

24 February 2017

Ongoing issues with NHSPS

Dear practice

We are aware of ongoing issues that practices are experiencing with NHSPS. We are taking action to resolve these issues nationally, but as yet there remain significant unresolved matters which we are dealing with as a matter of urgency.

One of the most pressing issues for practices is the increase in service charges. Increases are being levied with seemingly no reference to either

- i) the contractual arrangements (or lack of such arrangements) that are in place; or
- ii) the sums historically paid.

This allied to the lack of itemised invoicing is making it impossible for practices' to check whether the charges are payable and (to the extent they are) whether they are reasonable and have been properly incurred.

In light of these issues, we have met with NHSPS and have highlighted that consideration must be given to a practices' contractual arrangements (or lack thereof) and their historic charges. In addition we have stressed that a robust process needs to be established for both calculating and itemising service charges so as to not only ensure transparency but to ensure that any costs are reasonable and good value for practices.

Notwithstanding the above, we are aware that NHSPS are communicating in quite a threatening manner which is causing distress to many practices. Our stance is clear, practices should be satisfied that the charges are duly payable and indeed reasonable before payment is made. As part of this the practice should be provided with an itemised list of what specifically the practice is being charged for, and practices should not be funding historic neglect of the building.

In many instances we are aware that disputes over service charges are coinciding with attempts by NHSPS to negotiate a lease. If your practice is in this position, please ensure that you undertake appropriate due diligence so as to ensure that you are comfortable with the current and future liabilities you may be signing up to. We have significant concerns over the current approach that NHSPS are taking in terms of service charges and as such we would urge all practices' to take care in defining and potentially capping their exposure to service charge liability before signing up to any new lease. For further information on the things to look out for when entering into a lease, please visit our website

where there is detailed guidance (please follow this [link](#) or search for “GP premises lease resource” for details).

Aside from the above we have heard concerning reports that ETTF funding is being leveraged to have practices sign up to a new lease. This is unacceptable and we are writing to NHS England to highlight that this funding should be available to all practices.

We have written to NHSPS regarding the above issues and hope they can be resolved urgently. If you are experiencing issues with NHSPS, please contact your LMC or BMA local advisor.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Ian Hume". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'I' and 'H'.

Ian Hume
GPC policy lead