



Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire LMC Ltd: Weekly Update for Practices, Tuesday 15th June 2021

In this issue:

1. **Delay in roll-out of patient data sharing programme (GDPR)**
2. **Covid-19 Vaccination programme**
3. **Funding and support for COVID-19 vaccination sites**
4. **Extending the role of Medical Examiners into primary care**
5. **New PCSE pay and pension system update**
6. **PCN funding**
7. **GP registration for un/under-documented migrants**
8. **Pension guidance for retired doctors - reminder**
9. **Deadline for THE EU SETTLEMENT Scheme – 30 June**
10. **Educational Events: Webinars**

1. **Delay in roll-out of patient data sharing programme (GDPR)**

As we reported last week, the planned roll-out of the GP Data for Planning and Research (GDPR) would be delayed by two months, from 1 July to 1 September 2021. This followed extensive engagement by BMA and RCGP with NHS Digital and a direct meeting with the health minister, [calling on NHS Digital and the Government to delay the introduction](#) of their new data programme until patients and the public have had time to be aware of and understand the programme and choose to opt-out if they wish.

Locally, Beds & Herts LMC has discussed the situation with the CCGs and asked for support for practices who are being deluged with patients submitting opt-out forms and/or asking for more information. The CCGs are sympathetic to the situation and we expect to hear what local support will be available soon.

In the meantime, we have been asked by several practices:

Can/should we opt-out all our patients and ask them to opt back in if they wish?

The answer is, no. The extraction of this data is mandated under law, and patients have been given the right to opt-out but it has to be their informed decision to do so. GPs, as controllers of their data, cannot opt patients out of the extraction unless they have an explicit request from the patient to do so.

2. **COVID-19 vaccination programme**

The [COVID-19 Vaccine Enhanced Service specification](#) has been updated, with the main amendments listed below. We would particularly like to draw your attention to the first change as it could impact on payments.

- (i) **Introduction of a 3 month-maximum period for payment claims.** A new paragraph (11.2.4) has been added which means that from the beginning of June, the deadline for practices claiming payments for COVID-19 vaccinations will be 3 calendar months following the calendar month in which the vaccination was administered.
- (ii) **Restriction for PCN groupings to use a single Point of Care system.** To minimise the risk of duplicate payments resulting from a PCN grouping entering vaccination events on two Point of Care systems simultaneously, paragraph 7.8 has been amended so PCN groupings can now only use a single Point of Care system within a single calendar month to enter new vaccination events (except for changes to existing events or during the transition period to the new Point of Care system).
- (iii) **A change to permit the administration and payment claim of a single dose vaccine.** Paragraph 11.1 has been split into two to allow the administration and payment claim of a single dose vaccine. This is because of the introduction of new vaccines that can be given as a single dose.

3. Funding and support for COVID-19 vaccination sites

NHSE/I has published a document outlining additional [funding and support available for PCN and Community Pharmacy-led COVID-19 vaccination sites](#). This includes an additional £20 million to ICS/STPs to support primary care providers to draw down additional staff to help deliver the COVID-19 vaccination programme between 16 June and 14 July 2021. The amounts available locally are based on the number of sites delivering vaccination and will be: £146,008 for BLMK (where there are 10 sites) and £350,419 for HWE (where there are 24 sites).

4. Extending the role of Medical Examiners into primary care

The National Medical Examiner (NME) and other parties this week published a [letter](#) announcing the extension of the medical examiner (ME) scrutiny to non-acute settings. The ME system has been operating on a non-statutory basis since 2019 in hospitals and scrutinises all deaths in hospitals that are not referred to the coroner. The plan is to pass legislation to make this a statutory function and to include deaths in the community as well as in hospital so that every death will be scrutinised in future either by the medical examiner or by the Coroner.

BMA's Professional Fees Committee (which is chaired by a GP) have been involved in the discussions on how best to implement the new arrangements with the aim of minimising both the financial and operational impacts upon GPs and their practices. There have been two small trials of the ME system in primary care in Gloucestershire and the results are not yet published.

The letter places an expectation on the hospital medical examiners offices to "engage with local partners" and CCGs and ICSs are expected to facilitate partnership working across systems. Beds & Herts LMC has contacted local CCGs/ICSs to ensure we are involved in these discussions at an early stage as we expect these changes to have big implications for GPs and practices going forward.

5. New PCSE pay and pension system update

PCSE's new pay and pension system was launched on 1 June and 3,500 GPs have logged onto the system so far. We would urge all GPs to log on and check their details and data ahead of any need to use it. Any errors or issues identified should be [raised with PCSE](#) at the earliest opportunity.

BMA has informed us that they have been made aware post-launch that PCSE don't have contact details for approximately 6,000 GPs. PCSE has given assurance that they are working on solutions for this but we would advise any GP who haven't received one or more emails from PCSE since 30 May giving access to the system contact pcse.user-registration@nhs.net in the first instance. In the same period, around 2,500 practices have logged on to the system and allocated roles to their own users. We would encourage all practices to do this and ensure that all details and data are correct at the earliest opportunity, [reporting any issues to PCSE](#).

BMA has been meeting with PCSE almost daily since the launch and has raised a myriad of issues relating to missing and incorrect data along with poor usability. BMA is concerned about the volume of these issues but has been assured that they are all being addressed. BMA will continue to monitor and pursue the progress of this and other remedial work over the coming weeks and will update LMCs on a weekly basis. In turn, we will keep practices updated through these weekly bulletins.

PCSE have posted user guidance for [practices](#) and [GPs](#) on their website. We would encourage users to make use of them.

6. PCN funding

GPC England has had some concerns from practices about payments for IIF for 2020/21. NHSE/I has informed them that this is in progress and calculations of achievement will be available for declaration within CQRS on or around 11 June, with PCN declaration required by 24 June, and payments being made before 31 July.

7. GP registration for un/under-documented migrants

GPC England would encourage practices to use the Safe Surgeries [toolkit](#) developed by Doctors of the World (DOTW). The toolkit - endorsed by RCGP and RCN - is an accessible presentation of existing DHSC and NHSE guidance and supports clinical and non-clinical NHS staff to promote inclusive care through GP registration. Notably, it aims to address specific barriers to primary care faced by vulnerable, un/under-documented migrants by ensuring that GP practices are aware of all relevant guidance and rules. This includes, for example, that patients should not be turned away if they lack a proof of ID, address, or immigration status.

GPs and practices are encouraged to consider and adopt the recommendations set out in the toolkit, particularly as it is now more important than ever that patients are registered with a GP. GP registration will likely mitigate the effects of the pandemic on health inequalities by improving equitable access to care and ensuring that marginalised and excluded communities are not missed in the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out.

DOTW also offer FREE [training](#) to clinical and non-clinical NHS staff that aims to improve awareness of migrant entitlements to NHS care and enables staff to better advocate for their patients.

8. Pension guidance for retired doctors – reminder

From 25 March 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the [UK government's emergency legislation](#) temporarily suspended some of the regulations governing the administration of NHS pensions, allowing doctors who have recently retired from the NHS to return to work, and for retired doctors who had already returned to work, to increase their commitments without affecting their pension benefits. These measures include the temporary suspension of the 16-hour rule when members of the NHS Pension Scheme take retirement.

Following the end of the COVID-19 outbreak, a six-month notice period will be given to staff and employers at the end of which the suspended regulations will take effect again. Staff and employers will therefore have six months' notice to readjust their working patterns, where necessary.

9. Deadline for THE EU SETTLEMENT Scheme – 30 June

The deadline for applications to be made to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) is 30 June 2021.

If you are a doctor currently in the UK and arrived before the 31 December 2020, you must apply by 30 June. It is free of charge, and in applying and being granted pre-settled or settled status, you will have secured your rights to continue living and working in the UK.

In addition, an application must be made for every eligible child within your family. If you and your family members have lived in the UK for many years or have a permanent residence document or EEA Biometric Residence Card (BRC), you still need to apply to the EUSS (or apply for British citizenship) to secure your existing rights in the UK.

[Apply on GOV.UK](#) and check your immigration status [here](#).

10. Education Events: Free Webinars

(Please check eligibility via the contacts and links)

(i) First 5 GP Portfolio Careers Series: Expedition Medicine

Wednesday 16th June, 7.00 - 8.00pm

Are you a First 5 GP or ST3 in the Hertfordshire or West Essex Area?

Join us online for an evening in conversation with Dr Laura McArthur to hear about her experience as a primary care and tropical medicine physician and learn how you can develop your own interest into a portfolio career! To register, please email jessica.hansell1@nhs.net.

(ii) [VWV](#): General Practice - current and future issues update

Thursday 24 June, 3.00 - 5.00pm

This [healthcare](#) webinar will focus on the latest key sector trends and opportunities, how general practice has changed and coped during the pandemic and looking ahead to the future. [For more information and how to register your FREE place, please view here.](#)

AGENDA:

- Developments in GP partnerships & recruitment
- Surgery premises - valuations, ownership and potential tax traps
- Practice incorporation & takeovers including tax implications
- PCN developments including PCN incorporation
- Primary care within ICS & Trust led primary care models
- Q&A

(iii) Adult Safeguarding in Primary Care: Domestic abuse Involving Older People

Wednesday 30th June , 1.30pm - 4.30pm

For practitioners working in general practice in Hertfordshire, this webinar is delivered by a Domestic Abuse expert and the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service, the single point of referral for Hertfordshire.

AGENDA:

- Understand the dynamics of domestic abuse involving older victims
- Recognise some of the specific risk factors associated with this group
- Gain an awareness of the barriers to help seeking
- The role of healthcare in recognising and responding
- Understand the potential for perpetrator management in a healthcare setting
- Gain an awareness of the IDVA service in 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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