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GPC News

In order to provide LMCs and practices with as much up to date information as possible, we are now issuing two editions of GPC News a month. One will continue to be a report following GPC meetings and a second one will provide other updates in the interim period. This is the first edition of the interim updates. A regular newsletter from the GPC chairman, Chaand Nagpaul, to all GPs has also been launched.

GPC webpages

The new look GPC committee pages have now been launched and are available on bma.org.uk/gpc (click in the 'Who we are' box for an interactive map of GPC members).

In order to make information for GPs more visible and accessible, the pages previously named 'Practical support at work/Doctors as Managers' have been updated and renamed 'GP practices' and are now available on bma.org.uk/gppractices.

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](#).

QOF achievement data

The 2012/13 QOF achievement and prevalence data have been published by the HSCIC, including a statistical bulletin, an online database and a set of detailed data tables. The average achievement decreased from 96.9% in 11/12 by 0.8 % to 96.1 %.

The information is [available on the HSCIC website](#).

QOF business rules

Version 27 of the QOF Business Rules have now [been published on the PCC website](#).

Improving general practice: A call to action

The NHS England review of general practice is ongoing. The consultation aims to gather views on how general practice can best meet the challenges of an ageing population, increased patient demand and growing recruitment and retention problems. NHS England has also said it wishes to address inequality of and patient dissatisfaction with access to GP services.

The GPC is coordinating a central response to the consultation, but NHS England's focus is very much on encouraging discussions at a local level. The GPC will publish a response to the consultation but urges all LMCs to also respond and to encourage their constituent GPs to feed in to. You can fill in the [online survey form on the NHS England website](#).

CCG constitutions

The GPC has issued updated guidance on CCG constitutions, focusing on what to do if you are unhappy with something in your CCG constitution and the process for requesting changes. [You can read the updated FAQs on the BMA's website](#).

Conflicts of interest guidance

GPC guidance on how to manage conflicts of interest can be [found on the BMA website](#). The guidance provides advice for GPs as commissioners, covering issues such as the GMC guidance for doctors in management or commissioning roles and how to manage conflicts of interests when

commissioning services from member GP practices. We would encourage LMCs to share this guidance with their CCGs.

Read code for dementia DES

The Read codes for dementia DES are available in the [enhanced services guidance](#) on the BMA website.

NHS Employers have advised that although the guidance refers to the October Read code release, which is not yet available, practices should be able to use these on their systems already. However, the codes may not yet be picked up as part of reporting until system suppliers have put the necessary templates in place.

The Read codes in italics in the guidance should be the correct codes, as there have been no changes since the publication of the enhanced services guidance, but they had to include a line around the possibility of change in case they did.

Local enhanced services

During 2012-13, NHS England guidance stated that all existing local enhanced service contracts should be extended into 2013-14, in order to provide stability during the transition period as PCTs transferred commissioning responsibility to CCGs. The guidance recommended that the contracts be extended with a six month review clause, so that CCGs, if they wished, could choose to change or decommission services during the current commissioning cycle.

In addition, all local enhanced services (now referred to as community-based services) commissioned by CCGs would need to be contracted using the NHS Standard contract from April 2014. NHS England guidance on the transitional arrangements for [commissioning of community-based services can be found on the NHS England website](#).

As such, many CCGs are reviewing current LES contracts and making decisions about services to be commissioned for 2014-15, using the NHS Standard Contract. We would urge all LMCs and practices to read the [GPC FAQs on the NHS Standard Contract](#).

You can find detailed guidance from NHS England on how to contract using the standard contract [on the NHS England website](#).

Responsibility for public-health related community-based services now lies with local authorities. Guidance on the Public Health Services Contract, which local authorities may choose to use when commissioning public-health community-based services from GP practices [can be found on the BMA website](#).

Care.data guidance for GPs

NHS England has recently announced next steps for the care.data programme, including the activities they and the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) will undertake to support patient

awareness raising at a national level. For example, a leaflet about information and data sharing will be sent to every household in England, starting in January 2014.

They have also worked with the BMA, HSCIC and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to provide further advice to GP practices on their fair processing responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998. This guidance is available at the link below, along with the existing joint guidance, FAQs and technical guidance, which provides details of the data to be extracted from GP systems.

No data will be extracted for care.data until spring 2014 and GP practices will be notified prior to the extract.

GP practices have received information packs to help raise awareness with patients of how their personal data are shared and used and their right to object if they are not happy. It is important that practices use the time between now and the extract to raise awareness.

[Read the Care.data guidance on the BMA website.](#)

BMA 2014 research grants

The BMA was among the first of the professional bodies to award grants and prizes to encourage and further medical research. Today, ten research grants are administered under the auspices of the Board of Science, all funded by legacies left to the BMA. Grants totalling approximately £500,000 are awarded annually. Applications are invited from medical practitioners and/or research scientists, for research in progress or prospective research.

The 2014 research grants will be available to apply for online on the BMA website from 10 December this year - www.bma.org.uk The application deadline is **14 March 2014 at 5pm**.

Subject specifications for each grant vary. For example, in 2014, research areas range from rheumatism and arthritis, cardiovascular disease and cancer to neurological disorders and clinical outcome measures. For more information on the grants on offer in 2014 and details of how to apply, please see: www.bma.org.uk/researchgrants

Please disseminate this information as widely as possible, in particular to any potential applicants.

If you have any questions about the BMA research grants, or would like to receive alerts about them, please contact Hugh Garnett at info.sciencegrants@bma.org.uk or telephone 020 7383 6755.

LMC Secretaries Conference 2013

The agenda for the LMC Secretaries Conference, including the list of workshops, has now been sent out to those who have registered to attend. Workshop choices should be returned to Karen Day (kday@bma.org.uk) on the form provided by **Monday 11 November**. The Conference will be held on **Thursday 5 December 2013** in BMA House. Guest speakers will be Clare Gerada, Chair of

RCGP Council, and Nigel Edwards, Senior Fellow at the King's Fund. For any queries, please contact Karen Day (kday@bma.org.uk).

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.

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. 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

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