**To all practices Surrey and Sussex LMCs**

13th April 2021

Dear Colleagues

**Standardised GP Appointment Categories**

I enclose an important update for all practices regarding the identification of GP appointment categories; this is being standardised across England so that the data on GP appointments and utilisation that has been collected by NHS England since 2018 accurately reflects local GP practice data aggregated across PCNs, CCGs , and wider footprints. The funding for undertaking this work is included within the 2021/22 Investment and Impact Fund [Indicator ACC – 01]. NHS England advise on the basis of piloting this exercise it should only take one hour, but depending on the complexity of each practices appointment system.

All practices should read the guidance available at:-

[NHS England » Network Contract Directed Enhanced Service – Standardised GP Appointment Categories – 2021/22](https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/gpad-appointment-categorisation-guidance-2021-22/)

I also enclose a copy of the associated Regulations, at Appendix 1.

**Appointment definition**

All appointments should be recorded in a practice appointment ‘book’, this includes appointments undertaken by General Practice employed/engaged staff and ARRS staff, in all modes [F2F, telephone, video or on-line] and in all settings, including at the practice, the patients place of residence, or community settings, such as access hubs. DNAs should be also recorded.

The following should not be recorded as appointments:-

* Purely administrative interactions between practice staff and patients
* Work that does not involve patient contact such as MDTs, case conferences, referral letter preparation, reviewing results
* Clinical supervision activity
* PPG meetings

Further details are included in the following guidance:-

[PowerPoint Presentation (england.nhs.uk)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/gpad-guidance.pdf)

Practice IT providers are introducing functionality for this change and practices should be notified when this occurs.

**GP appointment categories**

There are four available service settings:-

* **General Practice**: all appointments delivered under the primary medical service Contract, which will be the majority
* **PCN**: appointments delivered by ARRS staff or under the scope of the PCN DES, such as Care Home ‘rounds’ or structured Medication Reviews, except for,
* **Extended Access**: such as Extended Hours appointments
* **Other**: appointments delivered in the practice by another provider, if recorded in the practice appointment ‘book’

General Practice appointments are of three sorts:-

* Care related encounter
* Care related activities
* Administrative and practice staff activities (however, practices are not expected to use their appointment ‘book’ to record these, some practices however do so)

The guidance noted above gives multiple examples of the different types of activity occurring in General Practice as examples to aid categorisation; this is likely to be helpful for practice staff to understand appointment types, noting the majority of appointments will be General Practice care-related encounters.

I hope this background is helpful; please contact the LMC Office (Sarah Parsons: Associate Director for Practice Manager Liaison sarah.parsons@sslmcs.co.uk ) with any queries not included in the guidance.

With best wishes



Dr Julius Parker

**Chief Executive**

**Appendix 1**

**Collection of data relating to appointments in general practice**

**74H.**—(1) A contractor must participate in the collection of anonymised data relating to appointments for its registered patients (“practice appointments data”) in accordance with the “GP Appointments Data Collection in Support of Winter Pressures”([**2**](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/911/schedule/1/paragraph/4/made#f00009)) referred to in the Health and Social Care Information Centre (Establishment of Information Systems for NHS Services: General Practice Appointments Data Collection in Support of Winter Pressures) Directions 2017([**3**](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/911/schedule/1/paragraph/4/made#f00010)).

(2) The contractor must ensure that all practice appointments data relating to the provision of primary medical services under its contract is recorded within the appointment book in accordance with the guidance([**4**](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/911/schedule/1/paragraph/4/made#f00011)).

(3) The contractor must ensure that the practice appointments data is uploaded onto its computerised clinical systems and available for collection by the Health and Social Care Information Centre at such intervals during each financial year as notified to the contractor by the Centre.

(4) For the purposes of this regulation, “appointment book” means a capability provided by the contractor’s computerised clinical systems and software supplier which supports the administration, scheduling, resourcing and reporting of appointments