

Content

| | |
|---|---|
| Amendment to generic medicine reimbursement prices: April 2014 (England) | 4 |
| Advice on employer's pension contributions for locum GPs (England) | 5 |
| Controlled drugs and repeat prescriptions (England) | 4 |
| Electronic Prescription Service - options for enabling EPs Release 2 in practices (England) | 3 |
| GP contract 2014/14 | 1 |
| Increases in prescription charges from April 2014 (England) | 4 |
| LMCs – Change of details | 5 |
| Men C for freshers (England) | 3 |
| MRCGP – Exam costs | 4 |
| QOF business rules v28 | 2 |
| QOF guidance 2014-15 | 2 |
| Vaccination and immunisation guidance 2014-15 (England) | 2 |

GP contract 2014/15

Several guidance documents have been recently published to reflect the changes to the English GP contract for 2014/15 coming into force from 1 April. The BMA website has been updated to incorporate these changes, and now includes the new joint GPC, NHS Employers and NHS England guidance document on the contract agreement, NHS England guidance on how the agreement will be applied to PMS practices and a checklist for practices on actions that they should take now to meet the requirements of the contract. [The information is available on the BMA website.](#)

Separate guidance on the [new unplanned admissions enhanced service](#), along [with associated templates](#)), has also been published. The guidance:

- Sets out the full requirements of the enhanced service under the headings of practice availability, proactive case management and personalised care planning, reviewing and improving the hospital discharge process and internal practice review;
- Includes the templates associated with the enhanced service, including on care planning and reporting;
- Sets out how the enhanced service will be paid and monitored. A maximum of £2.87 per patient is available for meeting the requirements, split into five components.

We would be grateful if LMCs could circulate this information as widely as possible.

Details for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland can also be accessed via the [same page on the BMA website](#).

The Statement of Financial Entitlements (SFE) Amendment Directions 2014 are [available on the NHS Employers website](#).

QOF guidance 2014-15

QOF guidance for 2014-15 for England has been published and is available on the [BMA website](#). Guidance for the devolved nations will also be updated to the QOF guidance pages once they have been published.

QOF business rules v28

Version 28 of the QOF Business Rules have now been [published on the HSCIC website](#).

Vaccination and immunisation guidance 2014-15 (England)

Guidance on a number of changes to the vaccination and immunisation programmes (in England) has now been published and added to our website on the [vaccinations and immunisations pages](#), along with a [summary table](#). Note that for some of the vaccinations we are still waiting for the guidance or service specification to be published; and these will be added as soon as they are finalised and the main guidance document [Vaccination and Immunisation Programmes 2014-15 - guidance and audit requirements](#) will also be updated to reflect this.

In short - the changes refer to:

New vaccination programmes commencing 1 April 2014

Hepatitis B for new born babies at risk (SFE) - guidance published.

MenC vaccination booster for freshers (ES) - guidance and service specification published.

Existing vaccination programmes continuing from 1 April 2014

MMR (SFE) - for patients over 16 who self present at practices (this was an enhanced service in 2013, but has now moved to the SFE, so no new service specification will be published).

Pertussis for pregnant women (Temporary ES) - service specification 2014 has been published.

Rotavirus (SFE) - guidance published.

Existing vaccination programmes continuing after August 2014

Seasonal influenza for at-risk patients (DES/ES) - widened so that it mirrors the at-risk groups set out in the Green Book to include pregnant women, but excluding 2-4 year olds - guidance and service specification to be published in June 2014.

Childhood seasonal influenza (ES) - this has been extended to include children aged 4, so that the new cohort is children aged 2-4 - guidance and service specification to be published June 2014.

Pneumococcal (DES) - There is an addition to programme to include the cohort as indicated within the Green Book - ie those aged under 65 in the at-risk groups - guidance and service specification to be published June 2014.

Shingles (routine cohort patients aged 70, SFE; Catch up programme (patients aged 78-79, ES) - Guidance and service spec to be published soon.

Men C for freshers (England)

A [tripartite letter \(England\)](#) has been sent out to practices regarding the new Men C for freshers.

This is a booster offered to freshers (aged 17-25) not previously vaccinated with Men C since reaching age 10, and who self-present to the practice (they will be notified via UCAS). It will commence 1 April 2014 and run until 31 October 2014. There are no call and recall requirements, the vaccine will be centrally supplied, and there will be a payment of £7.64 per dose.

We are drafting joint guidance and a service specification, both of which are in the process of being finalised and will be published on our website on the [vaccinations and immunisations pages](#) shortly.

Electronic Prescription Service – options for enabling EPS Release 2 in practices (England)

The Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) Release 2 enables prescribers in England, such as GPs and practice nurses, to send prescriptions electronically to a dispenser of the patient's choice, such as their local pharmacy.

The Joint GP IT Committee of the GPC and RCGP supports the deployment and utilisation of EPS Release 2, recognising the benefits it brings to practices and patients through increased efficiency and convenience.

There are three different options for enabling EPS Release 2 in a practice:

- (1) Commissioning Support Units or Health Informatics Services can arrange and manage go lives at a practice or CCG level;
- (2) CCGs can manage the go live;
- (3) GP practices can manage their own go live by using the [Standard Deployment Model](#).

The options are explained in more detail on the [HSCIC website](#). Practices that have questions about going live with EPS Release 2 can contact the HSCIC's Senior Implementation Manager for their area – names and contact details are [available online](#).

Increases in prescription charges from April 2014 (England)

The Department of Health (England) has announced that prescription charges in England will increase from £7.85 to £8.05 for each medicine or appliance dispensed as from 1 April 2014. The charge is also intended to increase by 20p to £8.25 in the following year.

The BMA believes it would be best to abolish prescription charges in England - they have already been abolished in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. This information is also available on the [drugs and prescribing pages](#) on the BMA website.

Controlled drugs and repeat prescriptions (England)

It has come to our attention that some CCGs are telling GPs they cannot put Controlled Drugs on repeat prescriptions, which is incorrect. There appears to be some confusion generated by only reading the first sentence of a paragraph in the NPC's [Guide to the management of controlled drugs in primary care](#) (12/09) on page 53 it says:

It is clear under the current legislation that repeat prescribing of CDs in Schedule 2 and 3 is not permitted. However, management systems which allow the patient to receive a prescription (hand signed by a practitioner) without a consultation is not subject to legislation, but is a clinical decision made on a case by case basis. It is good practice that patients should be reviewed before prescribing Schedule 2 and 3 CDs.

The repeat prescribing systems within practices are not the definition to which the regulations refer - the CCGs are confusing repeat prescribing within a clinical context (ie as every GP would understand it) with a "repeatable prescription" which is defined in the [Pharmaceutical Services Regulations](#). They are correct in so far as Schedule 2 or 3 drugs cannot be prescribed on such a form but there is no restriction whatsoever on what may or may not be contained within the patient's practice based medication repeat list.

Practices experiencing problems should direct their CCG to the relevant legislation.

Amendment to generic medicine reimbursement prices: April 2014 (England)

NHS England has reduced generic medicine reimbursement prices (Category M) from April 2014 by £10 million per month, equivalent to £120 million in a full year. The Drug Tariff will be amended from April 2014 to reflect this change. The letter can [be accessed online](#).

MRCGP – Exam costs

Some of you may have been contacted by the RCGP regarding tax relief on AKT and CSA examination fees paid since 2009. This will translate into a significant tax saving. Please see the [dedicated RCGP web page](#) for more information about this issue.

Advice on employer's pension contributions for locum GPs (England)

Following the web page updates to the contracts and funding pages for 2014/15, the advice on employer's pension contributions for locums has been relocated to the pensions area of the website. It can now be accessed via the following page - [accessed via the BMA website](#).

LMCs – change of details

If there are any changes to LMC personnel, addresses and other contact details please email Karen Day with the changes at kday@bma.org.uk.

The GPC next meets on 17 April 2014, and LMCs are invited to submit items for discussion. You may like to review these, beforehand, with the representatives in your area who serve on the GPC. The closing date for items is 8 April 2014. It would be helpful if items could be emailed to Christopher Scott at cscott@bma.org.uk. You may also like to use the GPC's listservers to exchange views and ideas.

GPC News

LMCs are reminded that their regional representatives can provide more detailed information about the issues covered in GPC News, and other matters. Other members of the GPC would also be pleased to accept invitations to LMC meetings wherever possible. Their names and addresses are in the GPC Yearbook. The secretariat can also provide a written background brief if required, but it would be helpful to have such requests well in advance of your meetings.

Finally, if LMCs require assistance on local issues, they can also contact the BMA's local offices: addresses are on page 3 of the GPC's yearbook.

This newsletter has been sent to:

- Secretaries of LMCs and LMC offices
- Members of the GPC
- Members of the GP trainees subcommittee
- Members of the sessional GPs subcommittee