

9th August 2021

In this week's Newsletter...

[Chief Midwife Urges Pregnant Women to Get NHS Covid Jab](#)

[Vaccines for 16- And 17-Year-Olds](#)

[Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programme 2021/22 Enhanced Service Specifications](#)

[Workforce Data Concerns](#)

[Covid-19 Vaccine Dashboard](#)

[New NHS England Chief Executive](#)

[NHS Covid-19 App Updated to Notify Fewer Contacts to Isolate](#)

[Appraisal Payments](#)

[Practices Call for More PCN Funding, Support and Autonomy](#)

[Improving the NWRS \(National Workforce Reporting Service\)](#)

[GP Payments and Pensions System Update](#)

[Enhanced Monitoring and Management of GP Prescribed Medicines](#)

[Mentor Support](#)

[Mental Health and Wellbeing](#)

[LMC Website](#)

[Covid Resources](#)

Click on any title to go directly to an item

CHIEF MIDWIFE URGES PREGNANT WOMEN TO GET NHS COVID JAB

Professor Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent, Chief Midwifery Officer for England, has written to midwives and GP practices stressing the need to encourage pregnant women to be vaccinated to protect them and their baby. [England's top midwife is urging expectant mums to get the Covid-19 vaccine](#) after new data shows the overwhelming majority of pregnant women hospitalised with the virus have not had a jab. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) and the Royal College of Midwives have both recommended vaccination as one of the best defences for pregnant women against severe COVID-19 infection.

VACCINES FOR 16- AND 17-YEAR-OLDS

The JCVI has [confirmed that 16- and 17-year-olds will be offered a COVID vaccine](#). NHSEI have amended the enhanced service specification accordingly to incorporate 16- and 17-year-olds into cohort 12, and published a [letter](#) outlining details. The updated [COVID-19 enhanced service specification for phases 1 and 2](#) and the [enhanced service specification for phase 3](#) now include the new eligible patients. Practices delivering COVID-19 vaccinations under the phases 1 and 2 arrangements can start vaccinating eligible children and younger people immediately subject to meeting the requirements of the ES.

The revised enhanced service specifications clarify that the Clinical Negligence Scheme for General Practice (CNSGP) will provide clinical negligence indemnity cover for all staff engaged by a GP practice under the CNSGP Regulations. Cover under CNSGP is not restricted to a GP practice's registered patients so would apply to the provision of any NHS COVID-19 vaccinations by a GP practice to a person, including where they are not on the registered list of that GP practice.

SEASONAL INFLUENZA VACCINATION PROGRAMME 2021/22 ENHANCED SERVICE SPECIFICATIONS

Following the publication of the [annual flu letter](#) on 17 July 2021, NHSEI has published the two [Enhanced Service Specifications for the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programme 2021/22](#). Practices are encouraged to opt in to the seasonal flu vaccination programme by Monday 16 August.

The service specifications are practice-based and similar to the 2020/21 flu service specification, except they now allow practices to vaccinate certain non-registered patients, including care home staff, in line with the current COVID-19 enhanced service. They may, though, be modified subject to any further JCVI advice or government policy. The enhanced services would be offered to all GP practices providing essential services and would not be capable of amendment by CCGs.

It is important to note that we are still awaiting the outcome of clinical trials which will help to determine which vaccine general practice will be using. This could clearly have a significant impact on the practicalities of programme delivery, so it is important that practices are given this information as soon as possible.

Public Health England has updated its [guidance](#) to explain to patients how they can help to protect themselves and their children against flu this winter.

WORKFORCE DATA CONCERNS

The latest quarterly [GP workforce data](#) has been published by NHS Digital. However changes have been made to the way this information is produced, and we have raised [concerns](#) that it is now misleading and fails to accurately reflect the staffing shortages that we, and thousands of doctors across England, know we are facing in primary care – and have been for at least a decade. The methodology NHS Digital is now using no longer includes estimated data to accommodate for the small proportion of practices that upload no or only partial workforce figures each quarter. As a result, this makes it look like the decrease in the GP workforce is less than the reality shown across previous datasets.

We can't make improvements without understanding the extent of the problem, which is why NHS Digital must be allowed to revert to its original methodology as a matter of urgency.

In the coming weeks the BMA will be sending to practices materials and tools they need to explain to their patients the pressures general practice is facing.

COVID-19 VACCINE DASHBOARD

NHS Digital has developed the GP COVID-19 vaccine dashboard to enable general practices and PCN-led local vaccination services to view the uptake of COVID vaccines of their registered patients. This dashboard is now live and can be [accessed via NHS Futures](#).

The platform aims to enable staff at GP practices to view and understand uptake for all patients registered to practices. Access is controlled by NHS smartcard and is subject to an organisation and role code B0360 being available for relevant organisations on a user's smart card. The dashboard provides contact information for registered patients who are eligible for the vaccine and have not received their first dose, and those whose second dose is pending or overdue.

It is an optional tool to help practices to support patients in the vaccination rollout in local communities.

NEW NHS ENGLAND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Last week we highlighted that the new chief executive of NHS England and Improvement would be Amanda Pritchard. We were pleased to see that her first visit as chief executive was to [a GP-led vaccination centre in Reigate](#), and during the visit she [expressed her thanks and appreciation](#) to primary care and

general practice staff for playing their part in the incredibly successful COVID-19 vaccination programme, with now almost 90% of adults having had at least one vaccination and more than 32m having both.

GPC have approached Ms Pritchard to welcome her appointment and will be using all opportunities with her arrival in post to reset their relationship with NHS England in such a way that GPs can see tangible evidence of both understanding and support for them and the teams they work with, at this critical time of workload pressure and workforce exhaustion.

NHS COVID-19 APP UPDATED TO NOTIFY FEWER CONTACTS TO ISOLATE

The Department of Health and Social Care issued a [press release](#) urging the public to continue using the NHS COVID-19 app as changes had been made which would result in fewer close contacts being advised to self-isolate. Please see an explanation of the risk algorithm of the NHS COVID-19 app [here](#).

APPRAISAL PAYMENTS

Following GPC's submission to the DDRB, and the recommendation of a 3% uplift for GP appraiser pay and trainers grants being accepted by government, NHSE/I has confirmed the [standard appraisal fee](#) will be uplifted by 3% and applied from 1 April 2021. It is anticipated that the September 2021 payment will reflect the new recalculated fee and include back payments for appraisals undertaken and paid. GP appraisers had been severely affected during the pandemic, with many appraisals being paused.

PRACTICES CALL FOR MORE PCN FUNDING, SUPPORT AND AUTONOMY

The NHS Confederation PCN Network has published a new report, [PCNs: Two Years On](#), which highlights how PCNs have risen to the challenges and demands of COVID-19, galvanising their communities to deliver the most successful vaccination programme in the history of the health service.

It has reinforced BMA messages about the impact of the huge workload pressures on general practice and the scale of the challenge from the nearly 5.3m people who are now awaiting elective treatment, with the pandemic having led to increased and more complex demands on all NHS services.

IMPROVING THE NWRS (NATIONAL WORKFORCE REPORTING SERVICE)

NHS Digital has [improved the way they collect primary care workforce data](#) making the new NWRS is easier to use, and as simple and efficient as possible to help minimise the burden placed upon practices and primary care networks.

From July, users should access the new NWRS via the [Strategic Data Collection Service](#) (SDCS) - using the same login you use to complete other data collections, such as the General Practice Annual Electronic Self-Declaration (eDEC). Visit the [SDCS Data Submission site](#) to check that you have access to the new system. If you have never used SDCS, [you will need to register for an account](#).

It is important to understand staff capacity in the health service - this information helps shape GPC England's negotiating strategy and how investment, training and resource is directed across the primary care workforce. It is therefore critical that the information you submit to NHS Digital about your staff is accurate and complete. Provision of workforce data is also a contractual requirement for practices and PCNs as it is crucial for understanding changing capacity across the primary care workforce.

To find out more about the changes to the NWRS, Practice and PCN Managers can [join one of NHS Digital's webinars](#) which are running twice weekly until end of August.

GP PAYMENTS AND PENSIONS SYSTEM UPDATE

As we approach the end of the second month of its use, we continue to see an unacceptably high level of issues being raised about the new online portal. GPC continue to liaise with PCSE several times a week reflecting the concerns that you have highlighted to us but the progress is frustratingly slow. The survey for GPs in England to provide their experiences of the new system will remain open until 13 August. If you haven't already, we would urge you to please [fill out the survey](#) so that we have further evidence of the full extent of the issues and can hold PCSE to account. Note that this survey is not a forum for individual issues – [please raise these with PCSE directly](#).

We know that practices are the biggest users of the portal and we are aware of the many issues they are facing. Our intention is to release a survey of practices in England at the start of September which we hope to use as a 'snapshot' of progress after three months of its use. There will be further information on this in the coming weeks but, again, the purpose is to help us hold PCSE accountable for their performance. Please be assured that practice use of the portal continues to be central to the work that GPC are doing on this issue.

ENHANCED MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT OF GP PRESCRIBED MEDICINES

We would like to remind practices who have signed up to the enhanced monitoring and management of GP prescribed medicines service specification that the specification is in place to pay for those medicines that are prescribed from the list. There is no obligation to prescribe all medicines from the list or to initiate specialist medication in the community which may previously have been initiated by secondary care. GPs should only prescribe within their own level of competence.

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 SUPPORT

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](#).

LMC WEBSITE

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

[Cameron Fund Summer Newsletter](#)

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

VICE-CHAIRMAN: Dr Matthew Davis
Bewdley Medical Centre, Dog Lane, Bewdley, Worcs
DY12 2EF
Tel. 01299 402157 Email: matthew.davis@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 M Shah

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

WYCHAVON: Dr D Herold
Dr J Rankin
Dr K Gines

MALVERN: Dr P Bunyan
Dr R Khehar

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: Dr J Chun (North)
Dr L Jones (South)

Practice Manager Representatives:

Helen Garfield, Representative WF PM
Michelle Hallahan, Representative R&B PM
Meryl Foster, Representative SW PM

First5 Rep: Dr M Venables
IT Rep: Dr R Williams
Non Principals: Dr W Safdar
Clinical Directors: Dr R Williams
EDI: Dr R Benney

MEMBERS OF THE HEREFORDSHIRE COMMITTEE

SECRETARY: Dr Nigel Fraser
Wargrave House Surgery, 23 St Owen Street, Hereford, HR1 2JB
Tel: (01432) 272285 Email: nfraser@hereflmc.co.uk

MEDICAL DIRECTOR: Dr Paul Downey
St Stephens Surgery, Adelaide Street, Redditch B97 4AL
Tel: 01527 65082 Email: pdowney@hereflmc.co.uk

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

The next LMC meetings will be:

Worcestershire – 8th September 2021
Herefordshire – 9th September 2021