

Beds & Herts LMC Ltd: Weekly Update for Practices, Friday 27th August 2021



1. Blood bottles - supply disruption

On Thursday 26 August NHSE sent a further letter on this to all GPs in England - [B0933-bd-blood-collection-supply-disruption-v2.pdf \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

The letter says:

“All primary care and community testing must be halted until 17 September 2021, except for clinically urgent testing. Examples of clinically urgent testing include:

- Bloods that are required to facilitate a two week wait referral
- Bloods that are extremely overdue and/or essential for safe prescribing of medication or monitoring of condition
- Bloods that if taken could avoid a hospital admission or prevent an onward referral
- Those with suspected sepsis or conditions with a risk of death or disability”

The letter also says:

“While it is anticipated that the position will improve from the middle of September, overall supply is likely to remain challenging for a significant period.”

We expect further information to follow as this situation develops.

2. PCN DES update

On Wednesday NHS England published their plans for Primary Care Networks for the remainder of 2021/22 and for 2022/23 in [a letter and several annexes](#).

This includes:

- New funding for PCN leadership and management support - £43m in 2021/22
- Clarification that Clinical Directors (not commissioners) should determine whether or not income from IIF is being used appropriately
- Phased introduction of four new services:
 - CVD prevention and diagnosis – in 21/22 this will just be on case finding
 - Health inequalities – in 21/22 PCNs are asked to identify and work with a disadvantaged population to codesign an intervention to meet their unmet needs (delivery of which to start in 22/23)
 - Anticipatory care – will come in from April 2022
 - Personalised care – will come in from April 2022
- Combining Extended Access and Extended Hours – details to be published in the autumn for delivery from April 2022
- Investment and Impact Fund (IIF) – new targets added for 21/22 and for 22/23. Full details are in [Annex B](#) but some things to note are:
 - There will be 4 areas in 21/22: Health inequalities; Proactive primary care; Improved access; Sustainable NHS. In 22/23 a 5th area will be added around medication.
 - In 21/22 there will be 19 indicators over 4 areas, totalling 666 points and worth £150.2m nationally

- In 22/23 there will be 28 indicators over 5 areas, totalling 999 points and £225.3m nationally.
- 21/22 indicators include recording of ethnicity, number of online consultations (5 per 1000 per week), plans to increase referrals to community pharmacists, plans to use the GP/Patient survey to improve access.

These changes take effect from October 1st and practices have one calendar month to opt out of the DES if they wish.

3. Support Your Surgery campaign

We received the following communication earlier this week about the BMA's 'Support Your Surgery' campaign.

"Dear colleagues

I wanted to let you know that we launch our latest campaign, Support Your Surgery, this week. We want to highlight the pressures practices are under and to encourage patients to join us in lobbying government for the resources needed to expand the workforce and address inadequate premises.

I've attached a copy of a [poster](#) we intend sending to practices. We've prepared physical posters and linked social media and website resources for practices to use to encourage their patients and those who work in general practice to sign up to our petition.

We've worked with a research company, Britain Thinks, who have run sessions with patients and done a survey for us, and we've used the outcome of this work to frame our campaign messaging. A press statement is below.

We'll need all your help and support in getting the messaging out, practices involved and crucially patients signing up over the coming weeks.

Best wishes, Richard Vautrey, GPC Chair

BMA press release: *(embargoed until 00.01, Tuesday 24th August 2021)*

Public says more GPs are needed to improve services, as BMA launches 'Support Your Surgery' campaign

Almost half of the public in England say if they could make one improvement to their GP practice, it would be to increase the number of doctors, according to a survey commissioned by the BMA.

These findings underpin a campaign launched by the BMA today – ['Support Your Surgery'](#) - encouraging members of the public to support the Association's call for Government investment in general practice to provide better services.

As part of the campaign, [a petition](#) has been set up by the BMA for the public to sign, which calls on the Westminster Government to also fund improved buildings and source more GPs. The campaign also explains the pressures on general practice, and why it's been difficult for patients to see their GP face-to-face over the last 18 months.

Demand on general practice and its workforce increased hugely during the pandemic, as practices kept patients safe by introducing infection control measures which has limited the number of people GPs and their staff could see face-to-face.

Although 58% of the public surveyed support these measures, GPs know this has been frustrating – in fact, [a recent BMA survey](#) found that one in five GPs reported being threatened, and another 67% said their experience of abuse, threatening behaviour or violence had got worse in the last year.

60% of those surveyed felt that the Government, local commissioning groups and NHS management were largely responsible for the backlog of care and lack of access to a GP, with just a quarter feeling that GPs and other healthcare staff in surgeries were to blame.

Dr Richard Vautrey, GP committee chair at the BMA, said: "This campaign is about being upfront and honest with our patients. We know that Covid-19 has changed how GP services look and feel, and that it can be incredibly frustrating for patients who just want to see their doctor, face-to-face, without delay.

"We, like the rest of the NHS, were ill-prepared for the pandemic - with decades of underfunding and seriously short on staff, and the consequences of the last 18 months have added significantly to these pressures. They have also been understandably very stressful for patients and, sadly, this has resulted in poor behaviours, or worse, with some staff reporting cases of abuse and violence from patients.

"This isn't the way we want it to be. GPs and their teams are just as frustrated, and while the general practice workforce have done everything in their power to improve pressures in their own surgeries, we can't make the changes we and our patients want to see without urgent Government backing and funding.

"It's important that patients understand the reality of this crisis and that, despite the easing of lockdown, the pressures on general practice will only get worse if nothing is done. Not only is Covid-19 still a threat, but GPs also continue to deliver the vaccine rollout; annual winter pressures and the flu season could make things worse; and the backlog of care is constantly growing.

"General practice is at a crossroads and the route for general practice to get through this crisis isn't guaranteed at the moment. All doctors want to do is help their patients, but we need the right funding and resources to do that, and to the standard that our communities understandably expect.

"We hope this campaign, with GPs and patients working together, is the beginning of not only giving general practice what it needs, but also what our patients rightfully deserve. We therefore urge everyone to sign our petition calling on Government to provide the funding we need for better services and more doctors. If you support your surgery, it means it can be there to support you."

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