
22nd May 2020

Primary Care Network Contract DES 2020/21

Over the last three months, and following the Special LMC Conference, GPC England has been raising issues relating to the PCN DES with NHSE/I, particularly in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic and as many practices are in the process of making decisions about whether to sign up. NHSE/I has responded in a letter outlining gratitude to the many thousands of GPs and practice staff who have worked tirelessly to transform their services in response to the pandemic and noting that the DES was modified to provide greater support to practices working together in their areas. They will continue to keep the DES under close review in response to the pandemic and they believe PCNs have enormous potential to support the sustainability and resilience of general practice, and to improve delivery of care to patients.

Importantly, it confirms the DES is clear that contract management will be supportive and collaborative and, in the rare circumstances that remedial actions are needed, NHSE/I expects CCGs to focus on the DES itself rather than other elements of the practice's core contract. However, they also made clear that should a practice opt out of the DES they will lose their Network Participation Payment of £1.76 per patient from their core practice contract, as well as their entitlements to funding and the workforce employed through the DES. CCGs will not be permitted to offer the service to those practices – or their associated Federation – on better terms through a local scheme as they will be expected to commission an alternative provider.

Their latest figures suggest 96% of practices have either signed up to the DES or expressed their intention to do so, with 74 practices (1%) having informed their CCG that they have decided not to participate.

BMA Survey of the Profession

The BMA has now published the results of the [latest, and fourth, tracker survey](#), which show that the majority of doctors have no confidence in being able to manage patient demand in the coming weeks and that caring for those with COVID-19 has severely impacted the treatment and care available for other patients.

Last month the Government insisted that before lockdown was eased, the NHS must be able to cope. These results clearly show that doctors on the frontline feel this is not the case.

The lowest level of confidence is for managing demand in the community, in particular for care homes, with 69% saying they are not very or not at all confident of being able to do this. In terms of patients being able to have tests, scans and other diagnostic type treatment, around 60% of doctors said they had little or no confidence that demand could be properly managed.

Care Homes

The Government have published an updated [COVID-19: care home support package](#), as well as a [new operational model](#) to help pharmacy and medicines teams implement the NHSEI guidance [Primary Care and Community Health Support for Care Homes](#).

Guidance Note for Parents of Children Returning to School from 1st June 2020

The LMC has produced a [guidance document](#) for parents for practices to use in response to the increasing requests for individual assessments of children returning to school and letters for schools. We hope this is helpful.

Referrals

WAHT has agreed to open e-RS referrals from today. We await further information on how the restoration of services will be managed however it is likely that there will be significant delays to patient being seen when they are referred and they will be seen in chronological order. Please continue to make use of advice and guidance. Referrals should not be downgraded without agreement from the referring GP.

Remote Consultations for Learning Disability Health Checks

Providing support to people with learning disabilities is an important part of general practice activity, which includes offering the opportunity for an annual health check. [NHSEI](#) have confirmed that, with regards to health checks for people with a learning disability, where this cannot be delivered safely face to

face or where the patient has other medical conditions which require them to shield or socially isolate, the review could be conducted remotely. Decisions about the best way to conduct a health check should be made on an individual basis, taking in to account the challenges some patients might have with this. The BMA's [toolkit for practices](#) now also includes an [FAQ for locum doctors working remotely](#).

Home Working and Distribution of High-Risk Work

Many practices now have some access to remote working and it is appropriate for clinical staff to make use of this where possible to reduce risk to staff and patients. For those situations where a face to face appointment is required then this should be arranged equitably between all clinical staff and based upon risk assessment where indicated. Read more in the [our toolkit](#).

BMA Risk Assessment Guidance

The [BMA has been lobbying government to take urgent steps to address the need to protect Black, Asian and minority ethnic \(BAME\) communities from COVID-19](#), as was highlighted in the [ONS data](#) published last week, which showed that those with BAME background are more likely to die from the virus. The BMA has [written to Sir Simon Stevens](#) this week to address these concerns and the need for more practical advice, to practices, on risk assessment. The letter also highlights that the great local variation in the use of and approach to risk assessments, and that occupational health services are not available to most staff in primary care. Read the [BMA guidance on risk assessments](#). This follows on from the publication of [FOM Risk Reduction Framework for NHS staff at risk of COVID-19](#) and [NHS Employers guidance on risk assessment for staff](#).

New Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme

On 27 April a new life assurance scheme was introduced covering health and social care workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Details of the scheme have now been published by NHS Business Service Authority - scheme rules including guidance for claimants and employers can be found [here](#). This payment is in addition to Death in Service (DiS) benefits linked to the pension schemes. We are aware of outstanding issues around DiS benefits, particularly for locum GPs, and continue to lobby on those.

Testing

Anyone over 5 who has symptoms of COVID-19 (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) can now access antigen testing. Practices should direct symptomatic patients to the [NHS website](#), for further information on how to access the test online.

If there are any questions about a test that has been booked, you can call the customer contact centre from 7am to 11pm. In England and Wales – call 119 for free. Read more [here](#).

GP and Practice COVID-19 Toolkit

The BMA continue to update their [toolkit for GPs and practices](#), which should help to answer many of your questions on a large range of topics relating to COVID-19. Last week they added a [section on reducing COVID-19 transmission](#), in relation to social distancing within GP practices. The guidance also suggests clarity must be given to healthcare workers about the future contractual position and plans to restore training and career development. Read more [here](#).

BMA Paper on Principles for Restarting Non-COVID Care

The BMA has published a paper on the [Ten principles for how the NHS should approach restarting 'non-Covid care'](#). The paper warns that healthcare leaders should be 'realistic and cautious' about restarting shelved, non-treatment NHS work and re-balancing COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 capacity. The principles suggest that managers should take a realistic and cautious approach, that there must be adequate PPE for HCWs, and that decisions about staffing levels and redeployment must be safe and measures must be taken to safeguard staff wellbeing.

Restoration of Cervical Smear Services

NHSE/I and Public Health England have published guidance on the restoration of cervical smear services, following the advice to step up urgent services which includes screening. The document provides guidance to NHSEI regional public health commissioning teams to support conversations with providers of NHS Cervical Screening Programme services to ensure that they are restored in a consistent, safe way. Read the guidance [here](#).

NHS Confederation Webinar (England)

NHS Confederation will be holding a webinar 'The PCN DES: a discussion for the undecided' on Wednesday 27th May 12.30-1.30pm. This will focus on issues relating to the DES and offer an opportunity for questions to be raised. They have also published a [briefing regarding the PCN DES](#). Register for the webinar [here](#).

NHS Digital National GP Data Extraction to Support COVID-19 Planning and Research

[The DPN for the GPES Data extraction for pandemic planning and research \(COVID-19\)](#) was uploaded last week, which will allow data to be collected using

GPES to be made available for approved uses through NHS Digital's Data Access Request Service in accordance with robust information governance standards and consultation with the BMA and RCGP.

As of 19 May, 54% of practices have participated in the extract, which represents 3815 practices (from a total of 7013). If you haven't already registered, the DPN can be found [here](#). NHSD have asked all practices to try to register by 27 May with extractions taking place on a fortnightly basis.

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.

As part of Mental Health Awareness Week this week, the BMA has published a report on the [mental health and wellbeing of the medical workforce - now and beyond COVID-19](#), which sets out ten recommendations to be addressed to protect staff now and in the future. Read more [here](#).

The BMA continue to offer [wellbeing services](#) and confidential 24/7 counselling and peer support for all doctors and medical students, regardless of BMA membership, as well as their partners and dependents, on 0330 123 1245.

We hope that you can enjoy spending some time with your families over the bank holiday weekend and that you get some well-earned rest and relaxation.

LMC Website

The following guidance has been added to the LMC website 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](#)

[Template Letter to Parents](#)

[NHS Letter to treatment of individuals in a Care Home Setting](#)

[NHS PCN DES Letter to GPC](#)

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

CHAIRMAN: Dr Shaun Pike
Elgar House Surgery, Church Road, Redditch, Worcs. B97 4AB
Tel: 01527 69261 Email: spike@worcslmc.co.uk

VICE-CHAIRMAN: Dr David Herold
Riverside Surgery, Waterside, Evesham, Worcs. WR11 1JP
Tel: 01386 444400 Email: d.herold@nhs.net

SECRETARY: Dr Gillian Farmer
St Stephens Surgery, (address and contact details as above)
Email: gfarmer@worcslmc.co.uk

EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Lisa Siembab
St Stephens Surgery, (address and contact details as above)
Email: lsiembab@worcslmc.co.uk

Representatives:

BROMSGROVE: Dr D Pryke
Dr K Hollier

REDDITCH: Dr I Haines
Dr S Pike

WYRE FOREST: Dr M Davis
Dr S Morton
Dr J Rayner

WYCHAVON: Dr D Herold
Dr J Rankin
Dr R Kinsman

MALVERN: Dr P Bunyan
Dr B Fisher

WORCESTER: Dr F Martin
Dr C Whyte
Dr R Benney

Out of Hours: Dr E Penny
Dispensing: Dr J Rankin
Registrars Rep: Dr E Shantsila (North)
Dr K Wiltshire (South)
First5 Rep: Dr M Venables

Practice Manager Representatives:

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

Co-opted Rep: Dr R Williams
Non Principals: Dr W Safdar

MEMBERS OF THE HEREFORDSHIRE COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: Dr Nigel Fraser
Wargrave House Surgery, 23 St Owen Street, Hereford, HR1 2JB
Tel: (01432) 272285 Email: nigel.fraser@nhs.net

SECRETARY: Dr Richard Dales
Mortimer Medical Practice, Croase Orchard Surgery,
Kingsland, Leominster HR6 9QL
Tel. 01568 708214 Email: herefordlmc@btinternet.com

EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Lisa Siembab
St Stephens Surgery, (address and contact details as above)
Email: lsiembab@worcslmc.co.uk

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 – 11th June 2020
Herefordshire – 17th June 2020