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**15<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

## **Roadmap out of Lockdown: Phase 2**

In response to the [Government's announcement to ease some lockdown measures](#) in England from this week, the BMA has said that the plan is too fast, too confusing and too risky. Since then further guidance has been released and will continue to be scrutinised carefully and challenged when necessary. Read the Government's recovery strategy [here](#). Read the full BMA statement [here](#).

In light of this announcement, GP practices could be faced with new workload as many people will be anxious about returning to a workplace where adequate social distancing measures have not been put in place, leading to more requests for fit notes and letters to employers, with people who cannot work from home being urged to return to work. Patients making these requests should be directed to discuss this with their employers, and employers should be making reasonable adjustments and performing appropriate risk assessments for their staff, with occupational health support when necessary. In this situation a fit note should not be required.

If this phase is not managed extremely carefully there is a risk of the virus spreading and putting renewed strain on the NHS, including GP services.

## **Coding for Suspected Covid**

Unfortunately, due to the recent VE day celebrations and apparent breach of lockdown rules across parts of Worcestershire and Herefordshire, it is thought that we may well be at risk of a further spike in Covid cases sooner than would have been expected. Could we therefore ask that practices continue to code any patients with "Suspected Covid" which may give us some advance warning of any surge in cases.

As we move in to the next phase of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, with the need to both deliver services to our patients whilst also continuing with the challenge of on-going viral circulation, we know that many areas are considering how this can be done safely. It is also leading many to consider what has changed in the last couple of months that we want to retain and what the 'new normal' General Practice should look like. Wessex LMC has produced two discussion documents to help with this thinking and has agreed for them to be shared. A [briefing document](#) includes a summary, key recommendations and a conclusion and a [full document](#) provides links and examples and further explores the questions practices are facing currently.

### **Care Home Arrangements**

Care homes are now being supported to rapidly upgrade their ability to do virtual consultations. These changes include the rollout of [NHSmile](#) to care homes and domiciliary care providers, supporting remote consultations, and [reducing social isolation and loneliness for care home residents](#) by providing tablet devices capable of secure video calling, and increased access to up-to-date and accurate information for care professionals through the new [Care workforce app](#). In addition CCG directors of nursing are now assisting local authorities with training in infection prevention and control in care homes.

The [NHSEI primary care bulletin](#) today (15 May) clarified that the clinical lead for the service is not also medically responsible and accountable for the care of individual care home residents. Medical responsibility and accountability for the care of individual care home residents remains with their registered GP – and there may be residents with different registered GPs within a care home. NHSEI does not expect residents to be re-registered.

NHSEI have stated that a reimbursement mechanism for general practice will be established to help practices meet the additional costs of COVID-19 related activity which cannot be met from existing practice resources. Reimbursement will be managed through clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), on the basis of national guidance.

### **CPR Guidance for Primary and Community Care**

The Resuscitation Council, together with the Royal College of GPs, have published guidance for healthcare workers (HCWs) who are performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in primary and community care setting. The guidance clarifies that as CPR is an aerosol generating procedure (AGP) in the context of COVID-19, AGP PPE is the safest option for HCWs when undertaking chest compressions and other resuscitation procedures on patients with suspected or confirmed COVID.

However, it is recognised that this may not always be achievable in a primary or community care setting depending on the availability of PPE. In the absence of AGP PPE, non AGP PPE if available for clinical care, must be worn as a minimum for resuscitation events. Read the guidance [here](#).

### **Datix**

We are aware that some practices have been unable to access DATIX in order to report safety or quality concerns recently. This appears to be the case in particular if GPs are working from remotely from home. Whilst the IT issues are being addressed by the CCG, we have been advised that colleagues can report any cases that would have been submitted to this email [ccg.qualityfeedback2ccg@nhs.net](mailto:ccg.qualityfeedback2ccg@nhs.net).

### **Herefordshire and Worcestershire Training Hub**

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Training Hub website is a resource for GP Practices providing information on training and career opportunities such as apprentice schemes and it now has a vacancy page to support job advertising. Click [here](#) to register for their free advertising service. A flyer for the service can be found [here](#). We are told that some of our newly qualified GPs are having to look elsewhere for employment due to a lack of vacancies. If you are looking to employ, please don't delay!

### **GP and Practice COVID-19 Toolkit**

Following the announcement about easing the lockdown in England, the Government has published [guidance for employers to help getting more people back to work and operating safely](#). However, as this does not specifically include healthcare settings, we would advise practices to refer to the BMA's [toolkit for GPs and practices](#), and in particular the [section on reducing COVID-19 transmission](#), which refers to social distancing within GP practices.

### **Risk Assessment Guidance**

The Office of National Statistics published [data on Covid-19 related deaths by ethnic group](#) last week, which showed that those with Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) background are more likely to die from the virus. Read the BMA statement [here](#). Various national organisations have developed resources that are included below for your information.

- The Faculty of Occupational Health Medicine: [Risk Reduction Framework for NHS staff at risk of COVID-19](#)
- NHS Employers has published: [guidance on risk assessment for staff](#)

- Public Health England is carrying out a [review into factors impacting health outcomes from COVID-19](#)

NHSEI are aware that primary care needs a nationally agreed tool for risk assessment that practices can use to take an appropriate and consistent approach in protecting staff. In the meantime, [here](#) you will find what feel is the most helpful risk assessment tool in circulation and would advise that practices consider using this approach to risk assess staff at the moment whilst we await NHSE guidance.

### **International Nurses Day**

The 12th May was International Nurses Day and Florence Nightingale's 200th Birthday and 2020 is also the Year of the Nurse and Midwife. Messages from local and national nurse/clinical leaders were collected to recognise the nursing workforce across general practice. The letter can be found on our website. May we take this opportunity to thank our nursing workforce for all of their hard work both past and present.

### **Preparing for Flu Immunisation 2020/21**

NHSEI has published the [annual flu letter for the 2020/21 programme](#). It is recognised that delivering the flu immunisation programme is likely to be more challenging this year because of the impact of COVID-19. NHSEI will publish further guidance nearer the planned start of the programme in September 2020, but in the meantime, practices should continue to plan for the programme as usual. The letter sets out which groups are eligible for flu vaccination (same as last year but different vaccinations for different groups) and how to prepare for this autumn's vaccination campaign.

### **NHS Digital National GP Data Extraction to Support COVID-19 Planning and Research (England)**

NHS Digital has issued a DPN outlining a framework for a tactical GPES extraction for planning and research related to COVID-19. This extraction was requested by the BMA and RCGP as means of relieving the burden being placed on GPs at this time to provide data for research purposes. Under this interim arrangement, NHSD will become the data controller for a predetermined set of data extracted from GP records in England with all requests to practices redirected to them.

BMA and RCGP will have sight of the process for requesting this data and will regularly meet with NHSD to review applicants who wish to use it. The [DPN](#) contains all relevant information on the extraction and in this [NHS Digital circular](#). NHSD have asked that all practices register by 27 May.

## **Wellbeing Support**

There is extended local mentoring support in place for members of your practice teams as we navigate the challenges of Covid-19.

Please find a flyer highlighting how you can access peer support during this time [here](#). More information about [wellbeing](#) support can be found on the LMC website.

## **LMC Website**

The following guidance has been added to the LMC website [www.worcslmc.co.uk](http://www.worcslmc.co.uk) this week:

[Government Care Home Testing Letter 110520](#)

[CCG Year of the Nurse Poster](#)

[Staff Risk Assessment Form](#)

[WMAS Monthly Briefing May 2020](#)

# WORCESTERSHIRE AND HEREFORDSHIRE LMC LTD

**Registered office: St Stephens Surgery, Adelaide Street, Redditch, Worcs B97 4AL  
Tel. 01527 65082**

All topical issues relating to local general practice are discussed at the monthly LMC meetings and those minutes can be read on the LMC [Website](#). Should you require further information on any issues raised at the LMC meetings please do not hesitate to contact the LMC representative for your area or practice.

## **MEMBERS OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE COMMITTEE**

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Dr S Morton  
Dr J Rayner

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## **Practice Manager Representatives:**

Helen Garfield, Representative WF PM  
Lisa Luke, Representative R&B PM  
Meryl Foster, Representative SW PM

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## **Representatives:**

All 20 practices are represented at Committee Meetings

**Worcestershire and Herefordshire GPC Representative:** Dr S Parkinson

**THIS NEWSLETTER IS PRODUCED FROM THE LMC OFFICE AT  
ST STEPHENS SURGERY**

### **The next LMC meetings will be:**

Worcestershire – 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020  
Herefordshire – 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020