



Beds & Herts LMC Ltd: Weekly Update for Practices, Monday 26th April 2021

1. Online consultations

We have had a number of queries about online consultations and whether this function can be turned off outside core hours. Our understanding, backed by the GPC, is that practices should be able to turn off access to their online consultation service outside core hours. Under the GMS contract, practices are required to deliver services in the manner determined by the practice within core hours to meet the reasonable needs of their patients, and so just as practices can turn their phone lines off and lock their doors out of hours they should also be able to turn off other forms of access such as online consultation. You may, of course, keep online consultation services available during some or all of the out-of-hours periods (evenings and/or weekends) and some practices prefer this way of working. But the contractual duty to offer online consultations does not stipulate that this has to be offered 24 hours a day.

If you are finding online consultations a problem please speak to your CCG and/or to your system provider to discuss how they can help, including the option of turning off online consultation for any of the out-of-hour periods. If you encounter any problems in connection with this from the CCG or your system supplier, then please come back to us at the LMC and we will be happy to support you.

2. Schools requiring letters for students not requiring facemask

We are aware that practices are being approached by parents with requests for letters exempting children from wearing a face covering in school. GPs are **not** in a position to provide individual risk assessments or letters for those who feel that they should be exempt from wearing a face covering, and have no obligation to do so, even if the school has a policy requesting this.

The [government advice on facemasks](#) states that: "If you have an age, health or disability reason for not wearing a face covering:

- you do not routinely need to show any written evidence of this
- you do not need show an exemption card

This means that you do not need to seek advice or request a letter from a medical professional about your reason for not wearing a face covering".

If you are receiving lots of these requests, please let the LMC know on lmcadmin@bhlmc.co.uk

3. Update from GPC re covid boosters and flu

In his [oral statement to Parliament](#) this week, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock MP, confirmed that plans are being made for COVID-19 vaccination boosters to be given later this year, to help protect against new variants. NHSE/I has committed to discuss delivery of COVID-19 boosters, and the impact on the flu campaign, with GPC once further information is available. GPC are also awaiting the outcome of research into the impact of giving COVID vaccinations and flu vaccinations at the same time.

4. PCV Hib MenC and Childhood 6 in 1 data collection for payment

A communication has been sent out from CQRS to commissioners regarding the automated data collection for PCV Hib MenC and Childhood 6 in 1. Due to a delay in the automated collection from the GP Clinical system, data for PCV Hib MenC and Childhood 6 in 1 will not be extracted until June 2021. To enable practices to claim for payment in respect of these services for April and May prior to this extract, GP practices will need to manually submit the data for these periods via CQRS.

The manual submission will need to be declared and approved within CQRS to generate a payment instruction to the payment systems. Where there has been no manual submission, the June automated extract will include April and May. If there has been a manual claim for April and May, the first automated extraction will be for June only.

Please see this link for [information and guidance documents for each of the available services on CQRS](#). Details of these services, including the live collections timetable, can be found on the [NHS Digital's GP Collections website](#).

5. Improving General Practice appointment data (GPAD) webinars and demos

Guidance for practices on standard national general practice appointment categories [has been published](#) to support the mapping of local appointment slots for these new categories. This follows on from guidance published in August 2020 jointly by GPC England and NHSE/I, which introduced an agreed definition of a general practice appointment. Recording all appointments in this way will also help GPC to more clearly demonstrate the increased workload pressures and activity of general practice. NHS Digital are [hosting several webinars](#) to supplement this guidance and the categorisation. There are also some short demonstrations that cover how best to carry out the national mapping exercise:

- EMIS WEB users: [GP Appointments Data \(GPAD\) - HowbeckHow2](#)
- TPP SystmOne users: [GPAD Mapping - TPP Demo](#)

6. Updated guidance for HGV medicals (UK)

Due to added pressures caused by the pandemic, a decision was taken by DVLA in April 2020 to waive the medical requirement for a D4 licence renewal application for those aged 45 and over. Applicants were instead issued with a single, one-year licence.

After talks with the DVLA, the BMA has agreed to aim to accommodate D4 medical appointments for working drivers to make sure that drivers are available to the transport industry. BMA would therefore encourage practices to enable working drivers to have this medical examination when necessary as much as public health guidelines and individual priorities allow. This excludes car driving licence renewals with small lorry (C1, C1E (107)) and minibus (D1 (101) and D1 (101,119)) entitlements issued before 1997 where these entitlements are used for driving large recreational vehicles rather than for working in the transport sector.

Further information and guidance on this can be found on the [DVLA website](#).

7. DWP Forms

Following a meeting between GPC and the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), the DWP has agreed to supply copies of all relevant GP forms prior to their publication on the [HCP pages of Gov.UK](#). Please see the following link to the PDF copies of the available [forms](#)

8. Maternal mental health

In the 2020/21 contract negotiations, GPC secured additional funding to support a dedicated postnatal check-up for new mothers. The [National Childbirth Trust](#) has now found, in their one year follow up [survey](#), that new mothers are not yet always being given the opportunity for this important review, particularly to have the chance to discuss their own mental health. The past year has, of course, been very difficult. However, as this is a contractual requirement, and as practices will be planning for the coming year, we would like to take this opportunity encourage you to offer these dedicated appointments to all new mothers, and to do this at a different time from the regular baby health check.

9. New GP Pay and Pensions system

Following a number of delays it appears that the new GP Pay and Pensions system will become available to practices and GPs on 1 June 2021. PCSE has this week written to both [LMCs](#) and [practices](#), advising on next steps and what practices will need to consider in preparation. GPs themselves are due to receive information and guidance on using the new system in the coming weeks.

10.* Herts Only* Wise5 Webinar: Welcome Back to Work (WB2W) – Tuesday 11th May 2021 7.30pm – run by Hertfordshire & West Essex Training Hub

Join Dr Lucy Henshall and Penny Flack for an interactive session exploring the uncertainty of change, and how to rediscover joy in work through identifying your Ikigai.

If you are interested in attending this webinar, please email the HWE Training Hub at hwetraininghub@nhs.net with the following information:

- Name
- Employing Practice (if applicable)
- Year you started working in general practice

For more details view [here](#)

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

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 for more information.

Locums - If you are a Locum and would like to receive mailings and updates from Beds & Herts LMC Ltd please register via the [online form](#) and we can add you to our database.

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

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