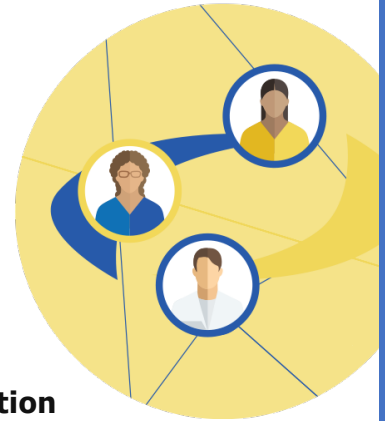


Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire LMC Ltd: Weekly Update for Practices, Monday 23rd August 2021



1. Becton Dickinson blood specimen collection supply disruption

In last week's update, we gave the national situation as we knew it on the shortage of blood bottles. We are discussing the local implications of this with the CCGs and asking what support they are considering for practices. Meanwhile, we are waiting for further information from GPC from their discussions with NHSE about implications for QOF. We will share this with practices as soon as we hear anything

2. Supporting General Practice - letter from NHS England

GPC has received a [letter](#) from Ian Dodge, National Director for Primary Care, Community Service and Strategy at NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I). This follows the meeting Dr Richard Vautrey, GPC Chair, had with Amanda Pritchard, the newly appointed NHSE/I chief executive, two weeks ago, and which was one of the first face to face meetings with any professional representative she had had since taking up her new role.

The letter acknowledges the pressures facing the profession, recognises its contributions and in doing so demonstrates a change of tone. It shows the steps NHSE/I is taking to rebuild relations with the GPC.

The GPC is expecting NHSE/I to shortly publish further information on the service specifications and IIF with a focus primarily on 2022/23. As the letter suggests, they have heard GPC's call to delay as much as possible of this until April 2022 at the earliest, whilst also continuing to invest the planned additional £150m for 2021/22. GPC's comments on this were reported on by [Pulse](#).

3. Support Your Surgery campaign

In the next few days GPC plans to launch its latest campaign – Support Your Surgery. This follows the unfair criticism that has been levelled at general practice in the news and across social media over the last few months due to the way practices have had to work during the pandemic because of the necessary infection, protection and control measures. All too often this has resulted in GPs and their team members receiving abuse, as GPC has highlighted in [The Doctor](#) magazine and through its widely reported latest [survey results](#).

To counter these perceptions and to put pressure on the Government to act to do more to support general practice, the campaign will provide practices with resources to help patients understand the reality of the issues facing general practice and to encourage them to join with GPC in lobbying for the changes needed to address them.

4. Earnings and expenses report 2019/20

NHS Digital has published the [GP earnings and expenses figures for 2019/20](#). This is a UK report and provides details of both average earnings and expenses for contractor and salaried GPs in each of the four nations. However, as practice contracts now vary so much between

nations, this annual report no longer produces any combined UK data. There were also significant factors in each of the nations in 2019/20 that impacted the outcomes and make interpretation and comparison more difficult, for instance in England it was the first year of the five year contract package with the introduction of the widely welcomed new Clinical Negligence Scheme for General Practice. For reference, the DDRB recommendation for 2019/20 was for a 2.5% pay increase.

Overall, the figures suggest that years of repeated, real-terms pay cuts for GPs are slowly reversing for both salaried GPs and GP contractors. They also highlight the rising expenses in running practices, with in England the expenses to earnings ratio (the proportion of gross earnings taken up by expenses), at a record high of almost 70%. This indicates how much GP contractors need to invest in their practices to maintain services for their patients.

5. Covid-19 Vaccination Programme

(We realise that the deadlines set out below are today, and we are sure that all practices and PCNs that are opting into this will already be aware of the requirements. However, we thought it important to include this information which we have been sent by GPC.)

Vaccinating 12-15 year olds with underlying health conditions

Following the advice from the JCVI that those aged 12–15 years with specific underlying health conditions that put them at risk of severe COVID-19 should be offered two doses of the Pfizer vaccine with an interval of eight weeks between doses, NHSE/I has published a [letter](#) outlining the actions practices should take to help identify eligible 12-15 year olds (cohort 13) to ensure they are offered a COVID-19 vaccination appointment by 23 August 2021.

The letter includes a template letter for practices as well as a link to updated [FAQs on Vaccinating children and young people](#)

Vaccinating 16-17 year olds by 23 August

The [government has now also announced](#) that all young people aged 16 to 17 in England should be offered a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine by Monday 23 August to give them protection before returning to school. Read the NHSE/I [letter](#) which outlines details of the amended enhanced service specifications to incorporate 16 and 17 year olds into cohort 12.

Spikevax vaccine (formerly COVID-19 Vaccine Moderna) for 12- to 17-year-olds

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has confirmed that the [Spikevax vaccine \(formerly COVID-19 Vaccine Moderna\) is safe and effective to use for 12- to 17-year-olds](#), thereby extending the current UK approval (currently authorised for over 18s).

New and updated COVID-19 National Protocols

The following new or updated COVID-19 national protocols and PGDs have been published:

The updated [PfizerBioNtech mRNA vaccine BNT162b2 National Protocol v04.00](#)

The new [Comirnaty COVID-19 mRNA vaccine National Protocol](#) v01.00

The updated [PfizerBioNtech mRNA vaccine BNT162b2 PGD](#) (v04.00)

NHSE/I will also be publishing the new Comirnaty PGD v01.00 shortly.

6. Updated PHE guidance on NHS staff self-isolation and return to work following COVID-19 contact

As of 16 August 2021 the government has changed the requirements to self-isolate following a positive COVID-19 contact, and PHE has updated its [guidance on how this changed will impact NHS staff and students working in the NHS](#)

Fully vaccinated staff and students who are identified as a contact of a positive COVID-19 case will no longer be expected to isolate and will be expected to return to work, after a number of safeguards have been implemented, such as a negative PCR test prior to returning.

It's important to remember that the updated guidance applies only to people who may have the infection but are not showing symptoms. Anyone who develops symptoms should still self-isolate and end isolation only following a negative PCR test.

7. HEE is looking to the future for the health and social care workforce

HEE has been commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care to work with partners and review long term strategic trends for the health and social care workforce. The [Long-Term Strategic Framework for Health and Social Care Workforce Planning](#) will review, renew and update [HEE's Framework 15](#), last published in 2014, to help ensure we have the right numbers, skills, values and behaviours to deliver world leading clinical services and continued high standards of patient care.

The BMA will make a submission, but HEE also wants to hear from as many stakeholders and partners as possible, including people who need care and support, service users, patients, carers, members of the workforce, as well as students and trainees.

They have launched a 'Call for Evidence' which is live until the 6 September – GPC encourages you to [complete the survey and have your say](#) if you have capacity to do so.

8. NHS e-RS five minute Referral Assessment Survey (RAS) survey

Currently, when patients are referred through non-A&G (advice & guidance) pathways in e-RS (e-Referral Service), a provider can either accept a referral (without advice) or return the referral (with advice / comment). However, a 5-minute survey has been launched to evaluate the potential benefit of enhancing e-RS RAS (Referral Assessment Services) – the non-A&G referral pathway – to allow providers to accept a patient referral and simultaneously provide comments or advice to the referrer to support patient care while the patient waits for their outpatient appointment.

There have been >750 responses already but a strong clinical voice would be really beneficial. The survey closing date is Monday 23rd August. Dr Carolyn Charman, NHSE/I e-Referrals Secondary Care Clinical Lead, appreciates that it is August and not an ideal time for a survey but thanks you in advance for your support in completing the survey and sharing it with colleagues.

The survey is live in e-RS as an alert – see this [link](#) for further information. Please do not hesitate to feedback via email (enquiries.ers@nhs.net) even after the survey closes if you have any comments.

9. Are you interested in being a GP Mentor in BLMK? *Applications now open*

- Are you a mid-late career GP in BLMK interested in mentoring and supporting others locally?
- Would you like to gain a professional accredited ILM5 qualification in coaching & mentoring?

The BLMK GP Mentor Development Programme for mid-late career GPs is a new opportunity to expand your career portfolio through offering an additional paid session a week to mentor early career GPs. Mentors will gain a professional accredited ILM5 qualification in coaching & mentoring as well as receive additional support and development from Beds & Herts LMC Ltd.

For further information about the opportunity please review:

- [Mentor Information Pack](#)
- [Mentor Role Description](#)

Not sure whether to apply? There is an informal Q&A session via MS Teams for prospective mentors on **Thursday 9th September, 10-11am**. If you would like to receive the link to attend the event please email: ccs.blmk.traininghub@nhs.net.

If you would like to apply for a GP Mentor role, please download and complete the application form [here](#) and email to ccs.blmk.traininghub@nhs.net by **Friday 17th September**.

News - For the latest news, information and weekly updates for practices, please visit the [Hot Topics](#) section of our website.

BHLMC Job Board - Advertise your practice vacancies or search for jobs on our [Job Board](#). 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 LMC updates, please register via the [online form](#) to be added to our database and mailing list.

Workforce Wellbeing & Support [Visit our webpage](#).

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