**.

The subcommittee recently wrote to the GMC to raise its concerns about the ability of locum GPs to access patient records for clinical audit and whether this might breach patient confidentiality. The GMC's reply confirmed that implied consent would be sufficient in cases where patient data is being used for the purposes of clinical audit. This means that if a locum sees a patient and then subsequently wishes to access the records of that patient held by that patient's regular GP, they can do so without breaching confidentiality if this data is required for a clinical audit and the conditions are in place for implied consent to be given.

RCGP

The RCGP are proposing the standards for revalidation for GPs. Version 5 of its 'Guide to the Revalidation of General Practitioners' was published in December 2010 and is available on the **RCGP website**. It recognises that the overall standard of evidence achieved must be the same for all GPs but allows for different methods of evidence collection by 'special groups', including peripatetic locum and Out Of Hours doctors.

These proposals followed the completion of the RCGP revalidation pilot for sessional GPs, which confirmed our concerns about the specific difficulties faced by this group of doctors. Laurence Buckman, the Chairman of GPC, has written to the College to request that a second pilot now be run to test the feasibility of the revised proposals.

The General Practitioners Committee will continue to work with the GMC and the RCGP to try and ensure that revalidation is fair for all GPs. BMA members can read updates on the progress of revalidation on the **BMA website**.

Pathfinder Pilots

The Department of Health's Revalidation Support Team (RST) is continuing to oversee 10 pathfinder revalidation pilots, which are due to finish by the end of March 2011 to allow time for analysis of the results. The BMA has representatives on each of the separate pilot steering groups and GPC representatives contribute to the groups in London, South Central and Dorset.

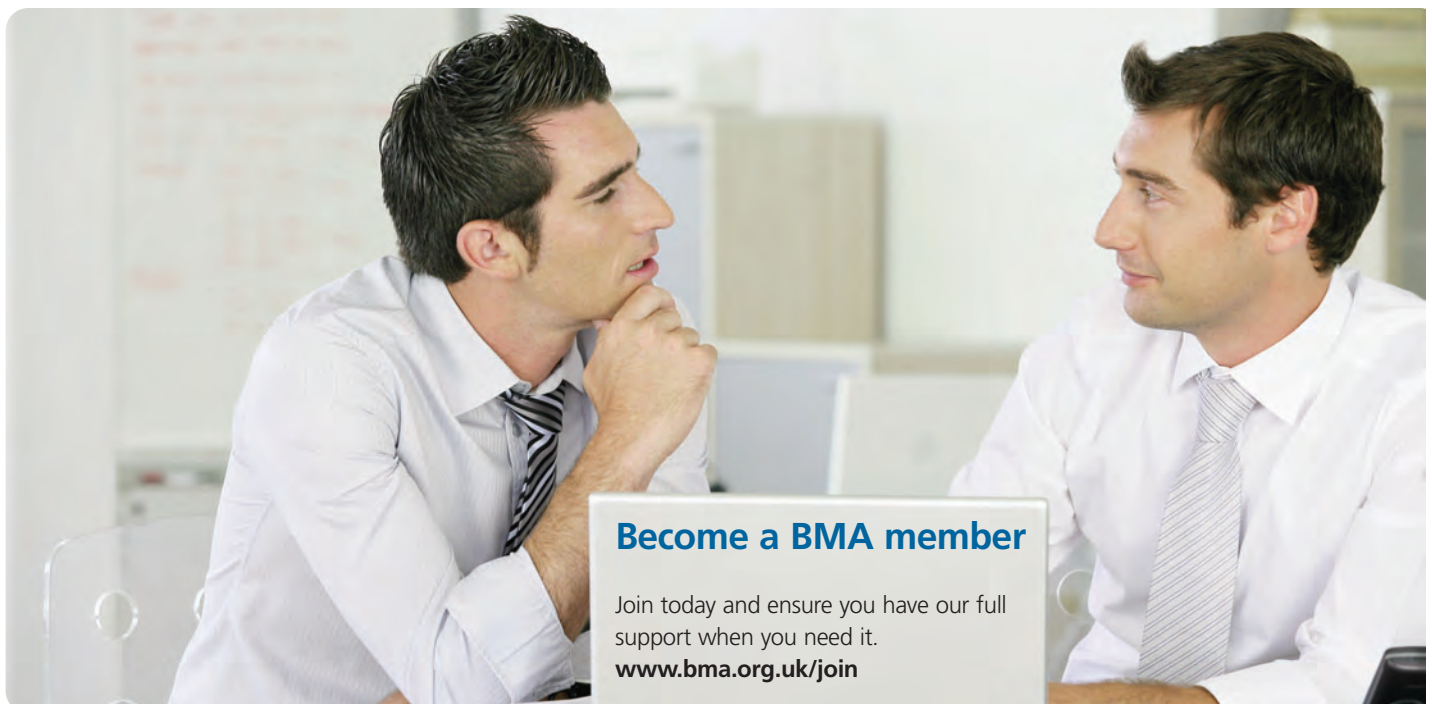
If you are taking part in one of the pilots, we would urge you to continue to participate and ensure that you provide feedback on your experiences. It is vital that sessional GPs have their say so that revalidation can be properly adapted to suit their needs.

Contacting your Local Medical Committee

LMCs are the local representative body for GPs. The LMC that represents you should keep you informed about any issues affecting general practice locally. It cannot be stressed enough how important it is that the LMC has your up-to-date contact details. You can find out how to get in touch with your local LMC on the **BMA website**.

Contacting the Sessional GPs Subcommittee about Issues in your area

To ensure that we are addressing the issues affecting sessional GPs, we need to hear from you. If you are a BMA member and need individual employment advice you should contact the BMA on **0300 123 123 3**. If you would like to bring an issue to the attention of the subcommittee then please email the details to **jread@bma.org.uk**



UPCOMING EVENTS

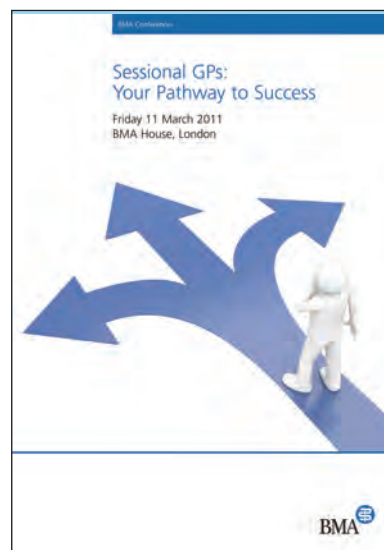
Sessional GPs: Your Pathway to Success

The British Medical Association is holding a one day educational conference for sessional GPs on Friday 11 March 2011 at BMA House, London. This conference will provide salaried and locum GPs with expert advice, support and information on the key issues affecting their career, as well as offering the helpful opportunity to network with sessional GP colleagues from around the country and discuss shared issues and concerns.

Key themes at the conference will be:

- How to develop your career as a salaried or locum GP
- How to meet the challenges of appraisal and revalidation
- The different issues to consider when setting up and working as a locum GP
- The impact of the NHS White Paper on sessional GPs, and the opportunities it provides
- Employment rights for sessional GPs
- How to get access to professional support, and the differing roles of organisations that provide this
- Representation of sessional GPs

The fee for attending the conference is £76.38 (inc VAT) for BMA members and £235 (inc VAT) for non-members. Further information, including the conference programme and information about how to register is available on the **BMA website**.



You can find out more about becoming a BMA member at www.bma.org.uk/join

DEVOLVED NATIONS



Northern
Ireland

Northern Ireland

Dr Thomas McCaw has recently been co-opted to join the Sessional GPs Subcommittee as the Northern Ireland representative. He is one of two sessional GP representatives who have a seat on the Northern Ireland General Practitioners Committee, along with Dr Peter Campbell.

Wales

Dr Stephen Bassett is the Welsh representative on the Sessional GPs subcommittee. He has been elected to the subcommittee's newly constituted Executive Committee, affording a seat on GPC along with GPC Wales.

Sessional GPs make up nearly half the GP workforce in some Health Boards in Wales, and are a vital part of all Health Boards. GPC Wales aims to ensure that sessional doctors receive as much information from Health Boards and the Welsh Assembly Government as contracted colleagues.

To enable us to achieve the most for our constituents, we need to hear your views. If there is an issue you would like to raise you can contact the GPC Wales secretariat at dmartin@bma.org.uk



Wales

Scotland

Dr Mary O'Brien has been elected as the Scotland representative on the Sessional GPs Subcommittee and attends Scottish GPC (SGPC) meetings.

GPs in Scotland continue to have to be registered with a 'host' NHS Board and then apply to other NHS Boards in order to be able to work in those areas. The SGPC negotiators are continuing to push for a single National Performers List for Scotland and raised the issue at a recent meeting with the Practitioner Services Division of NHS Services Scotland. At the meeting, they also discussed sessional GPs being given their own prescribing numbers, which is being taken forward on a UK-wide basis by the Sessional GPs Subcommittee.

Scottish GP partners and salaried GPs have a payment for their appraisals covered by the global sum but no funding is provided for locum GP appraisal. Tayside Health Board had provided this funding locally but withdrew it in April 2010, which SGPC vociferously opposed. SGPC is continuing to pressure the Scottish Executive Health Department to provide central funding.



Scotland

Locum GP guidance on negotiating fees

This is a reminder that guidance for locum GPs on negotiating fees is available to BMA members on the **BMA website**. The guidance was developed by the BMA (including the General Practitioners Committee and the GPC Sessional GPs Subcommittee) and the National Association of Sessional GPs (NASGP).

We want your details

The Sessional GPs Subcommittee represents all sessional GPs in the UK, regardless of whether or not they are BMA members.

If you are a BMA member you should make sure that your contact details are up to date and that you have registered your status as a sessional GP. You can update your membership details **online** or by emailing membership@bma.org.uk

If you are not a member but would like to receive future editions of this newsletter you should email membership@bma.org.uk to register your details.

Other work areas

In addition to the above, the subcommittee is working on the following areas:

- Protecting and extending the use of the Salaried GP Model Contract
- GP Retainer Scheme funding
- Prescribing Numbers for sessional GPs
- Pensions for Locum GPs
- Career Development and Progression for Sessional GPs
- Issues regarding Out Of Hours GPs
- BMA benefits to Sessional GPs
- Information Cascades to Sessional GPs
- BMA website content for Sessional GPs



Making the most of BMA membership

Contact the BMA for advice and support

If you are a BMA member, and require advice relating to your employment, please telephone **0300 123 123 3** or e-mail support@bma.org.uk. The BMA offers individual representation and advice, including a contract checking service, advice relating to maternity/paternity, sick leave and redundancy.

