

Dear Colleagues

Wessex LMCs News Update from the Team. . .

Wessex LMCs Intro...



*Dr Laura Edwards
Joint CEO
Wessex Local Medical Committees Ltd*

A brief message this week to say we recognise the pressure is still high in the world of General Practice. We thank you for filling out our [GP Alert State \(GPAS\)](#) measure each week so that we can share this pressure with other system members to get them into the space and conversation about how they might help us.

We appreciate that many of you will now be holding your flu (and/or COVID) clinics on top of the normal workload. Looking to the experience of other nations this year, we have seen that flu may be a significant issue for our populations this winter. Yet again you are serving your populations so well by carrying out this immunisation programme at a level of efficiency that is second to none. Thank you for the hard work involved in these, both in the planning and the actual vaccination.

And last but not least, a brief reminder of the good news that the vaccination of patient facing primary care staff is now covered by CNSGP.

GPC England Meeting

GPs Committee England met on Thursday 22 September, in an emergency meeting to discuss concerns about ongoing pressures in general practice and any potential actions that GPs can take as a profession in response to the underinvestment by the government and the crippling workloads faced by GPs. The Committee also debated the GP contract, discussing what needs to be done to support practices struggling with inadequate premises, maintaining the declining workforce, bureaucracy, and our negotiating strategy for the forthcoming year.

Below is a brief summary of the key issues discussed at the meeting. The meeting was live [tweeted](#) during the meeting, and the intention is to continue this for future meetings.

Thérèse Coffey announcement

The committee discussed the inadequacy of the announcement by the Secretary of State. In particular, the committee reflected that this announcement placed yet more requirements on GPs, without adequate measures to address the workload and retention crises which are facing general practice currently. GPCE's press release in response to this announcement is available [here](#).

Funding arrangements for GPC England

The committee discussed a motion regarding the funding arrangements of GPC England. This motion was passed, it called for significant additional funding for the business of the committee. This proposal was justified in light of the urgent crisis facing general practice.

Collective action planning

A project plan for a recently formed working group was shared with the committee. This group has been tasked to urgently scope out viable and impactful collective action options that could be taken by GPs in England. Alongside identifying options, the group has been tasked with developing guidance, timelines and comms plans for each option. These options are to enable the committee to have fully prepared options should the committee vote to ballot the profession in the future.

Prioritisation and position planning for contractual negotiations

Ahead of the forthcoming negotiations for year five of the current five-year contractual deal, the main item of discussion was around the planning for these negotiations. The committee were asked to prioritise the items that we believe will be in scope for these contractual negotiations. In addition, the committee were asked to feedback on what their minimum requirements, in terms of scope and outcomes, for it to be supportive of the officer team's participation in these negotiations and any resultant outcome.

The discussions also touched on what the negotiation priorities and positions should be for GPCE for the new contract, due to be implemented in 2024.

LMCs are encouraged to attend the LMC drop-in sessions which the GPCE officer team have been holding, where the officers will be able to update LMCs as much as possible on the progress of negotiations. Where appropriate, the officer team will also seek LMCs input on items arising during negotiations

Draft strategy for GPC England

An initial draft strategy for GPC England was presented to the committee by the GPCE officer team for their consideration and feedback. The aim of this strategy would be to provide a clear and succinct outline of what the committee's vision for general practice in England.

In addition, the strategy would aim to define committee's goals, and what its objectives are which would help it achieve its goals and vision. Furthermore, the strategy would seek to define what actions the committee would take to fulfil its ambitions and what specific non-subjective outcomes could be used to measure the success of the committee.

This was a very early discussion in the development of this strategy, and it will seek to be developed through iterative discussions with the committee and reflecting discussions at LMC England conference in November.

Read updates from the meeting on the BMA GP twitter account [@BMA_GP](#) / [Twitter GP pressure](#)

Changes to GP Contract Regulations

On 1 October 2022, the following changes to the [GMS and PMS Contract Regulations](#) and [APMS Directions](#) came into force:

- changes regarding premises requirements where services are provided remotely
- expansion of the provisions regarding the disclosure of information about NHS earnings and confirmation of the disclosure date for self-declaration submissions
- removal of the requirement that 25% of appointments are available for online booking, replaced with a requirement that all directly bookable appointments are able to be booked online, as well as in person or via the telephone.
- the ability for patients to register digitally is now supported.

Contract variation templates reflecting these changes will be published in due course.

Pension Contribution Rates

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has announced it is introducing changes to the amount members pay towards their NHS pension. See [here](#) for details.

PCSE Online will undergo a system change on 27 October 2022 to implement the new contribution rates. This will be followed by a dedicated technical process to automatically apply the new contribution rates to members' records to avoid practices having to submit a new Estimate form.

Adjustments will appear on the November contractual practice statements for any difference in deductions that are due for the period from 1 October 2022.

Practices must not submit a Salary Change form or revised 2022/23 Estimate of GP and non-GP provider NHS pensionable profits/pay until after the new contribution rates have been applied to PCSE Online

Winter Preparations – Variants of COVID-19 and respiratory challenges

Pulse oximeters continue to be available to enable systems to provide better support for people at home. Pulse oximeters are available to request free of charge and can be [ordered online](#). For queries, please email england.home@nhs.net

Resources to encourage take up of COVID-19 and flu vaccines for carers and personal assistants

To support work to ensure paid and unpaid carers and personal assistants know they're eligible for COVID-19 and flu, NHSE has prepared a carers communications toolkit and this is available [on Future NHS](#), with accessible and translated resources at [GOV.uk](#) and the [Campaign Resource Centre](#).

Increase in the cases of diphtheria amongst asylum seekers and refugees

UK Health Security Agency have confirmed that since February 2022, there have been five confirmed cases of diphtheria caused by toxigenic *C. diphtheriae* identified in asylum seekers in the UK with early reports that this situation is mirrored across a number of European countries. Many cases have presented with cutaneous lesions.

The two key diphtheria causing strains, *C. diphtheriae* and *C. ulcerans*, may present with cutaneous and/or respiratory presentations and can lead to severe disease in those who are not immunised or fully vaccinated.

Healthcare staff involved with supporting new arrivals are advised to consider investigating for suspected diphtheria in individuals presenting with cutaneous lesions and ensure careful use of PPE when assessing patients. It is important that all staff are fully immunised. Vaccination status should be assessed and any new arrivals with incomplete schedules should be caught-up as per the UK schedule. [More information can be found in national guidance](#).

Take part in digitising Proxy Access

NHS England would like to create a standard approach that allows a patient to grant someone else, usually a trusted family member, close friend, carer or care home, access to their GP online account to order repeat prescriptions or view their GP record on their behalf. This is known as proxy access. [Registrations for expressions of interest \(EOI\) are open to work with NHSE to help co-design how proxy access is delivered in the future](#). They are inviting general practitioners, practice managers, safeguarding leads, patient representatives and those with an interest in proxy access to take part.

Improvements to the Register with a GP Surgery service (case study)

During their [September General Practice webinar](#), NHSE presented a demo on the improvements that have been made to the 'Register with a GP Surgery' online service. [This case study provides further information about the new online registration service](#), including feedback from both GP practices and patients who have been involved in testing the new online form.

Wellbeing Corner - Resource of the week

NHS staff have been given free access to a number of wellbeing apps to support with their mental health and wellbeing. Click each link below for more information, including how to access support.



[#StayAlive](#)

The Stay Alive app is a suicide prevention resource for the UK, packed full of useful information and tools to help you stay safe in crisis.



[Bright Sky](#)

Bright Sky is a free to download, confidential mobile app providing support and information for anyone who may be in an abusive relationship or those concerned about someone they know.



[WorkLife Central](#)

The WorkLife Central programme consists of a curated collection of expertise, information, and inspiration available through video, live event, and written format, covering five principal topic areas – Careers, Families, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Workplace.



[Headspace](#)

Headspace is a science-backed app in mindfulness and meditation, providing unique tools and resources to help reduce stress, build resilience, and aid better sleep.



[Unmind](#)

Unmind is a mental health platform that empowers staff to proactively improve their mental wellbeing.



[Zero Suicide Alliance](#)

Zero Suicide Alliance provides you with a range of free online learning sessions that provide you with a better understanding of the signs to look out for and the skills required to approach someone who is struggling, whether that be through social isolation or suicidal thoughts.

Wessex Support Hubs for Practice Staff

Banes, Swindon & Wiltshire: [BSW Wellbeing Matters service](#)

Dorset: [The ICS staff wellbeing service – Here For Each Other \(joinourdorset.nhs.uk\)](#)

Hants & IOW: [HIOW Staff Support Hub](#)

Wessex Education & Events

Bite Size for Managers – Halfway through the financial year – where are we and where we should be.

Thursday 13 October 2022 10:00 – 12:00

FREE for Wessex LMC Members to attend the live webinar

Book Online: <https://www.wessexlmcs.com/events/13169>

Please join us for a 'bite-size' training session specifically designed for Practice Managers and Team Leaders.

Roger Morgan (Accountant from Sandisons Ltd) will lead this 2-hour session for any Managers in the Practice looking at the: Half-way through the Financial Year - Where are we (and where should we be)? Sue Scott, one of our PM Supporters will assist Roger in making sure that all the practical questions that PMs need to know are addressed.

We are recording this session and it will be available [here](#) for 12 weeks after the event at a cost of £5 for members of Wessex LMCs

Take a look at the range of bite-size recordings available [here](#)



Coping with Imposter Syndrome with John Perry

Monday 17 October 2022 14:00 – 16:00

Wessex LMC Members £30pp

Book Online: <https://www.wessexlmcs.com/events/13971>

Imposter Syndrome is the experience that many high-achieving people have of feeling a fraud, of not deserving their success, a fear of being 'found out', of not being as competent as other people think they are. It is characterized by chronic self-doubt, feeling phoney, attributing success to luck or other external factors, feeling unable to live up to expectations, etc.



This interactive, two-hour workshop will provide an overview of the causes of and remedies for Imposter Syndrome, including:

- The crucial difference between self-worth and self-esteem
- Overcoming guilt and shame
- How to break the habit of constantly assessing yourself and your performance
- Moving from self-reproach to self-acceptance
- Substituting 'could' for 'should' e.g. rather than, 'I should exercise more'; substituting 'I could exercise more'.
- Moving from proving oneself to valuing oneself.
- Substituting a focus on being interesting to a focus on being interested.

Please note this session is NOT being recorded

Regards
The LMC Team

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