



## Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire LMC Ltd: Update for Practices, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023

### In this edition:

1. **2023/24 Contractual Access Requirements**
2. **2023/24 Network Contract Directed Enhanced Service – changes related to Local Capacity and Access Improvement Payment Requirements**
3. **GPs vote to take industrial action if ‘disastrous’ contract changes are not renegotiated**
4. **Workforce data**
5. **Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire LMC Evening Roadshows - Coming Soon!**
6. **GP Pensions Update Webinar**
7. **Primary Care Level 3 Safeguarding Children Webinar**

#### 1. **2023/24 Contractual Access Requirements**

The LMC has produced a document analysing the contract regulations and our interpretation – [click here to read the document](#).

The GPC/ BMA have also developed [guidance](#) for practices to help them navigate this. The key change practices need to be aware of is that patients cannot be asked to call back another day; instead, patients must be offered an appointment, offered “appropriate advice or care”, signposted to a service or resource, asked to provide further information, or informed as to when they will receive further information about the services that may be provided (having regard to urgency of clinical needs and other relevant circumstances).

The [GPCE Safe Working in General Practice](#) guidance is still contractually compliant, and we strongly recommend that practices reflect on how they might incorporate this to prioritise safe patient care and staff wellbeing. Read more about the 2023/24 GP contract changes on the [BMA website](#).

#### 2. **2023/24 Network Contract Directed Enhanced Service – changes related to Local Capacity and Access Improvement Payment Requirements**

The LMC has produced an analysis of the current contractual position in response to the “templates” circulated by ICBs – [click here to read the document](#).

#### 3. **GPs vote to take industrial action if ‘disastrous’ contract changes are not renegotiated**

GPC England held an emergency meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023, where the committee voted to ballot GPs working in England for industrial action if ‘disastrous’ changes to the GP contract, which could threaten patient safety, are not renegotiated in the coming months.

The meeting was called after the Government and NHS England decided to impose changes to the 2023/24 GP contract, despite repeated warnings from GPC England that they were not suitable proposals. Changes to the contract were also roundly rejected by GPCE in February, calling the proposals ‘[unsafe and insulting](#)’. Since then, [the committee has also tried to meet with the Health Secretary](#) to negotiate a better contract, but this too has been cast aside.

In response to this Dr Kieran Sharrock, Acting Chair, GPC England said:

*“Today’s vote is an opportunity for the Government to put right this disastrous contract and to secure the future of patient safety.*

*No GP wants to have to consider taking industrial action – and it’s something we still hope to avoid – but the committee has been flatly ignored each time we’ve explained why this contract isn’t workable and needs to be urgently renegotiated.*

*General practice is under unprecedented pressure, and these contract changes will only make things worse by taking GPs away from their patients when they need us the most. This is a time to support the health service, not wave through policies that only pummel us further into the ground.”*

Read the press release [here](#).

#### **4. Workforce data**

The latest [GP workforce data](#), published recently, shows that GP practices across England continue to experience significant and growing strain with declining GP numbers, rising patient demand, and struggles to recruit and retain staff.

Although there was a slight increase in fully qualified GPs in March 2023 (0.1%), we still have the equivalent of 2,059 fewer fully qualified GPs than in September 2015, and we have lost the equivalent of 463 fully qualified full-time GPs over the past year. In addition to this, the number of GP practices England has reduced by 92 over the past year – reflecting a long-term trend of closures, as well as mergers. This coincides with a rise in patients: as of March 2023, there was a record-high of over 62.4 million patients registered with practices in England, resulting in another record-high average of 9,740 patients per practice, or 2,285 patients for each full-time equivalent GP. This is an increase of 348 patients per GP, or 18%, since 2015.

The latest [GP Appointments data](#) show that 31.6 million GP appointments were booked in March 2023, which is 4.3 million more than in February 2023, and 1.9 million more GP appointments than in March 2022, which is a significant increase and which demonstrates the increasing workload pressure on GPs.

Read more about the pressures in general practice [here](#).

#### **Workforce returns**

Please continue to review your workforce returns to ensure they capture all hours worked in an average week, including CPD time, which may be done at home. For salaried doctors the value in the contracted hours box is used in the returns. For contractors and zero-hours salaried doctors it is the actual hours box that is used. If you are unsure which box to use, please put the actual hours worked per week in both boxes. The website to file returns can be found here – [NHS Digital Data Collection](#).

#### **5. Beds & Herts LMC Evening Roadshows - Coming Soon!**

Please come along and meet the team and receive some practical information on the principles of Safe Working in General Practice: what you can do, what you can’t do and what others are doing.

We will also have an update on the new imposed GP Contract, and in particular what it says about access, and are pleased to confirm Dr Clare Bannon, Deputy Chair of GPC England is able to attend on the 21<sup>st</sup> June.

These free events are open to all GPs and Practice Managers in Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire. Please see the below dates and venues:

- **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023, 7 – 9:30pm** – Kings House, 245 Amphill Road, Bedford, MK42 9AZ
- **Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 7 – 9:30pm** – Focolare Centre, 69 Parkway, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 6JG

To book your free place, please [click here!](#)

## 6. GP Pensions Update Webinar

Hosted by Beds & Herts LMC Ltd, presented by Paul Gordon from [Atomos](#), this session is **aimed at GPs** and is an update, not an introductory session.

**Date:** Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Time:** 7.00 – 8.00pm (registration from 6.45pm)

**Format:** Webinar via MS Teams - joining instructions sent 1 week before

### Agenda:

- 1995/2008/2015 Schemes - including Normal Retirement Ages, accrual of benefits and peripheral benefits
- Age Discrimination Case – the impact on members and their benefits
- Annual Allowance – the issues around growth, the impact of the McCloud Judgement, Scheme Pays Election and the options available
- Lifetime Allowance – Budget 2023
- 24-Hour Retirement/Partial Retirement – how, when and why
- Q&A

For more information and how to register your FREE place, please visit [GP Pensions Webinar](#).

## 7. Primary Care Level 3 Safeguarding Children Webinar

**\*Herts Only\***

Dr Fabienne Smith (ICB Named GP for Safeguarding Children) will provide an overview of this the ICB Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Primary Care Toolkit and discuss cases to enable Primary Care colleagues to implement their own comprehensive Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence policy, covering both staff and patients affected by Domestic Abuse and/or Sexual Violence.

**When:** Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Time:** 1 – 2pm

**How to join:** via MS Teams (link included in the attached flyer)

For more information and joining instructions, please see the [attached flyer](#).

**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](mailto: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](#).

**Contact Us:**

Beds & Herts LMC Ltd,

Tel: 01438 880010

Email: [lmcadmin@bhlmc.co.uk](mailto:lmcadmin@bhlmc.co.uk)

Website: [www.bedshertslmcs.org.uk/contact\\_us](http://www.bedshertslmcs.org.uk/contact_us)

