



## Beds & Herts LMC Ltd Weekly Update for Practices: Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2020

### 1) NHSE Letter about F2F appointments

GPs woke up on Monday morning to see reports in the media about their failure to see patients face-to-face. NHS England had chosen to brief the media about a letter they were planning to send practices **before practices had seen the letter or knew anything about it**. This led to a lot of negative press, confusion for patients, and anger and upset for GPs, Practice Managers and practice staff. Like other LMCs around the country, [Beds and Herts LMC wrote to all practices](#) to express condemnation of the letter and the way it had been publicised, and to reiterate our support for and thanks to practices for how they have responded to the pandemic. A copy of the letter was also shared directly with NHSE. Dr Richard Vautrey, Chair of the GPC, has also [written to Simon Stevens](#) to express their concerns about the letter and to demand an apology. We await a response.

### 2) Covid Claims

At the beginning of the pandemic practices were promised funding to cover their additional costs incurred as a result of Covid-19. Locally our CCGs made arrangements to allow practices to claim before NHS England produced its guidance, which finally came out at the beginning of August. This meant that some areas may have agreed to reimburse costs that haven't been agreed in other areas. The final guidance refers to "other consumable costs" and gives some examples of what this includes such as Perspex screens, but this list is not exhaustive, and while telephony and similar costs are not explicitly mentioned, we have been informed by GPC that this should be within the scope of funding. They have asked us to let them know if claims for reimbursement are being rejected. If you have had claims rejected that you think should have been funded, particularly around telephony/text messaging, please let us know (and the reasons given). We can't guarantee to change the CCGs' minds in every case, but we may be able to pick up if there are things being rejected that should be funded.

### 3) QOF at a glance

As reported last week, NHS England have now published [revised OOF guidance](#) which details the requirements for 2020/21. This guidance is effective immediately and the Statement of Financial Entitlement will be amended shortly to reflect this. GPC has produced "[QOF at a glance](#)" which summarises the changes.

### 4) Delivering the flu vaccination programme

GPC has made the following statement about pharmacies and practices working together: "Practices working in their PCNs where appropriate are encouraged to work together with pharmacies to support a successful 2020/21 flu campaign. This is even more important in light of COVID-19, and the challenges that we face in delivering this year's flu programme.

As in previous years, this is a national service with both practices and community pharmacies providing NHS flu vaccinations, and we all have a role to play in identifying and engaging patients and vaccinating to protect as many as possible at a very vulnerable time.

Practices and pharmacies should talk to each other about the vaccination service they are planning to offer to understand each other's plans. Where possible discussions should include how to reduce health inequalities and how to target harder to reach or under vaccinated populations which can help achieve an effective campaign.

This year the new Investment and Impact Fund includes a shared goal across the PCN to provide immunisations to patients 65 years and over and this includes those given both by practices and pharmacies in the area. Read more in the [GP contract agreement document](#)"

*Beds & Herts LMC supports this statement from GPC and both the LMC and the LPCs encourage practices and pharmacies to work together. We must recognise that General Practice and Pharmacy are both private businesses and are both facing pressures to deliver services and maintain income, and if we work together to reach as many patients as possible then all services will have the best chance of a successful flu season.*

*Community Pharmacy Hertfordshire (Herts LPC) has confirmed that they strongly encourage community pharmacies to respond to requests from their Primary Care Network (PCN) Lead where they have been in touch to engage in meaningful conversations with their GP practices within a PCN for supporting flu vaccinations.*

*If you experience any issues with your community pharmacy please contact your LMC and we will work together with the LPC to resolve these issues at local level*

## **5) GP earnings and expenses 2018/19 (England)**

NHS Digital has published the [GP earnings and expenses for 2018/19](#), which show an average increase in income before tax of 3.4% for GP contractors and 3.8% for salaried GPs in England. For non-dispensing GP contractors in England the increase was 4.1%. Increases were higher in Scotland, in part related to the introduction of new contract arrangements, and in Wales, but lower in Northern Ireland. After many years of sustained real-terms pay cuts for GPs, these figures show that this trend is slowly beginning to be reversed, although not yet for GPs in Northern Ireland. This is despite in 2018 the Government in England yet again failing to recognise the huge contribution of family doctors by going against its own pay review body and imposing an award that was half of what was recommended, which would have left GPs with another sub-inflation pay uplift.

That practices were able to offer uplifts to both employed doctors and partners shows how much they value their highly-skilled staff, which is vital to both recruitment and retention – and ultimately guaranteeing high quality patient care.

Pressures in general practice still remain as demand rises amid large workforce shortages - before we consider the huge challenges over the last few months - which practices were quick to meet with both innovation and compassion. The pandemic has shone a light on the huge contribution GPs make to the NHS, and it is crucial that doctors are rewarded appropriately for their hard work and dedication.

## 6) COVID-19 antibody test results flowing to GP records

From 10 September, when a person undertakes an antibody test that is taken through the public antibody portal (an ELISA test), the result will be loaded directly into their patient records. This will be in addition to flowing of test results for pillar 2 viral testing and will follow the same process, according to each practice's IT system provider. Results will be presented on patients' records as 'positive', 'negative' or 'unknown'. As for viral testing, there will be no action required from the GP practice on receipt of the test results. Bulk upload of test results into GP records will take place without any manual patient by patient process. Practices will receive further guidance by their own system supplier about how this will work.

## 7) Remote fit notes - please remember to sign them

DWP has asked us to remind GPs that as per previously agreed guidance they will accept fit notes that are printed, signed, scanned and e-mailed to patients. This advice has also been given to employers, who should also be accepting signed, scanned and emailed fit notes. However, DWP is receiving a significant number of unsigned fit notes which they cannot accept and this results in inconvenience for both patients and GPs. We would therefore remind GPs that fit notes must be signed. Read more about remote fit notes in the BMA's [COVID-19 toolkit for practices](#).

## 8) BHLMC Education: Free Webinars - Level 3 Children & Adult Safeguarding for Hertfordshire practices

Beds & Herts LMC, East & North Herts CCG and Herts Valleys CCG invite GPs, Nurses and other healthcare professionals and safeguarding leads in Hertfordshire to a series of Level 3 Safeguarding webinars. You must be working in a practice in Hertfordshire to be eligible.

There are three sessions with different themes (Session A, B & C – see overleaf). There are two opportunities to attend each session, so you can select one date from Session A, Session B and/or Session C. It is NOT compulsory to attend all three sessions.

[Register here](#)

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| Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> October, 2.00 – 4.30pm <u>or</u><br>Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> November, 2.00 – 4.30pm | <b>Session A:</b><br>Topic 1. Bruising and suspicious marks in children &<br>Topic 2. Protecting children and vulnerable adults from radicalisation                                    |
| Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> October, 2.00 – 4.30pm <u>or</u><br>Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> November, 2.00 – 4.30pm | <b>Session B:</b><br>Topic. Domestic Abuse followed by information from the IDVA service in Herts  |
| Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> November, 2.00 – 4.30pm <u>or</u><br>Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> December, 2.00 – 4.30pm  | <b>Session C:</b><br>Topic 1. What happens when you make an adult safeguarding referral?<br>&<br>Topic 2. Re-directing to a safer destination: exploring suicide prevention strategies |

For more information, please contact Helen Bean, Education & Workforce Manager, BHLMC, [events@bhlmc.co.uk](mailto:events@bhlmc.co.uk), 01438 880010 or visit our [webpage](#).

## 9) BHLMC Education: Free webinars – Mental Health Updates, Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September

For 7 years running, Beds & Herts LMC have organised valuable Mental Health Updates in collaboration with HPFT and now we can offer these as webinars!

These sessions are aimed at healthcare professionals working in practices in Hertfordshire, delivered by specialist consultants from HPFT. If you are working outside Hertfordshire, you are welcome to attend, but please be aware there will be specific references to Hertfordshire services and referral pathways.

You can register on any one, two or all three sessions (see subjects overleaf). There will be a comfort break in-between each. You will be charged for non-attendance without notice.

[Register here](#)

Event contact: Helen Bean, Education & Workforce Manager, Beds & Herts LMC, [events@bhlmc.co.uk](mailto:events@bhlmc.co.uk), 01438 880010.

[Please visit our webpage for more information](#)

|  | <b>Mental Health Updates</b>   |  |
|--|--|--|
| Friday 25 <sup>th</sup><br>Sept,<br>13:00 -<br>14:10 | <p><b>Anxiety Management</b></p> <p>In this session, you will learn how Covid-19 has affected levels of anxiety and depression within the general population. We will look at how it has exacerbated existing drivers of poor mental health, and the direct and indirect impact of the pandemic on different groups. Finally, we will consider how patients might present to GPs in the short and long term, and how best to respond.</p>                                | <p><a href="#">Register here</a></p> <p>You can register on anyone, two or all three on the registration form.</p> |
| Friday 25 <sup>th</sup><br>Sept,<br>14:15 -<br>15:15 | <p><b>Update on Perinatal and Primary Care Management</b></p> <p>This session will focus on supporting GPs with managing perinatal mental health disorders in primary care, discussing prescribing choices in pregnancy and lactation and managing risk, through case-based discussion. There will also be an update on the Community Perinatal Team service in Hertfordshire with guidance on when to refer and what services are available.</p>                        | <p>You will be sent the link nearer the time and instructions to download the Go-To Training App.</p>              |
| Friday 25 <sup>th</sup><br>Sept,<br>15:30 –<br>16:45 | <p><b>Update on Eating Disorders for Primary Care</b></p> <p>This session discusses Blood Tests - why are they important in Eating orders? We will be presenting about relevance and significance of blood tests. We will also talk about few rare blood tests we do in ED, clinical feature of Refeeding syndrome in the context of eating disorders etc. Primary Care liaison nurses will talk about the new service started in alliance with Primary Care Trusts.</p> | <p>Please allow 10 mins either side for technicalities.</p>  |

BHLMC Job Board Advertise your practice vacancies with us on our Job Board on the website [here](#). If you are interested in posting an advert please contact [lmcadmin@bhlmc.co.uk](mailto:lmcadmin@bhlmc.co.uk) for more information.

If you have missed any of our regular bulletins for practices, please visit the [Weekly Updates](#) section of our website.

If you are a Locum and would like to receive mailings and updates from Beds & Herts LMC Ltd please click here to complete the [online form](#) with your details and we can add you to our database.

Wellbeing for GPs: [Visit our webpage](#).

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