

10th August 2020

The National Flu Immunisation Programme 2020 to 2021: Update

Details of the 2020-21 flu immunisation programme were announced this week in a [joint letter from the CMO for England](#), the Public Health England Medical Director and Director for Public Health, and the NHSE/I medical director. The letter outlines that this year as part of the wider planning for winter, and subject to contractual negotiations, flu vaccination will be additionally offered to:

- household contacts of those on the Shielded Patient List - specifically individuals who expect to share living accommodation with a shielded person on most days over the winter and therefore for whom continuing close contact is unavoidable.
- children of school Year 7 age in secondary schools (those aged 11 on 31 August 2020).
- health and social care workers employed through Direct Payment (personal budgets) and/or Personal Health Budgets, such as Personal Assistants, to deliver domiciliary care to patients and service users.

It is intended to further extend the vaccine programme in November and December to include the 50 to 64-year-old age group but this will be subject to vaccine supply and notification about this is likely in September. It is planned that this extension is phased to practices to prioritise those in at risk groups first.

While we welcome that the detail has finally been made available to those delivering the programme and now allows practices to do some further detailed planning, we are urgently seeking confirmation that all PPE will be provided for practices, guidance on delivery models (although this will be up to individual practices (working with their localities to decide), and we acknowledge that

this is going to be the most challenging flu programme. There needs to be support, resources and leniency so that practices can prioritise the flu programme over this uncertain period. Practices should be signed up to the [PPE portal](#), which can be delivered within 48 hours, to ensure regular supplies of PPE in advance of the winter and flu campaign. More information is available on the [DHSC PPE portal guidance page](#) and the portal customer service team can be reached on 0800 876 6802 for enquiries or registration support.

Delivering this challenging programme at this time will require a monumental effort from general practice at a time when workload is already increasing. The government has an obligation to facilitate this by supporting general practice with the additional resources required, along with a clearly and easily understood patient facing public health campaign.

COVID Funding Guidance for General Practice Published

The long delayed [COVID fund](#) has finally been released. This long overdue funding was and is needed to support practices that have been going above and beyond to continue caring for their patients in the face of the pandemic.

However, this package only covers until the end of July, and as we all know, the battle against COVID-19 is far from over. It does however set an important precedent. Both commissioners and NHSEI must guarantee that practices will continue to get all of the support and resources they need as we move into the latest phase of the pandemic.

Practices should now:

- review additional costs already incurred and submit claims to the commissioner
- discuss with commissioners any anticipated further costs that might require approval
- keep records and evidence of additional costs

Read more about COVID funding in the BMA's [toolkit for GPs and practices](#).

Face Coverings

Public Health England has now published [New recommendations for infection control in primary and community health care providers](#), which states that:

- Practices should ensure that measures are in place so that all settings are, where practicable, COVID-secure, using social distancing, optimal hand hygiene, frequent surface decontamination, ventilation and other measures where appropriate

- where a setting cannot be delivered as COVID-19 secure, a local assessment may conclude that primary care staff, when not otherwise required to use personal protective equipment, *should wear a face mask*, to prevent the spread of infection from the wearer
- where a COVID-19 secure environment cannot be maintained, patients and members of the public entering primary care premises should be advised to use facecoverings in line with [government advice](#)

The BMA believes that the government must do more to protect healthcare workers in community settings, including GP surgeries, and require those entering a healthcare facility to wear a face covering, as is the case for shops and other indoor settings.#

It is for practices to decide how to deliver services to their patients. It is also a practice's responsibility for them to protect their staff and patients, many of whom may be vulnerable to the most severe effects of Covid-19, from unnecessary risk. Therefore, if a patient refuses to wear a face covering inside a practice, without good reason, the practice can choose to provide services to that patient by means other than face-to-face consultation within the practice.

Practices should inform patients, in advance of their attendance, that a face covering will be required to protect other patients, clinicians and other staff who they will inevitably come into proximity with inside the building. If a patient has a legitimate reason for not wearing a face covering the practice will need to consider this on an individual basis.

2020/21 Healthcare Education & Training Tariff Guidance for England

The DHSC has [published](#) their healthcare education and training tariff guidance and prices for the 2020-21 financial year. The guidance confirms the introduction of a minimum tariff for UG medical placements in general practice of £28,000 per FTE "from the point at which placement activity resumes". It also provides confirmation of the tariff payments for the 2020-21 financial year, and includes:

- An overview of the introduction of the tariff payment mechanism for secondary care placements.
- Powers and requirements with regards to the application of the secondary care placement tariffs.
- Confirmation of the changes to the secondary care placement tariffs from 1 April 2020

- Further information relating to the scope of the secondary care placement tariffs.
- An explanation of the calculations underpinning the secondary care placement tariffs.
- Health Education England's position on tariffs for primary care medical undergraduate placements and response to Covid-19 impact on education and training activities
- Further information on the local implementation of the secondary care placement tariffs, including where to direct any queries.
- Early planning for 2021-22.

Locum GP Webinar 13 August (England)

The BMA's Sessional GPs committee will be hosting [Locum GPs and COVID-19 webinar](#) on 13 August, 6.30–7.30pm. The impact of the pandemic on locum GPs has been unique: while other doctors have been called to take on longer hours, you may have seen your sessions cancelled.

The sessional GPs committee understands the problems locums are facing, and the need for guidance in these uncertain times. This webinar will:

- explore how you can broaden your portfolio
- explain the terms and conditions you need in your locum contract
- look at sources of financial support
- describe how the BMA can help you.

The webinar is free and open for all England-based locum GPs – sign up [here](#).

Report on How COVID Might Affect the Number of GPs Available to See Patients

The Health Foundation has published [analysis looking at how COVID risk might affect the number of GPs available to consult face-to-face in England](#). The report shows that one in three GPs who singlehandedly manage a GP practice are at 'high risk' of death or serious illness from COVID-19, and estimates that this could potentially leave over 700,000 without face-to-face appointments with their GPs if those at high risk take the difficult decision to limit direct patient contact. In response to this Richard Vautrey has said "As this data shows, some GPs working alone are at a higher risk of becoming ill from Covid-19 and therefore, potentially not able to see patients face-to-face. If needed, locum GPs can be recruited to help these practices, but surgeries need financial

support to do so, as well as adequate space in their practices to accommodate another practitioner. This research therefore not only highlights the need for more GPs in the system, especially in deprived areas, as well as the continued provision of effective PPE, but also free access to comprehensive occupational health services to support clinicians with risk assessments.”

RPS Calls for Pharmacists to be able to Alter Prescriptions

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society is calling for all community pharmacists to be allowed to make changes to prescriptions that would reduce unnecessary delays in providing medicines to patients in the event of a supply shortage. The proposals would also allow pharmacists to dispense another generic version of a medicine on prescription without having to contact the prescriber every time.

Read more [here](#).

Mentor Support

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.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

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

LMC Website

The following guidance has been added to the LMC website www.worcslmc.co.uk this week:

[CCG Third Phase Planning Guidance](#)

[BMA Covid-19 Briefing on Supporting Return to Work](#)

[NHS Covid-19 Support Fund Letter](#)

Other COVID 19 Resources

[BMJ – news and resources](#)

[RCGP COVID-19 information](#)

[NHSE/I primary care bulletins](#)

[NICE resources](#)

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

Co-opted Representatives:

Out of Hours: Dr E Penny
Dispensing: Dr J Rankin
Registrars Rep: Vacant (North)
Vacant (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

IT Rep: Dr R Williams
Non Principals: Dr W Safdar
Clinical Directors: Vacant

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 – 10th September 2020
Herefordshire – 9th September 2020