

Dear Colleagues

Wessex LMCs News Update from the Team. . .

Wessex LMCs Intro...



*Dr Will Howard
Medical Director
Wessex Local Medical Committees Ltd*

Wessex Healthier Together: the Blueprint for Self-Care?



Following the Group A Strep outbreak and the demand that it brought with it, Wessex LMCs have been in conversation with Dr Sanjay Patel (Consultant in Paediatric Infectious diseases at University Hospitals Southampton) to see where his widely supported website (and now App) “*Wessex Healthier Together*” fit into the diverse offers to our patients and Practices, and what can we learn from the outbreak? We will shortly be doing a Podcast with Sanjay to reflect on what we have learnt from the outbreak. The app and website are funded by the NHS and there are no commercial ownership or profit making entities driving its development. This is a passionate team of clinicians and developers innovating to deliver a tool for the benefit of patients and health care providers.

What we have seen is the benefit of using intelligent self-care resources for both patients and practices. The website and app allowed clinicians to dynamically alter the information on offer to help meet the voracious new demand that the media generated. It was clear that we could not control the national media message, but the responsive nature of the app and website helped us. Early data from use of the app has showed that only 32.7% of triages resulted in an amber “speak to your GP” disposition. The rest were diverted to either green (self-care 59.5%) or red (seek emergency services 7.8%). This appears to suggest diversion away from Primary Care to the most appropriate care environment – although the study is ongoing.

It’s a great start, but as we all experienced during this demand crisis it has only scratched the surface. So, what next? We believe that now we know the app and website are helpful for us all, we need to get them into common use for our patients and practices. Therefore, we would urge all GPs and their teams to keep reminding parents of the existence of Wessex Healthier together – embedding it in the common knowledge of parents and practices teams. We also need to innovate collectively to see if this could be used as a blueprint for more common presentations to Primary Care, and how we can empower our patients to seek the correct management of their health concerns rather than simply following their historical habits. Just “*See your GP*” needs to change and the whole system needs to be reminded of this alongside our message to patients.

Wessex Healthier Together is an innovation that has been developed as a tool for Patients and Clinicians that is responsive, user friendly and helps patients understand how to self-care and when to get help.

For information about Wessex Healthier Together promotional resources, please email Holly Benton, Healthier Together programme officer (holly.benton@uhs.nhs.uk). To onboard with the Healthier Together App, please complete the online registration form (<https://forms.gle/1xdR1Wp3De3yw9Cs9>) which takes 5 minutes and book a slot to meet online with the App team (<http://calendly.com/cenigma/htapp>)

Wessex LMCs is holding an “Innovations Conference” on **Thursday 6th July 2023**, and we are asking local and national innovators and practices to share their products and ideas with Practice Managers and GPs from across the Wessex area. If you have created a new way of working or have innovated something within your practice, do let us know – we would love to invite you to share this with Practices. Equally if you are aware of any innovations you would like to know more about, let us know and we will ask the innovators to share their ideas with us all on 6th July. Please email louise.greenwood@wessexlmcs.org.uk. We hope to see as many of you there as possible – bookings are not yet open but please save the date in your diary.

Lifetime Pensions Allowance & Annual Allowance

In the budget on 15th March 2023, the Chancellor announced he will abolish the pensions Lifetime Allowance in a bid to retain GPs and other doctors. He said this formed part of a ‘comprehensive plan to help people extend their working lives’.

Jeremy Hunt announced that:

“The Lifetime Allowance charge will be removed before being abolished altogether, ‘removing barriers to remaining in work and simplifying the tax system by taking thousands out of the complexity of pension tax.’”

“The Annual Allowance will be increased from £40,000 to £60,000, in order to ‘incentivise highly-skilled workers to remain in the labour market.’”

He said that as a result of the pensions tax measures announced, an estimated 80% of NHS doctors will not receive a tax charge with respect to accruals under the 2015 NHS career average scheme.

The chair of the BMA pensions committee, Dr Vishal Sharma, said that scrapping of the lifetime allowance will be ‘potentially transformative’ for the NHS, as senior doctors will no longer be forced to retire early and can continue to work within the NHS.

New to Partnership Payment Scheme

The N2PP scheme was introduced in July 2020 for an anticipated two years. In December 2021, NHS England extended the scheme until the end of March 2023.

GPs and other clinical staff intending to apply for the scheme need to have entered into an equity partnership **by 31st March 2023** to be able to submit an application by 30 June 2023. **We understand the scheme will end at that point.**

Find out more about the application process [online](#) or you can email england.newtopartnershipenquiries@nhs.net

The Introduction of HRT Prepayment Certificates (HRT PPCs)

From 1 April 2023, women prescribed HRT - the main treatment for menopause symptoms - will have access to a new scheme enabling access to a year’s worth of menopause prescription items for the cost of 2 single prescription charges (currently £18.70).

As part of commitments to reduce the cost of HRT for menopausal women, the PPC will be valid for 12 months. It can be used against a list of HRT prescription items, and a patient can use this against an unlimited number of HRT items, such as patches, tablets, and topical preparations. There will be no limit to how many times the certificate can be used while it is valid.

As a consequence of its limited scope, a patient with an HRT PPC will continue to pay the prescription charge for any other (non-HRT) medicines (unless another exemption reason applies). While GPs will be required to write HRT items on separate prescriptions, on occasion both an HRT item and another medicine will be prescribed on the same prescription – **a mixed prescription. This presents a problem for a patient who has an HRT PPC** because a prescription cannot be processed as both 'exempt' and 'paid' within the NHS prescription processing and pricing systems.

DHSC state that a digital solution will be introduced as soon as possible to automate the issuing of HRT items on a separate prescription. In the interim, prescribers will have to manually issue separate prescriptions for any listed HRT items only.

Although DHSC have said that they will issue guidance to prescribers shortly, we have flagged this with the BMA as it comes into force from 1st April and could potentially cause increased workload for practices if there isn't a timely digital solution.

Website and phone message reviews forge best practice guides for GP surgeries

The websites and automated phone messages of GP practices across Wiltshire have been the focus of a two-part project led by Healthwatch Wiltshire volunteers.

Dr Andy Purbrick, Joint Chief Executive of Wessex LMC, said of the website review:

"It isn't surprising that there was significant variation in the quality and quantity of the information on practice websites. Often websites can become a victim of their own success, becoming a huge piece of work for practices to keep up to date.

"Constructive feedback with examples of what 'good' looks like are always welcome. Your list of recommendations will provide a useful crib sheet for practices to refer to when reviewing their websites."

He added about our phone message review:

"Many thanks for sharing this useful piece of research with us. It is good to see that a significant majority of reviewers found the messages easy to understand and informative [but] it would appear that practices could focus more on making their messaging more welcoming and personal.

"Your list of positive features provides a good aspirational template on which practices can base their phone messaging."

[Read the full article here](#)

Supporting General Practice Referrals to the NHS Community Pharmacist Consultation Service

New [patient materials to support referrals from general practice for a minor illness consultation under the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service \(CPCS\)](#) are now available. The communication materials have been designed to help practice teams and ICBs explain to patients why they are being offered a consultation with a community pharmacist and what to expect from it, to increase confidence in the referral process.

The digital materials were tested by practices – who found them a useful resource when making referrals. They include a patient leaflet and easy read version, poster, digital display screen, social media images and accompanying text and a briefing sheet that explains how to use them. Translations of the leaflet are available in ten languages.

Contact england.pharmacyintegration@nhs.net for more information.

Professional Record Standards Body (PRSB) survey to support improvements in discharge summaries

The PRSB have been commissioned by NHS England to identify improvements in the way that discharge summaries and clinic letters are sent from secondary care providers and received by general practice. The review will also consider implementation barriers and solutions to secondary care provider compliance with the existing [Transfer of Care \(TOC\)](#) discharge standard ([DAPB4042](#)).

To help inform this work, PRSB would like to hear from colleagues working in general practice via a short [survey](#). The deadline for responses is the 26th March. For further info please contact: info@theprsb.org.

Funding offer for Trainee Nurse Associate (TNA) places in general practice

Health Education England is offering additional funded places for TNAs in general practice starting in October 2023 with The Open University. This primary care apprenticeship programme is fully supported with funding:

- £4,000 per year per TNA
- Up to £15,000 apprenticeship levy
- PCNs will be able to claim 100% of the TNA salary

In addition, TNAs spending 50% or more of their time working with people who have a learning disability and/or autistic people will be eligible for additional funding – totalling £7,900 per apprentice.

To apply, contact nationalnursingandmidwiferyteam@hee.nhs.uk by Monday 11th April 2023

Wessex LMCs in the Media

Dr Laura Edwards, Joint CEO of Wessex LMCs was recently interviewed by Global News to highlight the pressures in general practice. [Take a listen to the interview](#) which was featured on Heart Hampshire Radio on 10th March 23.

Anxiety and depression: why doctors are prescribing gardening rather than drugs

Many GPs are now prescribing growing and other green activities, and evidence suggests that this can be as effective at treating anxiety and depression as medication, and sometimes more so. <https://theconversation.com/anxiety-and-depression-why-doctors-are-prescribing-gardening-rather-than-drugs-121841>

Dr Anne Hayden founder of the Grown your own Rainbow Gardens initiative explains how the project helps address physical and mental wellbeing and food insecurity. The initiative is about empowering people to take control of their lives by coming together as a supportive community, better able to cope with life's challenges. Lawrence Camilleri, founder of Forever More Food works in partnership with the project which has been steadily growing in popularity.

Listen to the podcast [here](#)

To find out more and get involved, email yourplanetdoctors@gmail.com or take a look at: <https://sustainabilitypractitioners.org/grow-your-own-rainbow-gardens-your-planet-doctors/>

Mental Health & Wellbeing

We would like to remind colleagues of the new Looking After You Too peer wellbeing sessions. This free service brings people together with a highly trained coach to discuss and plan how to improve and maintain their wellbeing, sharing experiences to support each other in a safe space. If you are interested in joining a group, [please fill in this expression of interest form by Friday 24 March](#).



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

GP Contract 23/24 - webinar to unpick and discuss the changes

Thursday 30th March 2023 15:00 - 16:00

FREE for anyone working in General Practice working in the Wessex area.

Book Online: www.wessexlmcs.com/events/14894

Please join us for an hour where we will analyse the 23/24 changes to the [GP Contract](#). We will look at the implications for you and your practice for the coming year.

We are delighted that Dr Richard van Mellaerts (Deputy Chair - GP Committee England of BMA) will join the discussion with our team of Directors from Wessex LMCs. We hope you are able to take up this opportunity to look at the contract with us and bring with you any questions you may have.

(We will record the event for anyone who is unable to join us live, and this will be available to watch back on the [event booking page](#) after)

Maternity Workshops Online - fully funded for GPs in practices in Wessex LMCs area

Next cohort starting Wednesday 19th April 2023 13:00 – 14:00

FREE for GPs working in General Practice working in the Wessex area.

Book Online: <https://www.wessexlmcs.com/events/14536>

Want to feel confident about your return to work after maternity leave? We often hear about mothers losing their confidence on maternity leave, but have you ever wondered why it happens? And how to prevent it?

One of the biggest challenges for working parents today is how to find work-life balance. But where do you start trying to figure out what will work for you and your family? Plus, how do you find the time and space to maintain your identity and look after your own needs when you become a mother?

Whether you are still at work or already enjoying your new baby, the chances are you're thinking about your return to work after maternity leave and the juggling this will bring.

This online course takes you through everything you need to think about to plan a confident return to work, from how to manage your emotions, maintain your confidence, juggle work and family life, maintain your sense of self and create your return to work plan. So, you won't just survive after your return to work, you will thrive.

And because we are working parents, and have been through maternity leave, we know how hard it is to find the time to do even the simplest of tasks. The bite size lessons, and downloadable worksheets are designed to make it easy to complete around even the busiest work and family life.

A series of lunchtime webinars to be held on:

Wednesday 19th April 1-2pm
Wednesday 26th April 1-2pm
Wednesday 3rd May 1-2pm
Wednesday 10th May 1-2pm
Tuesday 16th May 1-2:15pm
Wednesday 17th May 1-2pm

Find out more and book online [here](#)

Regards

The LMC Team

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