



Friday Fast Five – 20th March 2020

1. Covid-19

There is a lot of information coming out about Covid-19. We will not try to summarise all of this here but will point you to a few things that we think might be significant for practices in terms of organisation and delivery of your contract. The LMC office is still staffed to assist you with any queries you may have about Covid-19 or anything else.

[The NHSE letter of 17 March](#) included a commitment to the NHS of “additional funding to cover your extra costs of responding to the coronavirus emergency”.

[The NHSE letter of 19 March](#) for General Practice gave more details on the priorities which NHSE see for general practice and also on activities practices may suspend to free up capacity for Covid-19 response. This is more succinctly summarised in in [the letter to GP practices from Dr Richard Vautrey](#), GPC Chair, which includes the following list of activities to stop:

- Travel advice and travel vaccinations.
- New patient reviews.
- Over 75 health checks.
- Minor Surgery.
- Clinical reviews of frailty.
- Friends and Family tests.
- Engagement with PPGs.
- Phlebotomy (non-essential to be suspended).
- Dispensing Services Quality Scheme to stop (with funding protected).
- Dispensing list cleansing.
- Routine medication reviews (essential ones to be conducted by phone).
- All other non-urgent provision (DEs and LISs/LESSs) to be postponed until further notice. Funding will be protected for practices.
- Audit and assurance activities.
- Data collection requests (unless considered essential to support the Covid-19 efforts).
- All other routine nurse appointments will be subject to telephone triage by our nurses.
- Appraisal and Revalidation.
- All routine CQC inspections and annual telephone reviews (already enacted).
- All non-essential paperwork.

The NHSE letter of 19 March also NHSE has advised that all appraisals should be cancelled and revalidation due this year should be postponed. This advice has also been given by NHSE’s National Medical Director to all Responsible Officers.

NHSEI published the [Standard Operating Procedure for General Practice](#) on 19 March.

There is an online process for patients who want an [isolation note](#) for their employer.

2. Pensions

The Government announced an increase in the threshold for annual allowance tax charges to £200,000 (or £240,000 adjusted income). This could have a beneficial impact for senior GPs who have been affected by this in recent years.

It is important that you understand how pension taxation affects you. You can find information and guidance on the [BMA website](#).

3. PCN Contract Update

Last week reported on a virtual meeting held with local Representatives to discuss the LMC stance on the PCN contract for 20/21. This week, we had planned to circulate a document with the outcome of this meeting and some analysis of potential opportunities and treats to inform local and individual decision making. However, given the rapid changes experienced with Covid-19 and national/local discussions taking place on plans for incentive schemes for 20/21 we have decided to halt this work for the moment. Please be assured that we will refocus on this, if needed, when the picture becomes clearer.

4. LMC liaison with CCGs

Due to the escalation of the Covid-19 pandemic, this week we have set up regular contact points with the four CCGs around Primary Care issues and how they are supporting practices.

Please let us know if you feel there is anything specific you wish us to raise with them on your behalf or if they are asking for unreasonable bureaucratic requests. You can email us on lmcadmin@bhlmc.co.uk.

5. Training & Events Updates

Please note in light of the current situation, we have taken the decision to cancel all LMC Training, Events and Roadshows for the foreseeable future. We will be reviewing the situation as it develops. All delegates will be contacted in due course.

Please remember the LMC Office is here to support you and your practices with any issues. Our experienced Pastoral Care Team is well resourced to provide confidential support to GPs with any work related or personal difficulties. Please call us on 01438 880010.

For up to date information please visit our website www.bedshertslmcs.org.uk