

# THE LMC LINE

No.132 February 2018

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## GP access: Expectations in Relation to Core Hours and the Extended Hours DES

The LMC has [written](#) to practices as a result of the letter Dr David Geddes, Head of Primary Care Commissioning at NHS England has sent to CCGs. Within it, three principal issues are discussed: the extended hours DES; the definition of 'reasonable needs' of patients; and subcontracting arrangements.

As per the GP the Contract Agreement 17/18, practices which close for a half day on a weekly basis are not eligible to continue to provide the extended hours DES. As the DES is optional, it is open to practices to stop undertaking this service if preferred.

Both PMS and GMS Contract regulations refer to the delivery of primary medical services 'as are appropriate to meet the reasonable needs of patients'. 'Reasonable needs' are not defined within the regulations. Unfortunately, Dr Geddes' guidance, drawn up in consultation with 'patient groups and patient representatives', without consulting the GPC, seeks to define the services which should be provided in order to meet these needs. The LMC does not agree that the definitions within the regulations can be legally supplanted by this. The BMA's GPC assure the LMC that this will be addressed. In the meantime however, CCGs have this guidance, and the LMC is concerned that it may be used to assess whether practices are compliant with contractual requirements.

The BMA has released [guidance](#) on this matter confirming that the GMS Regulations;

- do not require the practice to be open at all times during core hours
- do not require the practice to deliver all services at all times during core hours

The GMS and PMS regulations also allow practices to apply to subcontract the delivery of contractual services to another organisation. The grounds on which commissioners can reject this are when the contractor's patients may be exposed to serious risk or the commissioner risks material financial loss as a result of the arrangements.

Most practices in the confederation have not applied to subcontract the delivery of their contractual services for half day closures, or shorter morning, evening and lunchtime closures. The LMC is concerned that CCGs may interpret this guidance from Dr Geddes to mean that practices must subcontract for all closures, however short, within core hours to meet the 'reasonable needs' of patients. The LMC advises practices make contact should they be approached by the CCG about their arrangements.

## Ear Syringing / Irrigation

Following numerous queries, the LMC would like to [confirm](#) that whilst the assessment of a person with reduced hearing or earache, plus the giving of relevant information and advice, may be part of essential services, the removal of wax does not. Nor does the removal of wax prior to an audiology appointment or a hearing test; ear wax removal is an enhanced service in some areas. The LMC is working to resolve the commissioning gap in those CCG areas without such arrangements.

## General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

As practices will be aware, the GDPR is replacing the Data Protection Act (DPA) and coming into force on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. Guidance from both NHSE and the BMA is imminent and the LMC will circulate this once it is published, however NHS Digital have produced the following [factsheets](#).

Practices already compliant with the DPA will be in a strong position for the introduction of the GDPR. The BMA has existing [guidance](#) on GPs as data controllers under the DPA.

## Vaccine Ordering for the 18/19 Influenza Season

NHS England has now published [advice](#) on vaccine ordering for the 18/19 season. It recommends the use of the adjuvant trivalent vaccine (aTIV) for over 65s, and the quadrivalent vaccine (QIV) for those aged 18-65 at risk. The deadline for ordering has been extended until 29<sup>th</sup> March 2018. If necessary, practices should switch to the more effective vaccine, and suppliers have agreed to keep the same prices as previously agreed. Reimbursement will remain for both vaccines. Practices should note that any costs associated with supply cancellations and changes will not be underwritten by NHS England: should a practice find themselves in this situation, please contact the LMC for advice. Our guidance is available [here](#).

It has recently been brought to the LMC's attention that several practices across Surrey and Sussex have not placed orders for their supplies of aTIV (Fluad) from the supplier Seqirus. The LMC has just written to practices to remind them to place their orders as soon as possible as it is likely that delivery dates offered will be, at the earliest, end of October.

All vaccines for eligible children aged from 6 months to 17 years will continue to be supplied centrally through Immform vaccine supply. Public Health England are currently undertaking the procurement process the 18/19 season and details of the vaccines will be confirmed when this process has been completed.

## GP2GP incident affecting TPP SystmOne and EMIS users

The BMA is aware of a system incident with the GP2GP import process affecting some patient records, resulting in excluded data such as read codes, vaccinations, and pathology results. The affected patients are those that were registered at a SystmOne or EMIS practice, have moved to a non SystmOne or EMIS practice, and are now registered at SystmOne or EMIS practice.

The total number of TPP patient records affected is 44,104; information of impact for EMIS users is awaited. TPP has issued a plan of action and has communicated this individually to practices who have been affected:

- Practices will be informed of the affected patients via a task which will direct them to the data in the GP2GP Record.
- Any practices with 10 or fewer affected patients will receive one task listing all patients.
- For practices with more than 10 affected patients, TPP will send two tasks, one identifying patients whose records it is recommended be reviewed more urgently and another identifying patients whose records still need to be reviewed but are less urgent.
- For the 12 practices who have over 100 affected patients, TPP will also contact the practices directly to discuss the issue and action needed.

Currently there have been no reported safety incidents; NHS Digital's Clinical Safety Team continue to review this incident. GPC are in active dialogue with NHS England and NHS Digital, receiving updated status reports as they come in. The workload implications for practices affected has been highlighted and is an area the GPC is seeking resolution on.

### **PCSE Update**

- The latest PCSE update bulletin is [here](#). This covers GP payments and pensions, GP trainee reimbursements and Performers List issues. There is also a reminder of how to submit queries via the new [online portal](#).
- Locum GPs are now expected to make their [pension contributions](#) via BACS and to send an accompanying notification on the standard PCSE enquiry form. Please note that you need an NHS mail email address to do this.
- The BMA, in light of the services provided by PCSE continuing to deteriorate, has published template [documents](#) for practices and GPs to make legal demands for payments that are owing.
- In one of PCSE's recent bulletins, it reported that CDs and other portable media should not be used for transferring patient records. The GPC's view on this matter is that practices can continue to use removable media to transfer medical records, provided that the data is password protected. Such methods are acknowledged in the *Good Practice Guidelines for GP electronic patient records*, which is the regulatory reference guidance agreed between the GPC and the Department of Health.
- The LMC has been made aware that practices have been experiencing delays in labels for patients being delivered. PCSE advises practices to check the online portal for an update first before ordering more. If labels are awaited as the result of a practice list dispersal, practices do not need to request labels as these will be sent automatically.

### **Occupational Health: A Reminder.**

All employees should have access to an occupational health assessment that includes the consideration of any necessary immunisations (see [CQC Myth buster 37](#)). This should be a standard part of the practice protocol for the appointment of new staff.

[Heales Medical Group](#) have been commissioned to provide occupational health services to GPs in the LMC confederation. This is a free service for all GPs on the performers list and all GP practice staff who have had a sharps injury or contamination incident. Otherwise, there is a fee payable.

### **CQC Guidance: Assessing the Financial Viability of Providers**

In their January newsletter, CQC reported the introduction of an assessment of the financial viability of providers, and that they would ask all providers to submit a statement letter from a financial specialist. This was challenged and a [correction](#) has now been issued, so to confirm, GP practices are not required to submit a statement of financial viability.

### **Changes to the Fit for Work service**

Following low referral rates, the Fit for Work assessment service will come to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018; the service stopped taking new referrals on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2017. Existing eligible referrals that have been made up to this point will receive full support for up to three months. Employers, employees and GPs will continue to be able to use the same Fit for Work helpline, website and web chat, which offer general health and work advice as well as support on sickness absence. The advice service will remain free to use, offering expert and impartial advice to those who need it.

## Referrals to Specialist: Patient Leaflet

The patient [leaflet](#) 'What happens when you are referred by your GP to see a specialist?' which has been produced jointly by NHS England, the BMA and the National Association for Patient Participation, will be printed and sent to all GP practices in early March. In response to further feedback from practices asking for easily printable copies, an A4, black-and-white version of the [leaflet](#), has also been published.

## NHSPS and CHP Premises

NHS England have extended the deadline for the lease incentive scheme to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. This will cover reimbursement of stamp duty and provide a contribution to legal fees and VAT for tenants of NHSPS and CHP. Otherwise, the [advice](#) to practices has not changed.

## Requests for Medical Records from the Police

The LMC has previously [written](#) to practices with guidance on how to respond to requests for medical records from the police. The LMC has been made aware that some practices in our confederation may be [undercharging](#) for this work.

## NHSmail

Secure emails [can](#) be sent out with the nhs.net system, but only if encrypted. The instructions on how to do so are available [here](#) under 'Sharing Sensitive Information'.

All locum GPs can retain an NHS email address if they have ever worked as a partner or been employed as a sessional GP within a practice. Any locum GP who does not have an NHS email can ask any practice with whom they regularly work to set up such an email address. However, locum GPs can also apply to the Local Organisation Administrator [LOA] within the CCG where they undertake most work.

## The importance of a Partnership Agreement

The LMC would like to remind colleagues of the importance of having a signed, valid and up to date [partnership agreement](#) in order to minimise the risk of potential disputes in the future.

## GPC Newsletter

The most recent edition is available [here](#).

## Sessional GPs Update

The latest newsletter from the BMA's Sessional GPs subcommittee can be found [here](#) which includes a blog on the Bawa-Garba ruling, a Pensions update, and a feature from the member relations team on maternity leave and pay.

## GP Trainees Update

The latest BMA newsletter for trainees is online [here](#).

## LMC Buying Groups Federation

Surrey and Sussex LMCs has been a member of the [LMC Buying Groups Federation](#) since 2008. This means that all practices within the confederation are eligible to access discounts that the Buying Group has negotiated on a wide range of products and services. These include medical consumables and equipment, dictation software and office equipment. To make an order, your practice must first sign up [here](#).

## Doctors Help: Financial support for doctors and their families

[Doctors Help](#) bring together five independent charities that support doctors when they need confidential financial assistance. These benevolent funds provide vital support to help doctors in genuine financial need get their lives and careers back on track. Support can be applied for online via their website.

## Practice Vacancies

Vacancies added to our website since the last edition of the LMC Line are listed below. Full details of all posts, including how to apply, can be found on the SSLMCs [website](#) . If you would like a vacancy in your practice to be advertised on the website free of charge for a three month period, please send the details to [Sandra Rodbourne](#).

GP Partner, Burgess Hill, West Sussex GP Salaried, Goring, West Sussex GP Salaried, Guildford, Surrey GP Salaried, Brighton, East Sussex GP Salaried, Burgess Hill, West Sussex GP Salaried, Chichester, West Sussex GP Salaried Walk in Hubs, Croydon GP Salaried with potential for partnership, Henfield, West Sussex GP Salaried with potential for partnership, Emsworth, Hampshire GP Salaried with potential for partnership, Brighton, East Sussex GP Salaried with potential for partnership, Woking, Surrey GP Salaried with potential for partnership, Darenth, Kent Locality Hub GP, Ashford Hospital Locality Hub GP, Thames Medical Hub Salaried Assistant with potential partnership, Wadhurst, East Sussex GP Salaried, Emsworth, Hampshire GP Salaried, Selsey, West Sussex GP Salaried, Goring, West Sussex GP Salaried, Englefield Green, Surrey GP Salaried, Crowborough, East Sussex GP Salaried (4 – 6 sessions for 6-month fixed term), Caterham, Surrey Salaried GP with a view to Partnership, Camberley, Surrey GP Partner, Brighton, East Sussex GP Locum, Newick East Sussex GP Locum, Guildford, Surrey GP Locum, Pulborough, West Sussex Maternity Cover, Thornton Heath, Croydon	Advanced Nurse Practitioner Brighton, East Sussex Paramedic Practitioner, Brighton, West Sussex Practice Nurse, Newick, East Sussex Practice Nurse, Woking, Surrey Practice Nurse, Bexhill, West Sussex Practice Nurse, Croydon Practice Nurse Maternity Cover, Crowborough, West Sussex Practice Nurse, Ferring, Worthing, West Sussex Advanced Nurse Practitioner (Dispenser), Selsey, West Sussex Nurse Practitioner, Lancing, West Sussex Paramedic Practitioner, Lancing, West Sussex Assistant Practice Manager Staines, Middlesex Medical Secretary/PA, Horsham, West Sussex Patient Services Team Leader, Redhill, Surrey Practice Manager, Uckfield, East Sussex Receptionist/Administrator, Twickenham Practice Medicines Co-ordinator, Peacehaven, East Sussex
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Surrey and Sussex LMCs issues the LMC Line bulletin which combines frequently asked questions, issues raised at the GPC and information about LMC activities. If you wish to make a brief contribution, please send it to [Dr Clare Sieber](#) at the LMC office.