



Friday Fast Five:

Beds & Herts LMC Ltd Weekly Update for Practices

IMPORTANT

1. Privacy Notices – update from LMC Law

LMC Law has provided wording for practices to update their privacy notices in the context of the Covid19 pandemic. [View here.](#)

2. Covid-19 Response: What has the LMC been doing so far?

The LMC office is closed but we are open for business as usual, working remotely. We do not want to add to your email burden so try to contain all our information into this weekly update. However, we wanted to let you know that we are all working on a number of issues that have been raised locally and nationally to help general practice cope in these difficult times. This includes:

- At least weekly phone conferences with all the CCGs, particularly to discuss their plans to set up “hot hubs” for the management of patients with suspected Covid19.
- PPE – the type and amount of PPE that is available to practices. These matters have been taken up at the highest level – [view the letter from the BMA to the Prime Minister](#) – and we have also repeatedly made the point locally that GPs and their staff must not be put at risk. The CCGs agree with this, and have been making their own representations to NHS England on this matter.
- Discussions with the LPC – our community pharmacy colleagues are also under strain and we are talking regularly to the LPCs about how we can support each other. Please let us know if you have any issues you would like us to raise.
- Death certification – we have had a lot of queries about this issue and national guidance is expected from the BMA. See item below.
- Childhood immunisations – there has been a substantial drop in the uptake of immunisations over the last few weeks. We have been discussing with PHE ways to ensure this vital service continues safely during this period.
- Cessation of non-urgent referrals – hospitals are having to change how they work too, and we are discussing with the CCGs to make sure any changes made do not place unreasonable liability or burden on practices.

3. Emergency changes to the GMS Regulations

Changes have been made to the GMS regulations in the light of the Covid19 pandemic. These changes mean:

- Changes to core hours – during the period of the pandemic, core hours can be amended by the NHS to include Good Friday and bank holidays. A formal announcement of such a change has not yet been made for Good Friday and Easter Monday but we think it is pragmatic for practices to plan for such an announcement being made.
- Breach notices – CCGs cannot issue breach notices for breaches that are a result of the pandemic.
- 111 direct booking – minimum numbers may be changed if required.

4. PPE update from the GPC

GPC has informed us today of the following:

- The National Supply Disruption Response was designed to deal with supply disruption in the event of no-deal exit. It is designed to support management of disruption across 6 x continuity of supply workstreams:
 - Medicines; Bloods, Tissues and Organs; Substances of Human Origin; Clinical Trials; Non- clinical goods and services; and Medical Devices and Clinical Consumables (of which PPE is a category).
- The disruption currently being experienced in light of COVID-19 is highly focussed around PPE at present; and so they are doing their best to flex the system to respond most effectively.
- In the past few weeks Government issued some free 'push' deliveries of GP kits (300 Type IIR facemasks; 400 aprons; 300 pairs gloves) as an initial support response
- Additional stock was then placed with distributors and wholesalers (such as Phoenix/ DCC Vital/ Williams) to enable GP practices to order through their BAU routes.
- NHSEI and DHSC are working with the military to enable swift movement from pandemic stockpiles into distribution centres to fulfil demand.
- For more immediate short-term issues NSDR are able to issue 'pre-packed kits' with a minimum of (100 Type IIR facemasks; 100 aprons and 100 pairs of gloves) within 72 hours.
- **Primary care providers who raise requests for kits through NSDR must to be able to make arrangements to receive emergency delivery of these 'pre-packed kits' outside of business hours.**
- The National Supply Disruption Response 24/7 telephone helpline 0800 915 9964
- Providers who have raised requests for emergency orders and then not been available to receive deliveries are compromising their ability to be responsive.
- They are focussed on providing swift responses; to e.g. meet gaps until scheduled deliveries arrive; and until orders with wholesalers through BAU are back up and running.

We expect a further update from GPC soon.

5. Death Certification

We have received a number of queries about this, particularly in respect of having to view a body after death. We are expecting national guidance on this from the BMA, but in the interim, the points to remember are:

- **Confirmation:** Any competent person can confirm death; it does not have to be a GP, and there is no need for the GP to see the body. If the death is expected and in a care home, a phone call between home staff and the GP is all that is needed for the home to call the funeral director to remove the body.
[View BMA guidance.](#) [View CQC guidance.](#)
- **Certification:** The GRO has just issued guidance for registrars after the passing of the Coronavirus Act 2020. [Read the full guidance here.](#) In addition, advice from the East of England Regional Medical Examiner says:
 - We complete death certificates 'to the best of our knowledge'. If a patient clinically appears to have Covid 19 infection then this should be put as the cause of death. If swabs have been sent but no result currently available, then circle 2 (further information may be available at post mortem) - this does not mean a post mortem will be carried out but swab results may be available later.

- If it is only a possible cause of respiratory illness, then write the cause of death as pneumonia. Again 2 could be circled if swabs have been sent and awaiting results.
- Covid 19 is a natural cause of death - it does not require a coroner referral unless for other reasons. It is however a notifiable disease.
- **Cremation forms:** Crem4 forms need to be completed by the doctor who attended the patient in their last illness. The new emergency legislation just passed removes the requirement for Crem5.

6. Appraisal and Revalidation during the Covid19 pandemic

You will be aware GP appraisals have been suspended and cancelled appraisals will be recorded as "approved missed". Anyone due to revalidate before September will be deferred for a year. Further information about what this means for GPs can be found in this document:

[Suspension of appraisal and revalidation during Covid-19 pandemic: FAQs.](#)

7. COVID-19: FAQs about ethics

The BMA has provided [FAQs](#) about ethics. Please note at the time of writing these FAQs, national guidance on triage and other prioritisation decisions during this COVID-19 outbreak is to be published imminently.

8. LMC Pastoral Care for GPs

One of the most important roles of the LMC is to provide one to one confidential support to GPs who may be struggling personally or professionally. If you or a colleague requires support, particularly in this period of heightened pressure and stress, please call us on 01438 880010. Visit our webpage for additional resources [Pastoral Care for GPs](#).
Poster [PDF] [Wellbeing for GPs](#).

9. LMC Website: Covid-19 Guidance for clinicians

We've collated up to date links to the BMA, NHSE, PHE & RCGP into one place on our website. Read the latest guidance, advice and information for clinicians, including resources and templates for practices and support for GP wellbeing.

View here: www.bedshertsmcs.org.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance/.

Look after yourselves. Remember we are here to support you.

Contact us:

Beds & Herts LMC, Tel: 01438 880010,

Email: lmcadmin@bhlmc.co.uk,

Website: www.bedshertsmcs.org.uk/contact_us/

We've updated our [Privacy Notice](#) in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

