



Beds & Herts LMC Ltd: Weekly Update for Practices, Monday 6th September 2021

1. Beds & Herts LMC Ltd Annual Report 2021

A brief overview of the work the LMC has undertaken to support individual GPs and practices in Beds & Herts in 2020 – 2021.

Please view here: [Beds & Herts LMC Ltd Annual Report 2021.](#)

2. Secondary / Primary Care interface

The Medical Directors of the two main hospitals in Hertfordshire (West Herts Hospitals Trust and East & North Herts Trust) have sent out communications to their medical staff to remind them of the pressures GPs are under and that they should not be passing on work to primary care that should be done by the hospitals.

Dr van der Watt at West Herts Hospitals Trust wrote to his colleagues recently that “our primary care colleagues are having to deal with up to a 100% increase in patient contacts. It is therefore not surprising that receiving complicated management plans, requests to order multiple tests, or suggestions to re-refer the patient to another specialty, is creating significant disquiet with our GP colleagues”. He listed a number of specific actions that he expects hospital clinicians to undertake themselves, rather than passing on to GPs. Similarly, Dr Chilvers at East & North Herts Trust wrote to his hospital colleagues “do not ask GPs to do a task that you can do”, reminding them to provide prescriptions and sick notes and to refer patients in line with the hospital’s consultant to consultant referral policy (which allows referrals for the same condition).

We have shared these communications with colleagues in Bedfordshire and Luton and hope that similar messages will be sent out there.

We hope that practices will start to feel the impact of these messages and notice a reduction in the inappropriate transfer of work that has been adding to the overwhelming workload general practice has been experiencing for the last 18 months.

In addition, hospitals are required to agree a plan with commissioners by the end of September that addresses a number of their contractual requirements relating to the interface between primary and secondary care, and are required to discuss these plans with the LMC. We are already liaising with the commissioners to ensure this happens as soon as possible, and we will keep you informed.

3. Blood bottle shortages

The shortages of Becton Dickinson blood test tubes across GP surgeries and hospitals are now severe, and the [BMA has raised concerns](#) that if the NHS does not reduce the amount being used in the coming days, even the most clinically important blood tests may be at risk.

The BMA has now [written to the Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid](#) calling for urgent action from ministers to address the shortages outlining the key areas that require urgent attention:

- Public-facing communications from government, responding to patients' concerns and outlining how long the current situation is expected to last
- A clear plan for what happens if the tubes run out before an alternative supply can be put in place
- Assurances that once supplies return to normal doctors will be supported to deal with the resulting backlog in tests.

The BMA stresses that the government urgently needs to do much more to provide patients with detailed, easily accessible information about the situation so that practices are not blamed for something they have no control over.

The NHSE/I published [guidance](#) last week about the impact of the national shortage, after BMA raised concerns about the impact this is already having on the ability of practices to complete QOF and other national and local contractually. The guidance advises practices not do any routine blood tests, until the situation has been resolved, and until then, urgent blood investigations can still be done as supplies allow (the national indemnity scheme, CNSGP, will cover this situation).

4. Delays in influenza vaccines

[Seqirus](#) has informed practices that due to road freight challenges, there will be a delay to scheduled delivery of influenza vaccine by one to two weeks. Practices have been asked not to book any flu clinics until they have received a Delivery Note email from Seqirus. Beds & Herts LMC has written to the commissioners to ask what support they will be offering practices in dealing with this situation; we await their response.

5. Survey of practices' experiences of using PCSE payments and pensions portal in August

BMA continues to challenge PCSE to ensure that their pay and pensions portal is fit for use by both GPs and practices. The portal has now been in use for three months and BMA are looking to gauge the effectiveness of the various 'fixes' put in place by PCSE to correct what they have described as 'teething issues'.

We are now at a critical time where PCSE and NHSE/I will be looking to end the transformation process and return to 'business as usual'. There needs to be confidence that the many significant issues around payments to practices which blighted the first couple of months of the portal's use are largely behind us. To this end, BMA are launching a joint survey, with the Institute of General Practice Management, for practices and practice managers to learn of their experiences of using the system during August specifically. The BMA are also keen to know about practices' experiences of contacting PCSE for support around issues raised around the portal since it came into use on 1 June.

At Beds & Herts LMC we have heard of many of the problems practices have been experiencing and so are very pleased to share this [survey](#) with you. We know how incredibly busy practices are but completing the survey should take no longer than 10 minutes and will be invaluable in helping BMA hold PCSE and NHSE accountable for the portal's performance. The survey will remain open until Friday 17 September.

[Complete the BMA Survey of practices experience of PCSE here](#)

6. Resumption of formal meetings between GPC and NHS England

At its meeting on Thursday, GPC voted to restart formal meetings with NHS England. You can read their [press statement here](#) for more details

7. #Support Your Surgery – GPC England campaign

Following the launch of the BMA's [Support Your Surgery](#) campaign last week, more than 5,600 people have now signed the [petition](#) asking GPs and the public to support the BMA's call on Government to provide the resourcing needed so the number of GPs in England can be increased.

The BMA have added some more resource materials to the [Support Your Surgery campaign page](#), including a [downloadable version of the petition](#) for use in practices. Once completed, these can be emailed back to info.gpc@bma.org.uk.

The BMA have produced a [poster](#) and [twitter versions](#) explaining why practices are having to work differently during the pandemic.

You can also show your support for the campaign by adding a '[Support Your Surgery](#)' [Twibbon](#), [Twitter banner](#), [linked in banner](#), or [Facebook banner](#) to your social media profiles.

Physical posters have now also been dispatched to more than 5,800 practices in England. It would be a great help once they are received if you could send any photographs on the posters on display to [the BMA](#) so they can use them as part of the campaign to encourage more people to do the same.

At a time when so many are criticising general practice we would encourage you to use this campaign to gain the support of your patients to make the changes we urgently need to see.

[General Practice \(@BMA GP\) / Twitter](#) - [#supportyoursurgery](#)

8. GP survey

Please complete the BMA GP survey to tell them about the issues affecting you most, including your workload, recruitment and your future career plans. The survey is primarily aimed at fully qualified GPs who are currently working. The BMA will be running a survey for GP trainees separately later in the year. This is an important survey and will support national negotiations and lobbying, and is a crucially important part of the BMA GP campaign and the results will help to support this. Your responses will also help BMA better understand the issues affecting GPs and ensure they are representing the profession effectively. The [survey](#) is open until 20 September and will take around 10-15 minutes to complete.

9. COVID vaccinations

[Updated advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation \(JCVI\) on vaccination of children aged 12 to 15.](#)

JCVI have issued further guidance relating to vaccinating children [JCVI statement on COVID-19 vaccination of children aged 12 to 15 years: 3 September 2021](#). The committee is of the opinion that the benefits from vaccination are marginally greater than the potential known harms but acknowledges that there is considerable uncertainty regarding the magnitude of the potential harms. The margin of benefit, based primarily on a health perspective, is considered too small to support advice on a universal programme of vaccination of otherwise

healthy 12 to 15-year-old children at this time. It has suggested the government may wish to seek further views on the wider societal and educational impacts from the chief medical officers of the 4 nations, with representation from JCVI in these subsequent discussions.

JCVI advice on third dose vaccination for severely immunosuppressed

The [JCVI has advised](#) that a third vaccine dose of the COVID-19 vaccination should be offered to people over 12 who were severely immunosuppressed at the time of their first or second dose, including those with leukaemia, advanced HIV and recent organ transplants, as they may not mount a full response to vaccination and therefore may be less protected than the wider population. This is in addition to any booster they may need in the future.

We are still waiting for JCVI to make a decision on whether, when and to whom booster doses should be given. Practices need this information as soon as possible as they prepare to start their annual flu campaign

10. Sessional GPs webinar – contracts

A webinar will be held on 21 September, 6.30-8pm, about key contract issues for sessional GPs, including what to look out for when reading a new contract, common pitfalls to avoid and what support is available from the BMA. There will also be an update on NHS 111 contracts. Questions can be submitted in advance and there will also be an opportunity to ask questions during the event. Register your place [here](#)

11. Integrated Care Boards guidance

NHSE/I has published some [additional resources](#) in supporting system leaders to establish integrated care boards (ICBs) which are broadly centred around effective partnership working within ICSs. The documents are:

[Guidance on the development of place-based partnerships as part of statutory ICSs](#)

[ICS implementation guidance on effective clinical and care professional leadership](#)

[ICS implementation guidance on partnerships with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector](#)

[ICS implementation guidance on working with people and communities](#)

NHS X has also published: [ICS 'What Good Looks Like' Framework \(Digital & Data\)](#)

12. Hertfordshire and West Essex ICS Training Hub Early Career GP Appraisal Webinar, Weds 15th September, 1-2pm

Are you a First5 GP working in Hertfordshire or West Essex? Worried about your upcoming appraisal? Not sure on the new format? Do you have a question for the appraisals team?

East of England Senior Appraiser Dr Sarah Crane will be joining us to help make your next appraisal stress-free. Including:

- How to prepare for the new appraisal format
- What to expect
- Common appraisal queries

Can't make it for 1pm? No problem - feel free to drop in any time between 1-2pm but don't forget to bring your lunch!



HWEICS Training
Hub Early Career GP

To book online, please visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/early-career-gp-drop-in-appraisals-registration-167606396243?aff=lmc>
Or email Dr Jessica Hansell, Jessica.hansell1@nhs.net

13. Professor David Haslam

David Haslam retired GP Watton Surgery Watton-at-Stone sadly passed away on Monday 23rd August after a long illness. David worked in Watton Hertfordshire for all his GP career after completing vocational training on a local VTS. He also worked as an obesity physician running the obesity services at Luton and Dunstable Hospital and for a number of years for the National Obesity Forum. He had to take early retirement 2 years ago because of ill health.

The funeral service is taking place next Monday 13th September at St. Mary's Church, Welwyn village and afterwards at Tewin Bury Farm.
Any queries, please contact Dr Clare Grimsell on clarechauhan@aol.com

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 lmcadmin@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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