



Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire LMC Ltd: Weekly Update for Practices, Tuesday 25th January 2022

1. Covid Vaccination Tracing

We are aware of a vaccine tracing initiative by Public Health operated by local District Councils. This resulted in an email being sent to practices requesting patient data last week.

Following feedback and concerns raised by practices and PCN Directors, we have met with Public Health today to relay these concerns. We understand this is an attempt to support practices in contacting unvaccinated patients to persuade them to obtain vaccinations. We have pointed out to Public Health that there is no contractual obligation on practices to engage in this initiative and advise that practices are at liberty to decline the invitation.

This has only been raised with us as an issue by Hertfordshire practices. There has been some suggestion that a similar initiative might be being undertaken in Bedfordshire. If Bedfordshire practices are contacted about such an initiative, our advice would be the same - there is no contractual obligation; it is an individual decision for the practice to comply or to decline.

2. Extension of free PPE to the health and care sector

The [government has extended](#) the central, free provision of all items of COVID-19 PPE to the health and care sector, including primary care, by up to one year to March 2023 or until the infection prevention and control (IPC) guidance on PPE usage for COVID-19 is either withdrawn or significantly amended.

The recently updated [UK Health Security Agency guidance on infection control](#) states that “an FFP3 respirator (or equivalent), must be worn by staff when caring for patients with a suspected or confirmed infection spread by the airborne route (during the infectious period)”.

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has advised in its [response to the consultation on provision of PPE to the health and social care sector](#), that practices can use the [DHSC PPE portal](#) to access PPE free of charge.

NHSE/I has confirmed that this includes FFP3 respirators, and that CCGs have been informed that where risk assessments have shown it to be necessary that fit-testing should also be provided by the CCG.

3. Face coverings in practice premises

On 19 January the Prime Minister announced that face masks will no longer be mandated, though people are still advised to wear coverings in enclosed or crowded spaces and when meeting strangers.

[IPC guidance for health settings](#) has not changed and states "Universal masking with face coverings or surgical masks (Type II or IIR) to prevent the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and other respiratory infectious agents in health and care settings, as a source control measure, should continue to be applied for all staff, patients, and visitors".

Furthermore, [practices should carry out risk assessments](#) of their environments and assess what level of respiratory protective equipment should be worn by different groups in various settings.

Health and Safety law makes it a practice responsibility to protect staff and other patients based upon these risk assessments, thus making mask wearing a legal requirement if your risk assessment suggests masks should be worn.

The position of BMA/GPC is that, if challenged by patients not wanting to wear a mask, you can advise them about the [IPC guidance](#) and your risk assessments and inform the patient that "the law imposes on me the duty to expect you to wear a mask, and on you the duty to wear one in these premises"

Download the BMA [poster about using face coverings in practices](#).

Access all the BMA's patient resources for practices on our [Support Your Surgery](#) page

4. COVID-19 vaccinations programme

Vaccinating 12–17-year-olds at risk:

NHSE/I has published [operational guidance following JCVI advice on booster vaccination of eligible 12 - 17-year-olds](#) and household contacts of immunosuppressed people. Vaccination sites can now begin to invite eligible 12–17-year-olds for their booster vaccinations.

Extending the post-thaw expiry date of specific batches of Comirnaty® (30 microgram/dose):

After discussions with Pfizer Inc. and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), certain post-thaw expiry dates of unpunctured and undamaged Comirnaty (30mcg/dose) vials in batches detailed in this [NHSE/I letter](#) may be extended from 31 days to 45 days.

Updated PGD and National Protocol for Spikevax (Moderna):

An updated [PGD and National Protocol for Spikevax](#) (formerly COVID-19 Vaccine Moderna) V05.00 have now been published.

5. National Standards of Healthcare Cleanliness 2021

Practices have been asking if the implementation of the [National Standard of Healthcare Cleanliness](#) is mandatory in Primary Care. NHSEI have confirmed that, while contractors must have regard to NHSEI guidance, it is not a mandatory requirement.

CQC acknowledge in their advice on [Infection prevention and control in General Practice](#) that it will continue to regulate in line with its own regulations and the existing Code of Practice.

6. Medicines Supply Tool

The Department of Health and Social Care and NHSE/I have now launched an online [Medicines Supply Tool](#), which provides up to date information about medicine supply issues. To access the Medicines Supply Tool, you will need to register with the [SPS \(Specialist Pharmacy Service\) website](#).

7. Education Update Webinars

***FREE* CQC Update Webinar, Tuesday 1st March, 12.00 - 1.00pm**

This CQC Update is organised by Beds & Herts LMC and delivered by [DKJ Support Services](#), who specialise in bids and compliance in primary care. The webinar is suitable for GPs and Managers working in general practice in Beds, Herts, West Essex and Milton Keynes.

The CQC process will be explained as it currently stands including the new monthly assessments and what to expect in April 2022.

Agenda:

- CQC in the past: What worked and how you can bring this to the new world of CQC inspections.
- CQC in the present: Looking at the current themes CQC inspectors are looking at including data, searches and questions that are being asked. A focus on the monthly assessment and how this can invoke an inspection. A look at the change in focus for CQC.
- CQC in the future: What do CQC inspections look like for general practice from April 2022 and what you should be prepared for.
- Q&A

[For more information and how to register your FREE place, view here](#)

***FREE* Mental Health Updates for GPs, Thursday 3rd March, 1.00 – 4.45pm**

This event is organised by Beds & Herts LMC and delivered in collaboration with [Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust \(HPFT\)](#). The webinar is aimed at GPs working in Hertfordshire. GPs from outside Hertfordshire are welcome to attend but please be aware there will be references to Hertfordshire referral pathways and localised services.

You are welcome to attend 1, 2 and/or 3 sessions within the same webinar.

Agenda:

12.45 - 1.00pm	Registration, Welcome, Housekeeping, Opening Comments
1.00- 2.00pm	Presentation 1: An Introduction & Overview to Eating Disorders - diagnosis, complications and management
2.00 - 2.15pm	Comfort Break (delegates are welcome to leave and join)
2.15 - 3.15pm	Presentation 2: An overview of Borderline Personality Disorders
3.15 - 3.30pm	Comfort Break (delegates are welcome to leave and join)
3.30 - 4.30pm	Presentation 3: Supporting Women with Perinatal Mental Health Disorders in Primary Care <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Spotting perinatal specific presentations- Managing perinatal mental health risk and when to worry,- Treatments of perinatal mental illness including prescribing in pregnancy and lactation.
4.30 - 4.45pm	Closing Comments

[For more information and how to register your FREE place, view here](#)

8. Daily Vaccine Confidence Sessions

Daily vaccine confidence sessions hosted by clinical professionals

NHS England and NHS Improvement will be running daily drop-in Vaccine confidence Q&A sessions from Wednesday 26 January 2022 to February 3, 2022. These sessions are for all staff to attend and will offer an opportunity to ask any specific questions you might have regarding COVID-19 vaccines.

Each of these drops-in sessions will be tailored towards a specific audience and hosted by a relevant clinical professional who will answer any questions and signpost you to any additional information. These sessions will provide a safe and supportive environment for you to ask any questions you may have about the COVID-19 vaccines. Dates and themes are:

- Wednesday 26 January: 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm - Primary Care
- Thursday 27 January: 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm - Vaccines and Fertility
- Friday 28 January: 10:00am – 11:00 am - Vaccines and the Science
- Saturday 29 January: 7:00pm – 8:00 pm - Vaccines and Your Faith
- Sunday 30 January: 7:00pm - 8:00pm - Vaccines and Your Faith
- Monday 31 January: 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm - Vaccines for Nursing and Midwifery Staff
- Tuesday 1 February: 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm - Vaccines and Fertility
- Wednesday 2 February: 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm - Vaccines for Healthcare Students
- Thursday 3 February: 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm - Vaccines and the Science

To register, go to <https://www.events.england.nhs.uk/events/staff-vaccination-daily-q-and-a>

Please note that these sessions will focus on staff vaccine hesitancy, not Vaccination as a Condition of Deployment.

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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