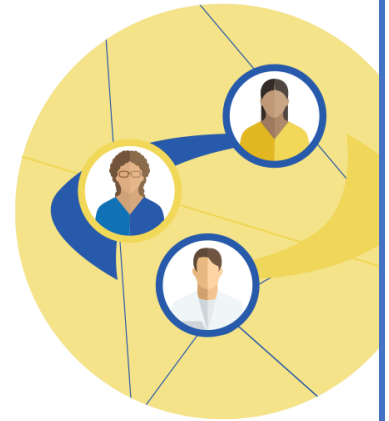


Beds & Herts LMC Ltd: Weekly Update for Practices, Monday 10th May 2021



1. LMC Wellbeing support

One of the most important roles of the LMC is to advise and support our local GPs on a personal basis. In the light of the increasing workload pressures covered elsewhere in this update, if you feel you need support because of these pressures, it is important to remember that you are not alone, and that it is OK to not be OK. This is a gentle reminder that the LMC Pastoral Care team is only a phone call away to provide confidential support for both personal and professional difficulties. To access the pastoral care team, please call the LMC office on 01438 880010 and they will ensure that a trained GP gets back to you. And if you believe a colleague may be suffering, please remind them of the service too.

2. LMC Contractual and Business Support

Another important role of the LMC is to advise and support our local practices on delivering their GP contract for the NHS. If you know – or believe – that your practice will be facing changes in its workforce due to imminent retirements, reductions in hours etc. and you want to talk through the potential contractual implications and what options your practice might have, the LMC can help you to explore that. Please contact the LMC office on 01438 880010 or via lmcadmin@bhlmc.co.uk and your query will be passed to the best person available to deal with it

3. DVLA backlog and requests for GPs to approve patients driving

We have received several queries from practices regarding patients whose driving licences have expired and are with DVLA waiting for a decision. DVLA has a massive backlog, and has stated through Section 88 that licence holders can go to their GP and, with the approval of their GP, can drive pending their licence renewal. Understandably, GPs have serious reservations about stating that a patient is safe to drive. We have been aware that BMA has been in discussion with DVLA for a long time about this issue, so we contacted them for an update. Their response was that from a legal point of view:

- The GP is not under a legal obligation to provide this service and therefore is entitled to charge for it as a non-GMS service.
- If a GP is concerned about their liability in the event that a patient (or DVLA) relies on the advice and then suffers loss (e.g. there is an accident and the advice is alleged to have been negligent) then they can decline to provide this service.

BMA added “Needless to say it is a major area of concern which we are trying to address with the DVLA and acting upon internally as well. We raised our concerns about this issue with the DVLA at a meeting last month, and we agreed to continue to revisit the issue and DVLA would review from their end. Unfortunately, there is no quick-fix on this issue, and we would welcome any case studies so that we can bring to the DVLA as instances where doctors are forced to deal with difficult situations.”

As soon as we have any further update from the BMA on this issue, we will share it with practices. In the meantime, please send any examples to the LMC office and we can forward these on to BMA to help with their discussions.

4. BMA survey – GP workload pressures

The BMA has published its 13th COVID-19 [survey](#), which clearly demonstrates how the pandemic has had a great impact on GPs and practice staff in terms of workload, lack of breaks and leave, and an increasing number of staff leaving the NHS.

More than half of GPs (62.5%) surveyed say they are 'very concerned' their patients' health will suffer due to the growing backlog of non-COVID care. The survey also reveals that 68% are either not very or not at all confident that their practice will be able to manage patient demand. GPs especially report that their non-COVID workload is higher than before the pandemic, and are less confident than their hospital colleagues that their practice and local health economy can manage this and actually clear the backlog within a year.

General practice, like much of the NHS, is currently facing unprecedented pressures as we battle to keep patients safe during the pandemic on top of a growing backlog of care.

The survey also shows that an increasing number of staff leaving the NHS, with:

- 36% of respondents from a primary care setting said they are more likely take early retirement in the next year while 22% of respondents from a primary care setting said they are more likely to leave the NHS for another career in the next year
- 55% of respondents from a primary care setting said they have changed their career plans because of workload, including the ability to take breaks/leave

No GP is a stranger to working long hours or seeing colleagues break down with stress, and as a result, many are now considering leaving the profession altogether in order to get the respite they so desperately need. Not only does this deprive the NHS of talented doctors, but it also hinders patient care, drives up waiting lists, and places extra pressure on those who decide to stay.

Read the full results from the survey [here](#)

5. Workforce data and GP pressures

The latest [GP workforce data report](#) has been published, which shows that the overall number of FTE GPs has seen little growth since 2015, with the number of GP partners significantly decreasing in that time.

Between March 2020 to March 2021, the number of older, more experienced GP partners reduced by 546 doctors. Factoring in this decrease, the number of qualified GPs increased by 1541 (salaried and locum GPs only) in that time. Looking at this on a FTE basis (37.5 hours per week), the number of fully qualified FTE GPs only increased by 110.7 (to 28,096) over the past year.

The number of patients per practice is 22% higher than it was in 2015, but the GP workforce has not grown with this demand. As a result of this stasis, there are now just 0.46 fully qualified GPs per 1000 patients in England - down from 0.52 in 2015. This is significantly below the average number of physicians per 1000 patients in comparable OECD nations (3.5).

These figures clearly illustrate that in addition to the workload pressures practices are under, the GP workforce is decreasing steadily, while the patient numbers are increasing.

Read the BMA's full analysis of the figures on the [GP pressures page](#) which has clear graphical analysis, with the chart resource pack [here](#) which can be posted as individual images as part of social media interactions. You can read the [statement](#) about it by the GPC Workforce lead and GPC England Executive team member, Krishna Kasaraneni.

6. Adult Safeguarding Webinars for Hertfordshire Practitioners

Beds & Herts LMC, East & North Herts CCG and Herts Valleys CCG invite GPs, Nurses and practitioner safeguarding leads working in Hertfordshire to attend two Adult Safeguarding Webinars. There are two dates for each webinar, but you only need to attend one. Each contribute to your Adult Safeguarding Update training requirements.

a) Mental Capacity Act Webinar, Tuesday 15th June **or Wednesday 13th October, 1.30 - 4.30pm**

This webinar is delivered by an expert lawyer in the field of mental capacity law who has led the Law Commission's review of the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and is currently the legal adviser to DHSC.

For more information and how to register your FREE place, please [view here](#).

b) Domestic Abuse and Older People Webinar, Wednesday 30th June **or Thursday 21st October, 1.30pm - 4.30pm**

This webinar is delivered by a Domestic Abuse expert and the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service, the single point of referral for Hertfordshire.

For more information and how to register your FREE place, please [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 lmadmin@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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