

Beds & Herts LMC Ltd: Weekly Update for Practices, Monday 24th May 2021



1. Vote of no confidence in NHS England leadership

Following NHSE's letter about the revised SOP for General Practice, which implied that practices had not already been offering face-to-face appointments and stated that patients should be seen face-to-face based on their preference rather than their need, GPC England met on Thursday last week to discuss an Emergency Motion of no confidence in the leadership of NHS England. As well as the ill-timed, "tone-deaf" letter, the motion highlighted NHS England's longer-term failure to support, or recognise the efforts of, the profession over the last 14 months. The motion also demanded an explanation from the Government as to why the letter was sent last week and an urgent meeting with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. The motion was carried and so as a result, the GPC has now ceased all formal meetings with NHSE and this will continue until sufficient steps have been taken to give the committee confidence to justify a resumption in such meetings.

Richard Vautrey, Chair of GPC writes:

"This motion sounds a much-needed warning bell, rung by GPs at the end of their tether, emotionally and physically exhausted by the past 14 months. The onus is now on NHS England and ministers to fix a broken system so that patients as well as doctors have a GP service that is fit for purpose in every way."

Read the full [statement from Richard Vautrey](#)

To reiterate, guidance such as the SOP is not contractual and it is for practices, as independent contractors, to determine how they meet the reasonable needs of their patients, and how they organise their appointment and access arrangements, including online consultations and triage, in the best way they can utilising their available capacity and expert knowledge of their local community.

2. Online consultations – the contractual position (further clarification from GPC)

Before the pandemic, as part of the [2019 GP contract deal](#) (paragraph 5.10 (i)) GPC England agreed that it would eventually become contractual for practices to offer online consultations during core hours. This agreement has not yet been added to the contract regulations, so is not currently a contractual requirement. However, GPCE also agreed that practices should offer online consultations as early as possible, provided that the necessary infrastructure is in place, but it would not become a requirement until it is entered into the contract regulations. It is therefore for practices to determine how best they use online consultation systems, including what hours they are available, and they should try to use them in such a way that helps with triage and workload management, enabling the delivery of a safer and more accessible service to all their patients.

3. NHS Standard Contract 2021/22 – New “interface” provision (England)

Following reports from GPs regarding inconsistent implementation of NHS Standard Contract requirements on secondary care providers relating to the interface with local primary care teams, the BMA has worked with NHS England on the introduction of a new provision in the (hospital) contract to improve collaboration between clinical teams. The new provision requires that secondary care providers work with their local commissioners to assess by the end of September, and annually thereafter, their compliance to the interface requirements of the contract. The commissioners and providers will have to agree an action plan to address any deficiencies identified by their assessment and ensure that this action plan is informed by discussion with and feedback from the relevant LMCs, and they also need to ensure that the action plan is adopted in public by their Governing bodies, and that progress on its implementation is shared with the relevant LMCs. Beds and Herts LMC has started discussions with the CCGs to make sure the views and experiences of GPs are collected and fed back into this work through the LMC. We will keep you informed of any progress.

4. [Aitchison Raffety](#) are an established specialist healthcare premises surveyor, with over 40 years of experience in the industry. Their specialist team provide a range of services that support the concept to completion of Primary care premises and the subsequent property aspects that result including investment acquisitions and sales, rent reviews, partnership valuations, and sale and leaseback options. Please see below for recent articles:

- [Essential guidance for GPs entering into an agreement lease](#)
- [Improving your Surgery Premises for COVID and beyond](#)
- [Resolving Rent Review Disputes](#)
- [Spring 2021 Healthcare Magazine - Healthcare Property Matters](#)

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Beds & Herts LMC, Tel: 01438 880010
Email: lmcadmin@bhlmc.co.uk
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