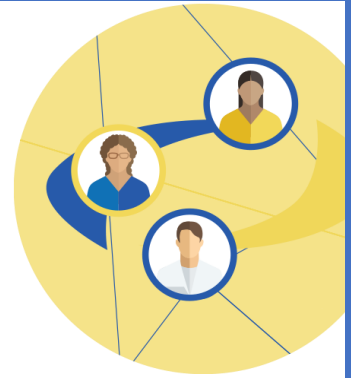


Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire LMC Ltd: Update for Practices, Monday 30th October 2023



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1. Access to Records

Following on from the additional BMA/GPCE [guidance shared with practices](#) last week about the imminent contractual requirement to give all patients online access to their prospective records, they have updated and published some further resources. What a practice is contractually required to do and any timescale for this will depend on when (or if) you have been issued with an appropriately updated contract. If you are not sure about what **your** contract requires of you on this topic, please feel free to contact the LMC to clarify this.

GPCE strongly advises practices to carry out a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) if they have not already done so, and may wish to use the [BMA's DPIA as a template](#). If your DPIA suggests there may be a high risk to patients, then the GPCE advise you to separately inform the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and your ICB commissioner. They have provided a [template letter for the ICO](#) to flag high risks associated with providing prospective online access and therefore stating that the GP, as data controller, is unable to go ahead with processing. They have also provided a [template letter for the ICB team](#) which includes questions that you may wish to ask your commissioner based around your potential concerns. If you have not 'gone live' and wish to make use of EMIS' offer to bulk provision access at a later date, BMA/GPC recommend you contact your ICB primary care IT team ahead of the 31st October 2023.

GPCE strongly recommend that you inform your patients regarding the provision of access to let them know it is happening (guidelines on how to do this in 'Reference A' within the [FAQs](#)), and would encourage practices to engage with and agree a way forward with the local commissioning team to ensure they are fully informed and updated of the practice plan, including any bulk communications you may plan to send to patients.

GPCE have also issued a [joint statement](#) with Violence Against Women and Girls organisations, including Refuge, Women's Aid and EVAW (End Violence Against Women Coalition), highlighting outstanding concerns around the implications of automatic prospective online access for domestic abuse survivors. Read more [here](#).

BMA/GPCE's full guidance is available [here](#).

2. PCSE Seniority Payments Reconciliation Exercise 2023

Some practices may recently have received letters from PCSE regarding the Seniority Payments Reconciliation Exercise 2023. GPCE states that '[Seniority Payments](#) used to be made to GP partners and were based on length of NHS service and received profit. The seniority scheme closed to new members on the 01st April 2014, and was then phased out, with the last payments made by the 31st

March 2020. Seniority funding was then diverted to Global Sum, as part of the 2013/14 Contract Agreement. The actual entitlement to seniority pay depended on the Final Seniority Factor [FSF] and as there was a time-lag in calculating this, the FSF for financial years 2017/18, 2018/19, and 2019/20 have only just been published. NHS England and PCSE are now reviewing the adjustments made for those years and will be contacting practices once this has occurred.'

GPCE advises current partners to inform their accountants of the details when received from PCSE, as the amounts can be challenged via the *online form link within the letter received from PCSE* stating that 'in a limited number of cases, there will be a need to liaise with retired colleagues, and the matter may not always be covered by written arrangements'. GPCE recommends that practices first ask their accountants for advice in terms of PCSE figures, raising a query if appropriate, 'which may not be a value-for-money exercise if the variance is small'.

If you have any queries regarding this process, please contact BMA/GPCE on info.lmcqueries@bma.org.uk.

[Attached](#) is the GPCE letter to practices which we have been asked to share with practices.

3. GPCE and RCN joint statement on GP practice staff pay uplift 2023/24

GPCE and the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) have issued a [joint statement](#) to alert their respective members to the details of the recently announced 6% pay increase for salaried general practice staff. The way the expenses uplift is applied leads to some inequity amongst GP practices. This means some practices will not receive enough additional funding to cover an entire 6% uplift for all salaried staff members.

GPCE states that 'Securing recurrent pay uplifts for all practice staff is vital for the future success of General Practice. Key to successfully negotiating with the Government in forthcoming contract negotiations 2024/25 and 2025/2026 is making the case that staff should be fairly paid and benefit from rewarding working conditions. The GPCE and RCN are committed to working closely together to ensure appropriate and fair funding for Nurses in General Practice as an integral part of the General Practice Team.'

4. Clarification on ARRS 5% Uplift and PCN Budgets

Further to previous advice regarding the ARRS/Agenda For Change scheme 5% uplift for 23/24, the LMC wanted to clarify that the updated maximum amounts that can be claimed for each role can be found under section 10.5 of the updated PCN DES specification [[NHS England » Network Contract DES – contract specification for 2023/24 – PCN requirements and entitlements](#)] and note that it **states that 'the higher maximum reimbursement rates do not affect the overall value of a PCN's overall ARRS sum'**. However, if a PCN finds that its current staffing will take it above the PCN ARRS allocation for the year because of the 5% uplift, we would strongly encourage them to contact their ICB as there may be sources of funding available to off-set any potential overspend.

5. Gender Dysphoria Management – ICB Letter

For the last two years we have been raising the unacceptable provision of services for the management of gender dysphoria in primary care, with our local commissioners, and regional NHS England. The responsibility for commissioning currently sits with NHSE, not the ICB, and it is clear that there is a commissioning gap when it comes to the prescribing for, and monitoring of, these vulnerable patients.

Last week H&WE ICB wrote to NHSE outlining their commissioning responsibilities, the consequences that the lack of a properly commissioned service is having on both patients and local GPs, and asking for urgent consideration and clarification. We applaud the H&WE ICB for listening to the feedback that they have received from local GPs and the LMCs, acknowledging that there is a significant problem, and understanding that pressuring GPs to prescribe isn't the solution. Whilst the letter was written by H&WE ICB it has been shared with BLMK ICB, and we will be raising the issue with them again at our next meeting.

6. Level 3 Children and Adult Safeguarding Webinars in Herts & West Essex

For Herts Practices

Beds & Herts LMC and Herts & West Essex ICB invite primary care colleagues in Hertfordshire and West Essex to the following FREE Safeguarding webinars, contributing to Level 3 training requirements. There are two sessions (A & B) and two opportunities to attend each event.

Session A:

Agenda:

- Sudden Unexpected Deaths in Children, SUDC UK
- Signs of Elder Abuse, Age UK Herts

Dates & times:

- Wednesday 15th November 2023, 1.30 – 4.00pm
- Tuesday 23rd January 2024, 1.30 – 4.00pm

[Register your free place here](#)

Session B:

Agenda:

- Hertfordshire IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy) Service
- Court Appearances, presented by Dr Olive Hayes, Consultant Community Paediatrician East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust & Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children, Hertfordshire and West Essex ICB.

Dates & times:

- Tuesday 05th December 2023, 1.30 - 4.00pm
- Wednesday 28th February 2024, 1.30 - 4.00pm

[Register your free place here](#)

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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