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## GPC meeting

The GPC held its meeting on 17 October 2013 and this newsletter provides a summary of the main items discussed.

## Negotiations update

The GPC remains engaged in negotiations with NHS Employers for 2014/15. NHS Employers has a more limited mandate this year as it is only for England that it has been engaged to negotiate on the whole contract. For Wales it is negotiating on clinical QOF only. Scotland and Northern Ireland have chosen not to negotiate through NHS Employers. The chairs of GPC Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland remain fully involved in the negotiations as part of our negotiating team.

## **GPC News**

In order to provide LMCs and practices with as much up to date information as possible, we are planning to move to issuing two editions of GPC News a month. A regular newsletter from the GPC chairman, Chaand Nagpaul, to all GPs is also being launched shortly.

## **GPC pages on BMA website**

The GPC committee pages have been re-designed and now re-launched and can be found at [bma.org.uk/gpc](http://bma.org.uk/gpc). With input from some GPC members and LMC secretaries, the BMA's web team has improved a number of functions and pages now include news updates, map and contact details of GPC members, quick link to practice support and guidance, and GPC meeting dates. Further work is underway and biographies and photos of GPC will soon be added, as well as updated pages for the national committees and GPC subcommittees.

In addition, the pages containing practical support and guidance previously called 'managing your practice' have been renamed and can now be found at [bma.org.uk/gppractices](http://bma.org.uk/gppractices). The pages group together different types of guidance on service provision, premises, GP and staffing, and contracts. There is also a quick link to all the 'Focus on' guidance documents. The page highlights current key areas and newly published guidance, such as guidance on federations and sharing staff. This is an ongoing project and we are happy to have feedback and suggestions at [info.gpc@bma.org.uk](mailto:info.gpc@bma.org.uk).

## **Guidance on collaborative GP alliances and federations and sharing staff**

The GPs' Committee has produced guidance for practices considering forming alliances or federations. It gives advice on what practices should explore before taking decisions, possible structural and legal models and provides case studies on the different organisations some GPs have already created.

Related to the guidance on alliances and federations, the GPs' Committee has also produced advice on sharing staff, including secondments, joint employment, VAT considerations, alternative arrangements and managing change. Both guidance documents can be found on the [GP practices pages of the BMA website](#).

## **Payments to practices**

Another meeting has been held between NHS England and all relevant agencies responsible for payment processes, regarding the ongoing issues with payments to practices.

NHS England is acutely aware of the issues affecting some GP practices (and others) in relation to pay arrangements and delays and is working proactively with the GPC, FHS payment agencies, Area Teams, CCGs and local authorities to resolve these matters as quickly as possible.

Further communication about the solutions that have been identified for implementation will be made available to GP practices via NHS England in the very near future. These will be shared with GPC for approval in advance.

In the meantime, please continue to send in practice experiences regarding late payment to [aottley@bma.org.uk](mailto:aottley@bma.org.uk), particularly any instances where VAT registered practices believe they may have issues claiming back VAT from HMRC as a result of delays.

### **Prescription direction**

The GPC has published a [joint statement](#) with the PSNC and Pharmacy Voice on prescription direction which reminds practices and pharmacies that proper prescription practices should be followed and highlights activities to avoid in order to maintain good practice. A related [online article](#) has also been published by BMA News.

### **Care.data – additional guidance for GP practices**

NHS England and the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) have announced next steps in raising public awareness about care.data. Throughout January, all 22 million households in England will receive a leaflet explaining how peoples' information will be used and what to do if they object. This national activity will take place alongside the awareness raising activities undertaken by GPs, and will support GPs with their fair processing obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.

NHS England and the HSCIC have been liaising closely with the Information Commissioner's Office to help provide clarity and advice to GP practices on their responsibilities. Further guidance is now available (appendix 1). We recommend that practices read the guidance and follow the advice.

### **Dispensing doctor feescale changes 2013-14**

The dispensing doctor feescales, which includes an envelope of £172.3m for dispensing fees, has been published and come into effect from 1 October 2013 and onwards for England and Wales. The fees scale and further information is [available on the BMA website](#).

### **Vaccines and gelatine**

Following reports in the media about the use of gelatine in Fluenz, the vaccine recommended for use for children, Public Health England has published a [statement](#) on this issue. More in depth guidance has also been published in a recent [vaccine Update](#)

### **Vaccine supply: Zostavax® temporarily unavailable**

Public Health England (PHE) recently published the third special issue of [Vaccine Update in September](#), which deals with the temporary suspension of the acceptance of orders for Zostavax® following the recent capping of orders.

National distribution of Zostavax® vaccine began on 1 August 2013. However, due to an ongoing delay in the supply of the vaccine into the UK, PHE has temporarily removed Zostavax® from the ImmForm website, and it is not currently available to order. PHE expect further limited deliveries during October, at which point ordering will be resumed, with more substantial volumes due in

November and December. It is likely that the order level cap for England will remain in place during this period. PHE apologise for the inconvenience caused.

Multiple ordering to circumvent the cap has presented a number of challenges both for the distributor in distributing those orders, and for PHE in managing the remaining stock. Further orders will be monitored.

When ordering resumes, Zostavax® must only be ordered for the **70 year old and 79 year old cohorts** this year. PHE have asked GP practices not to stockpile the vaccine as the vaccine is expensive and it is important to minimise wastage.

Please note that the vaccine can be administered to the two eligible cohorts at any time between 1 September 2013 and 31 August 2014.

### **2013/14 enhanced services guidance and audit requirements – update**

NHS Employers, NHS England and the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) have updated their guidance and audit requirements for the 2013/14 enhanced services and the vaccination programmes supported by automated extractions. This guidance is intended to support area teams and practices in delivering these services, and includes the new read codes and business rules, including for childhood influenza. Note that guidelines and a template for all the flu vaccines (including childhood nasal spray) are available for Vision practices.

The guidance is available on the [GP contract pages](#) on the BMA website in the enhanced services section.

The business rules have also been published on the [HSCIC website](#).

### **Local education and training boards (LETBs) - GP representation**

There have been reports that in many LETBs, GPs are being under-represented on the main board, with GP representation instead being sought through other avenues such as advisory or project boards. Additionally, we are aware that the LMC structure is not being recognised in a number of areas. It is very important that LMCs continue to monitor the development of LETBs in their area. Please email Nadia Kalam (Executive Officer, GPC) at [nkalam@bma.org.uk](mailto:nkalam@bma.org.uk) if you have any concerns.

### **NHSmail user survey 2013**

The NHSmail user survey 2013 is now open. The NHSmail team at the Health and Social Care Information Centre are currently planning for NHSmail 2 which will replace the current service – they are keen to hear your views and understand how you use your account.

Every NHSmail account will have received an email inviting them to complete the survey, but if experiencing difficulties in finding it please email [feedback@nhs.net](mailto:feedback@nhs.net). We recommend that users take part - it should only take a few minutes of your time and the survey is open until 28 October.

The full results of the survey will be published in the NHSmail newsletter.

### **Data entry for quality services within CQRS**

CQRS has sent out a communication providing GP practices with information on manually entering data for Enhanced Services. GP practices will need to enter data manually on CQRS for supported Enhanced Services in order for payments to be calculated via CQRS for the remainder of the 2013/14 financial year.

This decision has been made to provide more time to deliver successfully the QOF 2013/14 extractions. The full [CQRS message can be read online](#).

### **Conference: "Thinking about a career in general practice?"**

Please forward this to anyone thinking about a career in general practice.

If you are considering a career in general practice, this one-day conference on Tues 12 Nov 2013 at BMA House, London will help to answer your questions.

Including the nuts and bolts of how to apply for GP training, and how to get through your exams, the seminar will also offer alternative perspectives of the different career paths that general practice can offer. Practical advice on managing your finances as a trainee and the support you can get throughout your career will also be available.

The friendly and informal atmosphere will also offer you the opportunity to ask your questions and discuss key issues with young GPs and GP trainees.

Reduced registration fees are available for BMA members.

[Find out more and book your place](#).

If you have any questions or need any further information, please contact BMA Conferences at [confunit@bma.org.uk](mailto:confunit@bma.org.uk) or on 020 7383 6137 or 6923.

### **LMC secretaries conference 2013**

Letters of confirmation have now been sent out to all the representatives attending the LMC secretaries conference in BMA House, on **Thursday 5 December 2013**. The agenda, including the list of workshops, will be sent out soon. For any queries, please contact Karen Day ([kday@bma.org.uk](mailto:kday@bma.org.uk)).

### **LMC conference 2014**

The 2014 LMC conference will be held on **Thursday 22 and Friday 23 May 2014** in York at the [York Barbican Theatre](#). A letter will soon be sent to LMCs confirming how many seats they will be allocated and the deadline for receipt of motions.

## **LMCs – change of details**

If there are any changes to LMC personnel, addresses and other contact details please can you email Karen Day with the changes at [kday@bma.org.uk](mailto:kday@bma.org.uk).

## **Royal Medical Benevolent Fund**

Please find attached (appendix 2) details of the Royal Medical Benevolent Fund Christmas appeal.

**The GPC next meets on 14 November 2013, 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 7 November 2013. It would be helpful if items could be emailed to Christopher Scott at [cscott@bma.org.uk](mailto:cscott@bma.org.uk). You may also like to use the GPC's listservers to exchange views and ideas.**

### **GPC News**

GPC News is available via the Internet, via the BMA's web pages: [www.bma.org.uk](http://www.bma.org.uk)

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