

Worcestershire

Local Medical Committee Ltd

NEWSLETTER

29th November 2021

In this week's Newsletter...

[LMC England Conference 2021](#)

[Health Select Committee Inquiry into the Future of General Practice](#)

[Supporting General Practice Against Abuse](#)

[Updated Infection Control Guidance \(UK\)](#)

[GP Appointment Data](#)

[Updated PGD and National Protocols for Covid Vaccination Programme](#)

[New Interactive ESA 113](#)

[Mentor Support](#)

[Mental Health and Wellbeing](#)

[LMC Website](#)

[Covid Resources](#)

Click on any title to go directly to an item

LMC ENGLAND CONFERENCE 2021

The Annual Conference of England LMCs was held on 25-26 November. There were a variety of debates, and motions were passed on the negative impact that inappropriate transfer of workload has from secondary care to primary care; the use of 'advice and guidance' which cannot be mandated; GP representation in Integrated Care Systems; review of NHS 111; and sustainability and carbon neutrality in general practice. Worcestershire LMC proposed motion 8 (see below) which was carried:

AGENDA COMMITTEE TO BE PROPOSED BY WORCESTERSHIRE: That conference recognises that GP representation in the new Integrated Care Systems is unclear and variable and demands that GPC England negotiate with NHSEI that:

- (i) all Integrated Care Systems should outline how they will enable LMCs to carry out their statutory role
- (ii) there should be no mandated limit on the number of general practice representatives on both NHS and Place Boards and general practice alone should decide who represents them within an ICS

- (iii) national funding for GPs roles in system and place leadership be made available
- (iv) funding must be ring fenced for enhanced services that are currently commissioned from general practice through locally commissioned services
- (v) where collaboration and streamlining of pathways involves work transferring to general practice from secondary care, funding and resource follows from funding previously aligned to secondary care budgets.

On Friday, Conference passed motions on online consultations; PCN DES guidance, GP contract reforms; and the COVID vaccination programme. There was also a very powerful and moving themed debate on Wellbeing for those working in general practice – something that is the focus of the [Support Your Surgery campaign](#), referenced again below. Later in the day there was a closed section which was not broadcast, to allow business to be debated without the constraints of the media spotlight. Representatives discussed GPC England transparency; the PCN DES; the NHSE/I 'access plan'; and accelerated patient access to medical records.

In her inaugural speech to conference, the newly elected chair of GPC England, Dr Farah Jameel, lay out her vision for the profession. She appealed for Government and GPs to work together to 'build general practice back better'. She highlighted the immense efforts of all GPs throughout the pandemic, including the hugely successful vaccination campaign, and the difficult truth that many family doctors have been left demoralised, broken and exhausted.

On Friday afternoon, Conference also discussed the results of the indicative ballot of GP practices in England. As you know, this was launched by the BMA after the profession rejected the Government's so-called winter 'rescue package' for general practice. The indicative ballot results showed that 84% of respondents said they would welcome non-compliance with COVID-19 exemption certificate requests, 80% said they would change the way they reported appointment data, and 58 % said they would support withdrawal from the PCN DES at the next opt-out period.

Read the [press statement](#) and full [transcript of her speech](#).

A list of resolutions and a recording of the event will be published on the [BMA website](#) shortly.

HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO THE FUTURE OF GENERAL PRACTICE

Last week, the Parliamentary Health and Social Care Committee (HSCC), chaired by former Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt MP, launched an [inquiry into the future of general practice](#). The inquiry presents a key opportunity for the BMA and LMCs to raise our concerns and recommendations. Worcestershire LMC has now formally submitted comments to the committee.

Members of the public and practices can also [submit their comments](#) directly to the inquiry by 14 December. Please do take the opportunity to get your views across if you can.

SUPPORTING GENERAL PRACTICE AGAINST ABUSE

We continue to campaign against abuse of GPs and their staff on your behalf. There are a number of resources available on [Support Your Surgery campaign](#) page, which can be used to explain to patients why practices need to work in the way they are doing in order to protect patients, and to make the best use of the available but limited workforce.

The resource package includes a [support your surgery](#) poster and [GP abuse](#) poster, a [template letter](#) to write to your local MP, and a [template letter](#) to share with local patient groups.

The BMA [GP campaign factsheet](#) can also be used to rebut the misinformation in the media and to proactively include in social media posts.

Please continue to show your support by signing the [Support Your Surgery petition](#) to put pressure on the Government to support general practice.

You can also get involved in the [#SupportYourSurgery social media discussion](#). Please do all you can to help us defend and support general practice at this critical time.

Your wellbeing

The BMA offers supportive [wellbeing services](#) which include **face-to-face counselling**. You can access one-off support or, after triage, a structured course of up to six face-to-face counselling sessions. Call **0330 123 1245** or [visit the website](#) for more information. Local wellbeing support is listed on our website.

UPDATED INFECTION CONTROL GUIDANCE (UK)

New [infection prevention and control \(IPC\) guidance](#) has now been published by the UK Health Security Agency, issued jointly by the Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and the devolved nations' public health

departments. It covers seasonal respiratory viruses and supersedes the previous COVID-19 specific guidance.

It recommends that face masks for staff and face masks/coverings for all patients and visitors should remain as an IPC measure within health and care settings over the winter period.

It also recommends that physical distancing should be at least 1 metre, increasing whenever feasible to 2 metres across all health and care settings, and that it should remain at 2 metres where patients with suspected or confirmed respiratory infection are being cared for or managed.

This follows the specific recommendations for changes to [IPC guidance in primary care](#) published last month. The BMA have already stressed that 1 metre social distancing will be difficult for some smaller surgeries and as such there will still have to be a reduced capacity in some practices. The guidance strongly emphasises that local decisions and risk assessments will ultimately decide whether a face-to-face consultation is appropriate and where physical distancing can be safely reduced. It is therefore for practices to determine what arrangements they have in the surgery.

Over the weekend there has been significant concern regarding the new Covid Omicron variant. We will provide more information as we receive it. The latest CAS alert can be found here:

<https://www.cas.mhra.gov.uk/ViewandAcknowledgment/ViewAlert.aspx?AlertID=103183>

GP APPOINTMENT DATA

The [GP appointment data for October have now been published, showing](#) an increase in the number of GP appointments, including the number of those being seen face-to-face.

Last month practices in England delivered more than 4 million more appointments than they did in September, a total of 33.9 million in October, and more than 3 million more than they did in the same month pre-pandemic in 2019. Meanwhile the number of people being seen face-to-face continues to rise, which underlines how wrong suggestions are that practices are closed and not seeing patients in person.

What's not picked up in these statistics though are the reams of other work that GPs and their colleagues do outside of consultations and at the same time we are continuing to lose GPs. Staff are exhausted and demoralised, and there are simply not enough hours in the day to provide safe, quality care to patients. Read the full statement [here](#).

UPDATED PGD AND NATIONAL PROTOCOLS FOR COVID VACCINATION PROGRAMME

Updates to the following PGDs and national protocols, for the COVID-19 vaccination programme in England, have been published:

[National protocol for COVID-19 mRNA vaccine BNT162b2 \(Pfizer/BioNTech\)](#)

[National protocol for Comirnaty® COVID-19 mRNA vaccine](#)

[Patient group direction for Comirnaty® \(Pfizer BioNTech\)](#)

[Patient Group Direction for COVID-19 mRNA vaccine BNT162b2 \(Pfizer/BioNTech\)](#)

NEW INTERACTIVE ESA 113

The new interactive ESA 113 form, which healthcare professionals fill in if the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) asks for information in connection with Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit, is now live on the [gov.uk website](#).

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:

No New Items

COVID 19 RESOURCES

[BMJ – news and resources](#)

[RCGP COVID-19 information](#)

[NHSE/I primary care bulletins](#)

[NICE resources](#)

WORCESTERSHIRE AND HEREFORDSHIRE LMC LTD

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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.

MEMBERS OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE COMMITTEE

- CHAIRMAN:** Dr David Herold
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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 E Ukorebi (South)

First5 Rep: Dr L Jones

IT Rep: Dr R Williams

Non Principals: Dr S Manton

Clinical Directors: Dr R Williams

EDI: Dr R Benney

Practice Manager Representatives:

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

Worcestershire GPC Representative: Dr S Matthews

The next LMC meetings will be:

Worcestershire – 9th December 2021

