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GPC meeting

The GPC held its meeting on 14 November 2013 and this newsletter provides a summary of the main items discussed.

GP contract in England 2014/15

Following the conclusion of negotiations on changes to the GP contract in England for 2014/15, at yesterday's meeting the GPC voted overwhelmingly to accept the negotiated agreement. The GPC believes that this package, as a whole, puts general practice and all GPs in a better position to deliver improvements to patient care.

The deal was announced first thing this morning and there has been extensive media coverage. An [email from Chaand Nagpaul](#), GPC Chairman, was sent overnight to all GPs in England to inform them of the position and outline the key points of the package. Full details of the agreement are [available on the BMA website](#). Work will now be on the detailed arrangements for implementation.

GP contract changes – Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

The BMA is currently negotiating the GP contract changes for 2014-15 in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. [Further details are available on the BMA's website.](#)

In Northern Ireland, NIGPC is seeking a reduction in QOF and a solution to EPS/CPI.

In Scotland, SGPC and the Scottish Government have agreed in principle to pursue minimal changes to the current contract.

In Wales, GPC Wales and the Welsh Government have reached a shared understanding of wanting to reduce bureaucracy.

Developing general practice: Providing healthcare solutions for the future

The GPC has published its vision discussion paper, '[Developing general practice: Providing healthcare solutions for the future](#)', setting out proposals and ideas on the future of general practice. Views are being sought on the paper and it will be taken forward through a programme of activity over the coming year.

A BMA Health Policy and Research Unit paper outlining the findings from some GP focus group work on views for the future was issued to accompany the paper.

BMA response to the Call to Action

Alongside the GPC vision paper was also published the [BMA's response](#) to NHS England's Improving General Practice Review – the Call to Action.

GP practice premises development

David Geddes, Head of Primary Care at NHS England, recently wrote to the GPs Committee regarding practice premises funding. He has confirmed that Area Teams do not currently have allocated funding to progress premises developments that, though considered previously by PCTs, had not received final approval and confirmation of funding by PCTs before 1 April 2013. Area Teams will not be in a position to progress business cases which are still pending approval, or to consider any new developments until April 2014 at the earliest.

NHS England has confirmed its intention to remove barriers to future premises development from 2014/15. Following on from a recent review of capital commitments by Area Teams, NHS England is now undertaking an audit of the current backlog of business cases. David Geddes has asked Area Teams to prioritise all outstanding business cases against set criteria which match the NHS England business case approval guidance for capital investment.

New QOF guidance published

We have updated our guidance [Focus on QOF payments](#) for 2013-14 and NHS Employers has also updated their [QOF FAQs](#) (both England only).

Links to both documents are available on the page with the [QOF guidance for 2013-14](#).

Vaccines and immunisations guidance

The [Focus on vaccines and immunisations guidance](#) has now been updated following the many recent changes to the vaccinations programme.

This document explains the various payment mechanisms available, and the new sections include information about shingles, pertussis, childhood flu, rotavirus and meningitis C vaccinations.

Pharmaceutical regulations 2013 - Market entry and performance sanctions guidance

The guidance on market entry and performance sanctions, within the Pharmaceutical Regulations 2013, has been updated and [is available online](#).

Sick leave guidance for GP trainees

An updated version of the sick leave guidance for GP trainees is [now available online](#). This guidance is intended to clarify sick leave arrangements in line with the Framework Contract agreed between GPC and COGPED.

HIV testing week 22-29 November

Led by the Terrence Higgins Trust and funded by the Department of Health, National HIV Testing week promotes the benefits of HIV testing to gay and bisexual men and African communities. The British HIV Association and the British Association for Sexual Health and HIV are supporting this by encouraging clinicians in both hospital and primary care to be alert to the need to offer and recommend an HIV test. This may result in patients making requests for an HIV test or information about HIV. The full letter is available on the [NHS England website](#).

Indemnity cover for panel members

NHS England has recently confirmed that members of panels, including performers' list decision making panels (PLDP) and performers' screening groups (PSG), are covered by NHS England indemnity for their work on said panels.

This has been agreed by the NHS Litigation Authority and members of such panels are covered under the Liabilities to Third Parties Scheme (LTPS), indemnifying them for their roles. NHS England has written to all Area Teams confirming this decision.

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, has also been sent out. 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 19 December 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 10 December 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