

6th April 2021

GMS/PMS REGULATIONS - PANDEMIC AMENDMENTS

NHSE/I has confirmed that the temporary changes to the GP contract under the [pandemic regulations](#) which were due to lapse at the end of March have now been extended until 30 June 2021.

As previously, this means a continued suspension of the Friends and Family Test requirement; a continued suspension of the requirement for individual patient consent for electronic repeat dispensing (eRD); and a continuation of the amendment to NHS 111 direct booking with sufficient slots available for NHS 111 to refer into a triage list; for most practices offering 1 per 3000 as per the pre-pandemic arrangement is likely to be sufficient but this can increase to 1 per 500 if demand requires.

Read more about what services practices should be providing, and what should be prioritised during the pandemic, in the [COVID-19 toolkit for GP practices](#).

SFE AND GLOBAL SUM CALCULATION

An official consolidated version of the [SFE](#) (Statement of Financial Entitlements) has been published for 2021. This updates the SFE from the last fully consolidated version from 2013 and includes the amendments made up to the current 2021/22 contract year. The global sum figure has now been finalised for 2021/22 (£96.78) and amended from early figures we shared as it now takes into account the full impact of the final MPIG correction factor recycling. The global sum out-of-hours deduction will be 4.75% (£4.59).

DES DIRECTIONS AND FLU IMMUNISATIONS

The [DES \(Directed Enhanced Service\) Directions](#) were published towards the end of last week. NHSE/I has decided not to include the revised Influenza Immunisation Scheme in this set of DES directions. This is due to the possibility of a COVID-19 booster programme running alongside the flu programme, and the need to look at potential operational considerations for providers. NHSE/I

has made a commitment to discuss delivery of COVID-19 boosters and the impact on the flu campaign with GPC England once further information is available.

Note that practices should continue to plan to deliver the 2021/22 flu programme as per the [letter from NHSE/I Medical Director Professor Steve Powis](#).

NETWORK CONTRACT DES 2021/22 AND IMPROVING GENERAL PRACTICE APPOINTMENT DATA

NHSE/I has published a suite of documents to support the updated [Network Contract DES 2021/22](#) from 1 April. These documents implement the changes set out in the NHSE/I letter of [21 January 2021, and include a cover note outlining the key changes](#), the updated Network Contract DES specification and guidance, and other supporting guidance, including a set of FAQs.

They have also published [guidance for practices on standard national general practice appointment categories](#) to support the mapping of local appointment slots to these new categories. This follows joint NHSE/I and GPC England guidance published in August 2020, which introduced an agreed definition of general practice appointment.

There is also new guidance on PCNs implementing the [Investment and Impact Fund](#) for their practices as per the requirements set out in the Network Contract DES.

Access all the guidance [here](#).

COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME

Vaccination sites are encouraged to continue their efforts in maximising uptake in cohorts 1-9 during April, focusing on those in the lower cohorts first, which are yet to be vaccinated.

The [JCVI is recommending that adults who are over 16 and living with adults who have weakened immune systems](#), such as those with blood cancer, HIV or those on immunosuppressive treatment including chemotherapy should be prioritised for the COVID-19 vaccine. NHSE/I has [written](#) to practices [about the next steps](#), including a template letter practices can use to inform patients that their adult household contacts are eligible to have the COVID-19 vaccination, and also published [operational guidance](#) to vaccinate this cohort.

There will be very limited vaccine available for first doses in April and vaccination sites should now preferentially use spare vaccine from second dose clinics to give to other patients due a second dose, although they retain the clinical discretion to give it to others as a first dose, particularly those living with immunocompromised patients as set out in the [letter from NHSE/I](#).

We are expecting a statement from JCVI shortly on details relating to the next phase of vaccination for groups 10-12.

Maximising vaccine uptake in underserved communities

NHSE/I has published a problem-solving [framework to help maximise vaccine uptake in underserved communities](#), setting out best practice and practical guidance for implementing a range of interventions to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccination and drive uptake.

Pinnacle now features reporting functionality

Pinnacle has now released reporting functionality in their platform. This move comes after lobbying from both GPC England and the Joint GP IT Committee, calling for a solution to support PCN-led vaccination sites with reporting. To support users with their service delivery Pinnacle have introduced several service reports that can now be accessed from the "Reports" tab. Only users with the "Site administrator – user management" permission will be able to see this tab. Please follow instructions sent out in LVS email. All requests for access to PID extracts will be subject to an approval from Pinnacle on behalf of NHS England. For further queries please contact the National Service Desk: Telephone: 0300 200 1000; Email: vaccineservicedesk@england.nhs.uk.

Vaccine dose data

Nearly [31 million people in the UK](#) have now received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and the latest [data report](#) shows that as of 31 March, nearly 29.5 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been given in England.

Read more about the latest changes, including the delivery of second doses, added funding, and what practices need to do and the support available in the updated [guidance page about the COVID-19 vaccination programme](#).

SHIELDING FOR CLINICALLY EXTREMELY VULNERABLE TO END

As of 1 April [clinically extremely vulnerable \(CEV\) people in England no longer need to shield](#). CEV patients are still advised to continue to take extra precautions to keep themselves safe, even after receiving both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. Read the government guidance [here](#).

Practices are reminded to continue to add and remove patients, as appropriate, from the Shielded Patient List, as it may be necessary to identify this cohort in the future. Information on how to do so is available on the [NHS Digital website](#).

Read the BMA [guidance for practices](#) about arrangements for patients at high-risk of coronavirus.

The BMA also has guidance for [doctors isolating and those in vulnerable groups](#).

NHS STANDARD CONTRACT 2021/22 – NEW “INTERFACE” PROVISION

Following reports from GPs regarding inconsistent implementation of NHS Standard Contract requirements on secondary care providers relating to the interface with local primary care teams, the BMA has worked with NHS England on the introduction of a new provision in the contract to improve collaboration between clinical teams.

The new provision published in the [contract](#), requires that secondary care providers work with their local commissioners to assess by the end of September, and annually thereafter, their compliance to the interface requirements of the contract.

The commissioners and providers will also have to agree an action plan to address any deficiencies identified by their assessment and ensure that this action plan is informed by discussion with and feedback from the relevant LMCs.

Providers and commissioners will have to ensure that the action plan is adopted in public by their Governing bodies, and that progress on its implementation is shared with the relevant LMCs.

BMA SUMMARY: NHS PLANNING GUIDANCE 2021/22 AND NHS MANDATE 2021/22

The BMA has produced the attached member summary of NHS England’s latest Planning Guidance for 2021/22, which sets out its expectations for NHS commissioners and providers in England over the coming year and for the recovery from Covid-19.

GPC have also responded to the publication of the planning guidance publicly [here](#), and have welcomed the focus on staff wellbeing, recruitment and

retention in the guidance, which echoes some of the priorities set out in the recent paper [Rest, recover, restore: Getting UK health services back on track](#).

The BMA has also called for a realistic approach to tackling the growing backlog of care given the scale of the challenge facing the NHS. Although it is positive that the planning guidance sets out relatively cautious timescales for increasing non-COVID care in the NHS over the coming six months, they have warned that offering financial incentives to raise activity levels could be counterproductive if this leads to healthcare workers being put under pressure to ramp up services too quickly.

WORCESTERSHIRE ISSUES

PCN LMC LAW WEBINAR

The LMC is offering a **free** seminar from our lawyers, LMC Law on PCNs. This is a follow up to our previous PCN event and will provide an opportunity for PCNs to review how they are progressing, gain any top tips and to ask any specific questions.

Places are limited to **3 per PCN** and GPs and Practice Managers are welcome. Places will be allocated on a *first come, first served basis*.

Date: Wednesday 27th April 2021

Times: 12.30 – 2.30 pm

Joining Details: these will be emailed to attendees prior to the webinar – *only those that have booked a place will be permitted to join the webinar*

We strongly recommend that every Practice considers who is best to attend as part of their PCN. We are hoping that all of our PCNs in Worcestershire will be represented.

The online event is by ticket only and places can be booked by visiting:-

<https://www.worcslmc.co.uk/training> and clicking "event sign up". We hope to see some of you at the event.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Wellbeing

We are fortunate to have excellent mental health support in place for general practice locally across both our counties. Do please access support if you need it and remember that it is very hard to look after others if you are not looking after yourself! The latest support available can be found on our [website](#).

There is help and assistance available within the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Healthy Minds service. They are able to provide bespoke talking therapies for all colleagues irrespective of your role in your organisations to assist with anxiety, low mood, stress and other common mental health problems. Referral is easy and can be completed via visiting <https://www.healthyminds.whct.nhs.uk/>. This is a NHS service and as such is free at the point of contact and confidential.

The Service Manager, Phill Morgan Henshaw is happy to answer any questions regarding referral and treatment and can be contacted on 01432 842200 or via phill.morganhenshaw@nhs.net.

BMA Mental Health and Wellbeing

The BMA continues 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. Access the [BMA's COVID-19 wellbeing pages here](#).

The BMA has welcomed the NHSE/I [announcement](#) of further funding for the expanded and rapid access provision of mental health services for NHS staff in England over the winter. This is urgently required and something the BMA has been calling for to support the major challenges NHS staff are facing. At the ARM, a motion was passed expressing concern at the potential long-term impact of the pandemic and called for resources to support the profession. As we head into a second wave of the virus it is vital that staff are protected. [Find out 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.

LMC WEBSITE

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

[BMA Priorities and Planning Guidance](#)

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
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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.

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Dispensing: Dr J Rankin
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Practice Manager Representatives:

Helen Garfield, Representative WF PM
Lisa Luke, Representative R&B PM
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Representatives:

All 20 practices are represented at Committee Meetings

Worcestershire and Herefordshire GPC Representative: Dr S Parkinson

The next LMC meetings will be:

Worcestershire – 22nd April 2021
Herefordshire – 14th April 2021