

YORLMC News

For practices in North Yorkshire & York and Bradford & Airedale

Update from Dr Brian McGregor *YORLMC Medical Secretary*

Dear Colleagues

LMC England Conference 27 November 2020

The LMC annual conference for England took place on 27 November 2020. Several members of both Bradford and North Yorkshire LMCs attended, along with most of the corporate affairs team observing remotely.

My summary of the day at [Appendix 1](#) and the actual wording of each motion along with whether they were carried or lost is at [Appendix 2](#).

A video of the conference is available at <https://bma.streameventlive.com/archive/212>

COVID vaccine

My latest COVID update, issued earlier this week and available on the [YORLMC website](#), covers a range of COVID related news and guidance, particularly around the vaccine.

As I said in my update, thank you from everybody at the LMC for the outstanding and amazing work that has been ongoing in general practice throughout the last year. Take time over the holiday period to rest, recuperate, and relax, be kind to yourself and those you care for, and take some time to acknowledge and support colleagues who have been under similar pressures alongside you this year.

With best wishes
Brian



Cameron Fund Christmas Appeal

This year and subsequent years will be difficult for the [Cameron Fund](#), which is the only medical benevolent fund that solely supports GPs and their dependents, as the Fund faces increased pressure from those affected by the COVID crisis and a reduced income from investments.

As such, they have launched a Christmas appeal to try and raise more money for the Fund to be able to help more GPs in need. Read more in the attached letter at [Appendix 3](#) from Dr Ian Winterton, Cameron Fund Treasurer and on the [Cameron Fund website](#).

The latest Cameron Fund newsletter is available at [Appendix 4](#).



Guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people

As of 2 December, lockdown has ended in England and [returned to a regionally differentiated three-tiered system](#). Due to this, the government has sent [a letter](#) with updated guidance to all clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) people on the Shielded Patient List.

In each tier, there is a set of rules that everyone in that area must follow. The letter, which sets out the new guidance, no longer advises CEV people to stay away from work or school, but does suggest limiting the number of social interactions. Read the government's [guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people at each local tier](#).

The DHSC has also announced that people on the CEV list and those in residential and nursing care homes [will receive free winter supply of Vitamin D](#) to help support general health, in particular bone and muscle health, during the winter months, which is even more important for those that have been shielding and may not have been able to obtain enough vitamin D from sunlight.

NHS Digital has published [letter templates for high-risk patients](#) for use by GPs when notifying patients newly identified as clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19.

The BMA has updated [guidance about clinically extremely vulnerable people](#).

Christmas and New Year period

As highlighted in the [NHSE/I primary care bulletin](#), general practices are not expected to open for delivery of core services over the weekend and bank holidays for this coming Christmas and New Year period. Local commissioners and primary care providers can therefore continue to plan on the basis of their planned cover arrangements.

This followed the concerns that the BMA had raised of the importance of all those working in general practice needing time off during the Christmas bank holiday to rest after the difficult year we've had.



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CQC review of the use of do not resuscitate decisions during COVID-19

The CQC has produced the attached briefing at [Appendix 5](#) clarifying how it will be undertaking a [DHSC requested review](#) of the use of 'do not resuscitate' decisions during COVID-19 (made after 17 March 2020).

Some practices have already raised concerns regarding CQC 'spot checks' or communications from CCGs. Please note that these reviews are not CQC practice inspections and reports of review visits will not be published. If CQC do find examples in records which raise concerns about the way DNACPR decisions were made it will feed this back to the practice and to the CCG. CQC will also provide information to its local CQC inspection team as part of their routine monitoring.

The BMA recently wrote to Matt Hancock calling for an immediate suspension of all CQC inspections and reviews of general practice (other than those required for serious safety issues) for the duration of the pandemic to enable practices to focus on other priorities, not least the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

Medical Aid Films community language COVID-19 resources

Medical Aid Films, supported by BMA Giving, have produced community language versions of their [informative COVID-19 animation](#) 'Getting the help you need', which offers important patient information on medical rights, where and how to access services, as well as self-care strategies. The animations are available in English, Punjabi, Urdu and Arabic.

This resource is intended to aid doctors and health care professionals to better support their patient communities who may be lacking access to COVID-19 information and messaging in their own language. Additional languages versions will be available from next month.

In addition, the charity is inviting healthcare workers fluent in Punjabi, Urdu and Arabic to take part in an online screening and Q&A session that will review the animation and highlight information needs and preferences around COVID-19 for non-English speaking communities. If you are interested in this opportunity, Medical Aid Films are able to cover small project expenses. Contact meghan@medicalaidfilms.org for more information or fill out the [online feedback survey](#).



Difference between PGD and PSD

In light of requirements around the COVID vaccine, GPs and practices may find guidance on the [BMA website](#) of help, about Patient Group Directions and Patient Specific Directions.

University of Oxford / AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine trial data

The [data from Phase III of the University of Oxford / AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine trial](#) has been published which provides further good news in that it suggests that this vaccine could prevent asymptomatic disease, and we look forward to the trial to be completed. The data is promising, particularly as we know that this vaccine can be stored at fridge temperature and can be more easily be delivered in primary care. Read the Wellcome Trust statement [here](#).

RCGP call for suspension of GP appraisal during the Covid-19 pandemic

The [Royal College of GPs' Council has passed a motion to call for suspension of GP appraisal](#) for the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic. Although the College was pleased to see the introduction of a 'lighter touch' approach to appraisal, they remain concerned that many GPs simply do not have the capacity to engage even with a simpler process. Read the full statement [here](#)

Accessing your GP animation

To support general practice, the NHSE/I has created [an animation to help explain to the public how they can continue to access GP services](#), including how to get in contact, the different ways care may be delivered, and how face-to-face appointments have changed.

2019/20 annual allowance charge compensation scheme

Following significant pressure by the BMA, NHS England introduced the annual allowance repayment scheme last year, which guarantees that any annual allowance tax charge in 2019/20 for eligible clinicians will be compensated for at the time of retirement.

If an eligible clinician who is a member of the NHS England and Wales pension scheme incurs an annual allowance tax charge, they **must elect to pay this via scheme pays**. The formal scheme pays deadline is 31 July 2021, however, members are encouraged to complete the forms as soon as possible, preferably by 31 December 2020 (to minimise any interest applicable).

As the deadline is fast approaching, and to help members, the BMA has produced a [template letter](#), to be submitted alongside the [scheme pays election form](#). You will then need to complete the [2019/20 Annual Allowance Charge Compensation Policy Form](#). Find more information on how to apply, as well as resources for employers, FAQs and infographics, on the [NHSE/I website](#).

Read more in this [update from the BMA's Pensions Committee](#) and the [guidance on annual allowance repayment scheme on the BMA website](#).

Workforce data reminder

A reminder that NHS Digital will extract the latest general practice workforce data from the [National Workforce Reporting System \(NWRS\)](#) on **Thursday 31 December**. Practices and PCNs should review their records and make any updates, including recording GP locums (practices) or commissioned services (PCNs), before then. This is a contractual requirement and a prerequisite for access to the Covid Capacity Expansion Fund, and important for planning for workforce supply, data which the BMA also uses in our lobbying. Information on how to register and the latest [workforce statistics](#) are available on the [NHS Digital website](#).



QOF system suppliers update

As practices will be aware QOF 2020/21 has been [revised to reflect the impact of COVID-19 on general practice](#). The BMA recognises that practices need to reprioritise aspects of care not related to COVID-19 and the QOF requirements have been modified for 2020/21 to support this and to help release capacity in general practice. Practices and commissioners have been asked to work together to confirm that any population stratification is clinically appropriate for their local population.

Clinical system suppliers have recently updated QOF indicators and prompts. In some instances, this may have impacted on practices' records of progress to date. Practices should be reassured that the indicators affected by this update are those that are subject to income protection as outlined in 2020/21 QOF guidance. Practices are not expected to re-code or re-review patients for indicators affected by this system update, unless there is a clinical need to do so.

Investment and Impact Fund 2020/21 – reminder to sign up to PCN CQRS service

The fund above represents a significant source of income for PCNs and to calculate this, NHSE/I measures PCN performance against indicators defined in the [2020/21 Network Contract DES](#), by using data extracted from practice systems via the [Calculating Quality Reporting Service](#).

In order for practices to record their performance against these indicators, commissioners must have offered them the PCN service on CQRS. If they do not, PCNs containing these practices risk not receiving IIF funding this year, *so if your practice is not signed up to this service, please contact your CCG as soon as possible to ensure that it is offered*.

More information can be found on [NHS Digital's website](#) and please email questions about the service to england.gpcontracts@nhs.net.

Christmas parties and gifts – accountancy advice

Accountancy advice from James Gransby, Partner at RSM Accountants, Vice Chair AIMSA

With the traditional style Christmas party unlikely to be going ahead this year, what can practices do as an alternative? [RSM accountants](#) advises the following for practices:

Tax efficient options can be gifts or a remote get-together; normally there would be a £150 allowance per employee per year which would cover the cost of a Christmas party, but this isn't transferable into other options such as gift vouchers where the limit is £50 per person.

Gift vouchers - When giving vouchers up to £50 you are keeping within the HMRC 'Trivial Benefits' exemption limits. One of the conditions of this is that the gift must not be a reward for work or performance, therefore if the gift card comes with a message of "thank you for all your work over this challenging time" then HMRC could look to tax it, but a simple "season's greetings" will avoid this issue (the same advice applies for other times of celebration such as Diwali, or in Easter). Read more in the HMRC tax guidance on [trivial benefits](#)

Reward for service - If you want to give over and above a £50 voucher or if you do want to reward for service or performance then this should go through the payroll in the normal way as overtime or a bonus would do, and then be subject to PAYE in the hands of the staff member.

Remote parties - If you are planning a remote Christmas party then there is some good news, as HMRC has confirmed that the £150 per head exemption still applies. (There had been some concern that a virtual event would not meet the definition of an annual event and that food and drink sent to employees to consume during the party might be considered a separate gift which would therefore not be covered by the exemption). Note that this would be subject to the usual conditions:

- the event is available to all employees (there may be separate parties for different departments or branch surgeries)
- a record is taken of attendees, to ensure that those receiving food presents are at the party
- if costs exceed £150 per head the full cost of the party, not the excess cost, is taxable on the employee.

For further advice please contact your practice accountant.



GP trainees mileage payment

As mentioned in the previous edition of YORLMC News, NHS Employers and the BMA have published joint [guidance](#) for the reimbursement of home to principle place of work mileage for trainees in a GP practice.

The guidance will provide the necessary information for employing organisations on operationalising the current provisions in the absence of an updated version of the terms and conditions. This is applicable to both back dated and future claims.

GP appointment data

The latest [appointment data](#) for October has been published. There were nearly 1.6 million more appointments in October than September, and October also had the highest number of appointments of any month in 2020 (28,236,193), and the highest since October 2019.

There were 1.8million more face-to-face appointments in October than September and the highest number since February.

This data continues to show that general practice remains open and is delivering a high number of appointments during the second wave of the pandemic.

Government spending review

The Chancellor has announced funding plans for the NHS during his spending review speech. The BMA is of the view that the announcements fall short of what is needed to improve GP practices/ estates and expand the GP workforce.

Read the BMA briefing on the [announcements](#).

GMC State of medical education and practice in the UK

The GMC has released its annual survey findings in its [State of medical education and practice in the UK report](#). Last year they looked at general practice in detail. This year, not surprisingly, they have found that 80% of GPs said they were working remotely more often, with fewer face-to-face consultations. Of concern, 34% reported seeing situations where patient safety or care was compromised. However, 59% felt the pandemic has had a positive impact on the speed of implementing change. 38% of GPs responding said they were satisfied or very satisfied in their day-to-day work, up from just 20% in 2019.

Ethnicity data

The GMS regulation (England) amendments for recording of ethnicity information have been laid and will come into force from *1 January 2021*. This follows the significant impact COVID-19 has had on BAME people and the need to have better quality data to support the most effective healthcare planning.

This amendment places a requirement on practices to record ethnicity data provided by a patient when a practice ask for this. Read the Statutory Instrument and the Explanatory Memorandum [here](#).

EU Exit update – medicines supply continuity letter

The NHSE/I has published a [letter](#) from Dr Keith Ridge, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer for England, with an update on EU Exit on 31 December 2020, specifically on medicines supply continuity. The letter sets out that:

The DHSC guidance is that it is not necessary for local providers, whether in hospitals or primary care, to stockpile medicines or for clinicians to write longer prescriptions for patients. Unnecessary stockpiling puts more pressure on the supply chain and can risk additional pressure on the availability of medicines in other parts of the country. Prescribers and pharmacists should explain to patients that they should continue to order their prescriptions as normal.

Humber, Coast & Vale: Apprenticeship project

NHSE has funded a project hosted by the Excellence Centre to support Practices and other Humber, Coast & Vale (HCV) organisations to increase the number of DAS accounts in order to increase the growth of the apprenticeship workforce, whilst maximising the usage of the apprenticeship levy across HCV. There is more information at [Appendix 6](#).

Mental Health and Wellbeing

The BMA continues to offer [wellbeing services](#) and confidential 24/7 counselling and peer support for all doctors and medical students, as well as their partners and dependents, on 0330 123 1245. For hard copies of our Wellbeing [poster](#), please email wellbeingsupport@bma.org.uk. Access the [BMA's COVID-19 wellbeing pages here](#).

YORLMC is committed to providing its constituents with a variety of services to give modern General Practice the support it needs.

YORLMC's wellbeing programme, brings together a range of services, schemes and events that will support wellbeing and enable individuals to look after their own health and know when to seek help before difficulties arise. This programme is available to all GPs and practice managers as well as the wider practice team and the feedback already being received is excellent. There's more information about YORLMC wellbeing services [here](#).



YORLMC Buying Group & Member rates

Members of the LMC Buying Group can access discounts with any of the suppliers on the attached list at [Appendix 7](#).

To access these discounts, you can either login to the Buying Group website and request a quote or if you contact the supplier directly, you need to make sure you mention your practice is a member of the LMC Buying Group or state the discount code from the suppliers page of the Buying Group website.

If you were using an approved supplier before you became a Buying Group member or have been using a supplier for a long time and aren't sure whether you are receiving the correct rates, you can email the Buying Group to check: info@lmcbuyinggroups.co.uk. For further information on LMC Buying Group member benefits or to speak to a member of the team, you can live chat via their website: <https://www.lmcbuyinggroups.co.uk/> or give them a call on: 0115 979 6910.

YORLMC jobs page

YORLMC has a job page on our website at <https://www.yorlmcld.co.uk/jobs>. Please visit this page to view current vacancies and details of GPs seeking work.

NHS Practices in the YORLMC area seeking to fill GP and staff vacancies and GPs seeking work in the YORLMC area can place adverts on the job page free of charge. To place an advert please contact the Corporate Affairs Team via info@yorlmcld.co.uk



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