

Dear Colleagues

Wessex LMCs News Update from the Team. . .

Wessex LMCs Intro...



Dr Laura Edwards
Joint CEO



Dr Andy Purbrick
Joint CEO

We know many of you are working way beyond your safe capacity and have been for some time now. We also know that this is not sustainable.

General practice in England is at an ever-increasing risk of collapse, with unsafe volumes of work being expected of an ever diminishing and demoralised profession. To protect patients, GPs and practice staff, something has to change.

The BMA's GPCE (GP Committee England) voted to reject the Government's proposed contract changes for 2023/24 on 1st February 2023. Despite further lobbying and discussions throughout last month, no further changes were made. These changes will subsequently be imposed on us and will come into force on 1st April 2023.

GPCE voted to reject these contract changes because:

- The government increased the bureaucratic burden on practices - unnecessary work at a time when patient waits for care are at an all-time high and every moment spent on patient facing care is precious
- they place unachievable arbitrary access targets on practices that, they fear, will likely leave at least some in breach of contract through no fault of their own
- there is no support for practices with huge inflationary and minimum wage pressures, despite hospitals receiving £1.5bn of support for these pressures

These changes come at a time when [practices are providing more appointments with fewer GPs](#).

GPCE know that this workload is leading to burn out of GPs, many of whom are reducing their number of working days to stave off burnout and protect their ability to continue working or leaving the profession altogether as a result.

As the workload increases and the number of GPs decreases, the capacity for general practice to provide safe care diminishes. This affects our patients.

To protect patient safety, and GP wellbeing, GPCE is looking to bring Government back to the negotiating

table to agree a contract that helps, rather than hinders, retention of GPs, protects practices, and ensures safe and high-quality patient care. "Urgent action by our politicians is needed right now. However, despite the significant evidence to the contrary, they currently do not recognise the severity of the problems they have just exacerbated."

To try to force Government into meaningful talks, GPCE is preparing to ballot GPs on proposed action. GPCE feel they have exhausted all other means of changing the Government's minds on this contract and are asking the profession to act together now in order to secure meaningful change. They believe that it is vital that GPs take up this request when it comes, as it has reached the point where not acting will lead to increasing patient harm. GPCE will be publishing more updates, briefings and guidance in the coming weeks on potential options and answering all your questions.

In the meantime, the GPCE is asking practices to discuss the state of general practice, the imposed 2023/24 contract changes and the importance of constructive change with your colleagues, patients, and the LMC as frequently as you can. All feedback and profession insight will be gratefully received. Informing and sharing concerns about the current contract, as well as hopes for a much-improved contract, will go a long way to protecting general practice and, one day, allowing it to thrive in this country on behalf of patients once again. To be part of a future ballot GPs must be a BMA member to participate.

GPCE will be continually communicating with all GPs in the near future about next steps and progress. In the first instance, please do attend one of the GPCE contract webinars which is open to all GPs, practice managers, and LMC colleagues. You can register [HERE](#).

GPC England calls for GP response to 2023/24 contract imposition in this short video



Dr Richard van Mellaerts (Deputy Chair of the BMA GPC England) will be joining us for a webinar to discuss the 2023/24 contract changes on Thursday 30th March 15.00-16.00.

[Wessex LMCs: Event details: GP Contract 23/24 - webinar to unpick and discuss the changes.](#)

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.

Read more about the 2023/24 GP contract changes on the [BMA website](#)

Read more about the options being considered in the [Doctor magazine](#)

Lifetime allowance scrapped

At the budget announcement earlier this week, the Government has finally taken meaningful steps to address the impact of punitive pensions taxes by scrapping the lifetime allowance that means doctors will no longer be forced to retire early because of pension tax.

The additional rise in the annual allowance to £60,000 will mean that far fewer doctors will face large, unexpected tax bills and will significantly reduce the perverse incentive to reduce hours.

This is a significant win for the BMA and the BMA's pension committee has campaigned extensively for the Government to provide a fix to the pension crisis that has left a significant number of doctors with no option but to retire early or reduce their hours. This will help us to retain our most senior doctors who have a pivotal role to play not only in providing care for patients but in teaching and mentoring our junior colleagues.

However, it doesn't address all the issues and the BMA will be continuing to support those doctors who continue to be impacted by big pension tax bills, including those affected by the tapered annual allowance, and will aim to work with the Government to find appropriate solutions to address this. Read the press statement [here](#)

Junior doctors' and GP trainees strike action

Junior doctors (including GP trainees) took industrial action last week and the BMA has thanked practices for their solidarity with GP trainees and junior doctors. 98% of junior doctors voted in favour of strike action and which gave the BMA a huge mandate and puts the government under intense pressure. The BMA has signalled this as a step in the right direction for full pay restoration not just for junior doctors, but the whole profession.

Watch David Wrigley, GPC England Deputy Chair, and Dave Smith, Chair of the GP Trainees Committee, explain more in [this video](#).

See more on the strike action on GP trainees twitter Ahead of the strikes, the BMA published guidance for practices how to manage the impact of strikes.

Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill – Protect the right to strike

The Government is pushing through anti-strike legislation that could undermine workers' ability to take strike action. The proposals would mean government could set "minimum service" levels for health workers during strike periods. Employers would then be able to issue work notices naming workers required to work to make up these minimum service level on strike days. The BMA is calling on Lords to block Government's attempts to curtail legitimate strike action and to ensure there is safe staffing across the NHS every day of the year. The BMA is asking practices to take action and [write to a peer today](#)

Workforce returns – please report all hours that GPs work

Following some exploratory work within GPC England, it has become evident that the workforce returns that each practice submits may no longer be accurate given the increased work GPs have been doing since the pandemic. We would like to remind practices to ensure their submitted workforce returns accurately match the work being done by partners and salaried doctors. It helps GPCE in negotiations to be able to evidence that GPs are working longer hours to provide the care their patients need.

Returns for each GP are filed in hours per week and should reflect the work being done each week, during a normal week when not on leave. It is important that returns reflect the actual hours worked, not an estimate based on nominal sessions planned.

Returns will usually be completed by practice managers and can be [filed here](#). There are two boxes where hours worked per week can be entered. One shows contracted hours and one shows actual hours. For salaried GPs, only the contracted hours box is used in the returns. For contractors and zero-hours GPs, only the actual hours box is used in the returns. If the same numbers are put in both boxes it will ensure the hours are correctly captured.

You should factor in all work done over the course of a week in providing NHS services, including time spent doing CPD (including any done at home).

It is worth remembering that the salaried model contract references four hours per week of CPD on an

annualised basis and that this therefore is to be considered working time. If a salaried GP has an annualised CPD allowance included in their contract, the equivalent hours per week should be added to the reported hours for the return.

If salaried GP's contracted hours happen to be fewer than the hours actually worked, then aside from a conversation about how the contract might be updated to reflect this work, recording the actual hours worked will be beneficial to the profession in showing to government exactly how much work we are doing.

Once processed, the returns are published monthly on [NHS Digital website](https://www.nhs.uk/digital). One full time equivalent doctor is associated with 37.5 hours of work per week. The next collection is at the end of the March and it would be helpful if returns could be checked prior to next month's publication

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing programmes

The NHS People Plan and the NHS People Promise outlines a number of key programmes that are in place to assist organisations to develop culture of wellbeing, in which their workforce feel supported and well at work.

Learn more about the programmes here: www.england.nhs.uk/supporting-our-nhs-people/health-and-wellbeing-programmes/

Wessex Support Hubs for Practice Staff

Banes, Swindon & Wiltshire: [BSW Wellbeing Matters service](https://www.bsw-wellbeing-matters-service.nhs.uk/)

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

Hants & IOW: [HIOW Staff Support Hub](https://hiow-staff-support-hub.nhs.uk/)

Wessex Education & Events

Saying no to unrealistic patient expectations

Friday 12th May 2023 13:00 – 14:00

Wessex LMC Members £25pp

Book Online: <https://www.wessexlmcs.com/events/14542>

This webinar is for all clinicians who undertake patient consultations.

Saying no to patients is something most clinicians wrestle with, and it can be even harder to set boundaries when patient expectations feel unrealistic. This webinar aims to help delegates manage these tricky situations.

In this one hour workshop, we will share some models and techniques that can help us feel more confident to set appropriate boundaries and draw on our own experiences to help manage conflicts that may crop up while dealing with this challenging group of patients.

Delegates will receive access to post session resources to support this training.

Previous Delegate Feedback

"A really helpful supportive session that has made me reflect on the way I consult. thank you"

Please note this training is not being recorded



Bitesize – New to practice finance

Wednesday 3rd May 2023 14:00 - 16:00

Wessex LMC Members £15pp

Book Online: <https://www.wessexlmcs.com/events/14690>

Matt Perkins, one of our PM Supporters will lead another of his webinars for all those involved in practice management finance. This one is especially for those who are new to working with practice finances. As ever, the session will be practical, relevant and Matt's guidance will be easy to implement.



This session will help you to understand:

- the basics of what you need to have in place
- what makes up GP income and expenditure
- the financial implications of PCNs, PCSE, tax, superannuation & Partnership drawings

Following this 2 hour session you will have a basic understanding of how finances work in Primary Care, and where the pitfalls are.

This training will be recorded and available to purchase afterwards [here](#)

Regards

The LMC Team

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