

Dear colleagues

### **ARM 2022**

The [BMA's Annual Representative Meeting \(ARM\)](#) was held this week. As ever, the ARM has brought meaningful discussion, debate and strong representation on behalf of the medical profession. A motion calling on GPC England and the BMA to organise the withdrawal of GP practices from the PCNs by 2023, was passed. It's clear from this result that there are ever-growing concerns about how well PCNs are actually working, and whether all practices can provide the safe, quality care they want to for their patients within the constraints of the current NHS-system as organised. GPC England will discuss how to enact this new policy at its next meeting in July.

In addition, other motions of relevance to general practice were debated on GP estates, [doctors' right to switch-off](#) to be able to recuperate, and greater awareness of the prevalence of abuse towards healthcare staff.

Read the reports from the GPCs across the UK, including GPC England, [here](#).

Read about the highlights and resolutions from the ARM [here](#)

Read the news stories from the ARM [here](#)

### **New BMA Council Chair**

The BMA has elected Professor Philip Banfield as its next UK [council](#) chair. Professor Phil Banfield is an obstetrician, educator and academic based in north Wales. He is currently the chair of the BMA Welsh Consultants Committee, is the immediate past chair of the BMA Welsh Council and has been on UK Council since 2012. He lives in Wales, is married to a GP, and has a son who is also a GP.

Professor Banfield will serve a three-year term, providing overall leadership in developing and implementing the policies, objectives, and strategies of the BMA. He takes up his post with immediate effect. Read his statement [here](#)

### **Warning over GPs leaving NHS**

In response to the [Royal College of GP's report 'Fit for the Future'](#) and its warning that England could lose almost 19,000 GPs over the next five years, Dr Kieran Sharrock, GPC England deputy chair, said:

"This stark warning from the College is one that the Government can ill afford to ignore. The number of fully-qualified GPs is already plummeting, meaning each day more people are losing 'their family doctor', and such projections lay bare the potentially devastating impact for both the NHS and patients if politicians and policymakers fail to act.

The RCGP has laid out a number of areas that need urgent attention, many of which the BMA has raised continuously. Ministers must work with the profession and organisations such as the BMA and RCGP to come to workable solutions that protect general practice so that doctors and GP teams have the capacity to provide the standard of care that patients deserve." Read the [full statement](#)



**Rebuild General Practice: support the campaign**

The [Rebuild general practice campaign](#) continues to tackle the crisis facing general practice. The campaign has been building awareness of the key issues in the media, with the public and with politicians. We need your support to amplify the message and make the campaign a success.

Parliamentary event

On 15 June, we hosted a drop-in event attended by 21 MPs to raise awareness of the challenges facing general practice. This was a real opportunity to influence policymakers, and we are pleased that so many MPs were able to join Drs Kieran Sharrock, Katie Bramall-Stainer, Rachel Ward, John Canning and Rob Barnett on the day. You can see coverage and photographs of the event on the [Rebuild General Practice Twitter feed](#)

**Access to GP Services – House of Commons debate**

Last Tuesday there was an opposition day debate in the House of Commons on access to GP Services and NHS Dentistry. During the debate a number of MPs, including Shadow Secretary of State, Wes Streeting raised concerns about demand for GP services outstripping the number of GPs. The BMA and our concerns were raised a number of times by MPs during the debate particularly in relation to GP abuse being a driving factor for those leaving the profession or retiring early, and the need to address sponsorship issues to support international trainee GPs to stay in UK. The wider debate included a range of topics such as pensions, retention, mental health support, wider general practice staff, community pharmacy, workforce planning and funding. Read the debate transcript in full [here](#).

**BMA calls for independent review of the GMC referral pathway**

Following the GMC's decision not challenge Dr Arora's tribunal appeal and call for her one month suspension to be dropped by the High Court, the BMA has repeated its call for independent review of the GMC referral pathway. In response to this, Dr Chaand Nagpaul, chair of BMA council, said:

“The fact that the GMC has effectively overturned Dr Arora's suspension shows that the current system is structurally disproportionate, with insufficient checks and balances, and is manifestly unjust. While this is the right response, it does not address the systemic flaws in the entire referral pathway to the GMC—ranging from the decision by an employer to refer, through to the decision to investigate, the process of investigation and finally the tribunal hearing.

This is precisely why the BMA is calling for a root and branch independent evaluation of the entire GMC referral pathway. The immediate safeguard of an external scrutiny panel is needed to assess each potential employer referral to ensure that it is fair and objective, and consider whether the issue could be more appropriately dealt with locally and swiftly. Nothing less will secure justice or fairness in medical regulation.” Read the BMA statement [here](#)

**Fees calculator**

A reminder about the BMA's [Fees calculator](#), which helps doctors decide how much to charge for their services based on their own circumstances. The Fees calculator uses your overheads to calculate a fee range for the time it takes to complete a piece of work. The calculations are specific to you, and you can see what rates you would need to charge to make sure your costs are covered. You can find out more about [how the tool can help you save money and save time](#).

**Letter from GP for travel with medication**

It has been brought to our attention that some [airlines](#) are advising travellers bringing medication in their hand luggage, should bring a letter from their medical practitioner confirming the type of medication and what it is for. We will raise this issue with the airline, but in the meantime, we would remind practices that patients can print off their medical record from the NHS app, or alternatively, practices are able to charge for travel-related requests for information.

**Fit note update**

From 1 July, new legislation comes into force which allows nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists, and physiotherapists to legally certify fit notes, in addition to doctors. To support this, the government has published [guidance](#) to help individuals and employers identify the knowledge, skills and experience required to certify fit notes. A new training package is also [available](#) and should be completed before taking up this task - this is freely accessible for all healthcare professionals. There is a rollout period from today where GP IT systems will be updated to reflect the change.

**CVD enhanced service specification**

NHS England have now published an updated [enhanced service specification for the Covid 19 vaccination programme](#), alongside a [covering letter](#). Practices should note that the programme from September will pay a reduced Item of Service fee of **£10.06** per dose. As a result, we strongly recommend that practices review the impact that this funding reduction will have on their ability to undertake the enhanced service. Practices should also be aware that the deadline if they do decide to sign up for the service is **5pm on 14 July**.

**GP Trainees Committee elections**

Please be advised that nominations in a by-election for London North West region for the GP Trainees Committee is open until Friday 8 July. Please submit your nominations [here](#). If you have any queries regarding the election process, please contact [elections@bma.org.uk](mailto:elections@bma.org.uk).

**Committee of Medical Managers (CMM) elections**

Nominations to the [Committee of Medical Managers \(CMM\)](#) are now open and doctors with recognised positions within the management structures of healthcare organisations, and who are BMA members, are eligible to stand for election. The deadline for nominations is 12pm Monday 11 July 2022. To submit your nomination, please login to the BMA's [election system](#). If you have any queries regarding the election process, please contact [elections@bma.org.uk](mailto:elections@bma.org.uk).

**BMA Employer Advisory Service**

As a membership benefit, the BMA provides an [employer advice service](#) for GP partners and your practice managers. With no expensive contracts, you can get tailored advice from the BMA's specialist team of HR & employment advisers and regulatory knowledge, who can support you with HR & employment law case management, employment tribunal support, and much more. *The service is available to BMA members - [contact the BMA GP employer advisory service](#)*

**GPC England committee pages and guidance for practices**

Read more about the work of the GP [Committee](#)

Read practical guidance for [GP practices](#)

See the latest update on Twitter: [@TheBMA / Twitter](#), [@BMA\\_GP / Twitter](#) [@DrFJameel / Twitter](#)

Read about BMA in the media: [BMA media centre | British Medical Association](#)

**Read the latest GP bulletin (England) [here](#)**

We would encourage LMCs to share this GPC update with GPs and practices.

Kieran Sharrock  
Deputy Chair, GPC England

Have you got any information you would like to share via the GPC update to LMCs?

Email us on [info.lmcqueries@bma.org.uk](mailto:info.lmcqueries@bma.org.uk) by Monday, 11 July, for the next edition.