



**ISSUED TO LLR GPs & PRACTICE MANAGERS ON 22.12.21**

This month we are covering the following areas:

- a. Christmas & New Year sub-contracting arrangement
- b. Covid Medical exemption certificates
- c. COVID-19 workload prioritisation guide for general practice during the accelerated booster vaccination campaign (England)
- d. Clinical waste duty of care online waste audit
- e. Vaccination as a condition for deployment in the healthcare sector
- f. LMC levy rebate to practices
- g. LMC General Practice Access Summit
- h. New to partnership scheme – update
- i. CQC unannounced access visits
- j. Fit Note extension period
- k. Prescription Charge Medical Exemption Certification
- l. Firearms licences
- m. DVLA checks
- n. PCSE webinar & useful links
- o. Increasing the exposure of Foundation Doctors to General Practice
- p. Comms from others
- q. Season's greetings message

**a. CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR SUB-CONTRACTING**

For all practices that have opted into this year's Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve (4.00-6.30pm) sub-contracting arrangement organised by the LMC, you should have now received a confirmation email. This includes all the relevant information, and the DHU telephone number to divert phones to during the sub-contracting arrangement. For anyone that has missed the comms, it is available [here](#).

Please ensure to remove the divert after 6.30pm.

**b. COVID MEDICAL EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES**

The details of how to do this is at: <https://digital.nhs.uk/services/summary-care-record-application/covid-pass-medical-exemption>

There will be a £44.00 item of service (IOS) fee paid by the NHS for every request that is processed (regardless of whether agreed to or declined), once it is posted onto the Summary Care Record.

The patient will need to contact 119 in the first instance. They will be provided with a form that a GP/specialist will be required to complete. The practice will need to log on and record the outcome on SCRa (<https://portal.national.ncrs.nhs.uk/portal/>). Please note that the portal only works using the Internet Explorer browser.

Once you have logged your decision, the patient is sent a letter advising whether they have an exemption or not. Payments will be made to the practice automatically without any need for the practice to take any additional action.



### **c. COVID-19 WORKLOAD PRIORITISATION GUIDE FOR GENERAL PRACTICE DURING THE ACCELERATED BOOSTER VACCINATION CAMPAIGN (ENGLAND)**

The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) and the British Medical Associations (BMA) GP's Committee with NHS England and Improvement's support has developed guidance for clinicians working in general practice in England.

This [document replaces prior guidance on workload prioritisation developed by the RCGP and BMA during COVID-19](#) and is intended to reflect the current situation at the time of publishing, which is changing rapidly. It will be reviewed on a regular basis as the situation develops, but it is intended as short-term guidance for practices in their planning whilst delivering the accelerated booster vaccination campaign.

### **d. CLINICAL WASTE DUTY OF CARE ONLINE WASTE AUDIT**

The LMC has been sighted of an email around 'clinical waste duty of care online waste audit'. We have queried whether this falls within the regulations and is mandatory for practices to complete.

Practices have a Duty of Care under section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which includes the pre-acceptance audits. Further information is also available in the Health Technical Memorandum 07-01 – Safe management of healthcare waste under section 6 Managing Compliance.

Whilst we have clarity that practices will need to complete, there is no deadline for completion, and our view is that this should be given low priority whilst practices are coping with the additional work from the pandemic and covid vaccinations.

### **e. VACCINATION AS A CONDITION FOR DEPLOYMENT IN THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR**

The recent GPC update stated, 'the Government published the outcome of their consultation on [making vaccination a condition of deployment in the health and wider social care sector](#), advising that from 1 April 2022, only to deploy healthcare workers who have been vaccinated against COVID-19 to roles where they interact with patients and service users, to avoid preventable harm and protect patients in the NHS, protect colleagues in the NHS, and protect the NHS itself. Read the [NHSE/I guidance](#).

*While the BMA has serious concerns about making vaccination mandatory, we're pleased that the Government has, as we recommended, decided to delay the policy of mandatory vaccination for COVID-19 until spring next year. Read the [full statement by the chair of BMA Council](#).*

We are waiting for the proposed legislation to complete its parliamentary passage following which we will expect to have further guidance on the implementation of the new regulations inclusive of a redeployment framework. We would suggest that practices speak with their HR providers on how this information is obtained, recorded or any complexity in relation to HR matters.

### **f. LMC LEVY REBATE TO PRACTICES**

We have received numerous responses to our email regarding the LMC rebate to practices.

If you have not yet responded, please email [enquiries@llrlmc.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@llrlmc.co.uk) with the following details:

- Practice Name
- Practice code
- Practice Bank sort code
- Last four digits of bank account
- Practice Manager email address

Note, if you manage more than 1 practice and/or they share the same bank account, please make this clear. We will start processing the rebates shortly, and a remittance advice will follow once payment is made.



#### **g. LMC GENERAL PRACTICE ACCESS SUMMIT**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> December, the LMC organised the General Practice Access Summit to which we invited senior leaders from all the relevant healthcare organisations inc. UHL, LPT, CCG, ICS, Healthwatch, Public Health and other key health organisations. There was facilitated discussion that allowed for open debate on the challenges being faced in the current climate.

We invited all LLR MPs, but it was a shame to see the majority of local MPs weren't able to commit to this engagement, which was disappointing as it's what we believe is a crucial time within General Practice and the Health and Social Care.

We are working with the organisations on 'what next?'

#### **h. NEW TO PARTNERSHIP SCHEME - UPDATE**

We suspect by now you are all aware of the '[new to partnership](#)' scheme. The GPC has received confirmation from NHSEI of the changes to the scheme:

- The scheme will be extended till at least March 2023
- The 6 month timescale for applications is being removed altogether
- 1140 applications (1102 GPs, 19 nurses, 14 pharmacists, 4 paramedics, 1 physician associate) have been approved so far and 973 of those grants have been paid
- £18m worth of grant payments made so far.
- £25m is the total value (including bursaries, grant payments and top ups minus clawbacks)

#### **i. CQC UNANNOUNCED ACCESS VISITS**

Further to our recent comms to practices regarding CQC unannounced access visits, there has been a lot of regional and national lobbying to suspend CQC inspections to allow general practice to focus on winter access and covid vaccinations.

We are pleased to hear that CQC inspections (including unannounced CQC access visits), unless there are patient safety concerns, have been suspended until the new year. There continues to be lobbying for further suspension on CQC inspections until the pressures ease.

#### **j. FIT NOTE EXTENSION PERIOD**

The Department of Work and Pensions are making legislative changes meaning that from Friday 17 December 2021 self-certification for sickness will be extended from 7 to 28 days for people accessing Statutory Sick Pay, and there will be no requirement for a fit note to access other benefits. This time limited change will end on 26 January 2022. [Further guidance on this is available](#). Whilst we expect this to cover the vast majority of fit note requests, GPs may continue to receive some for access to occupational sick pay depending on individual contractual arrangements.

#### **K. PRESCRIPTION CHARGE MEDICAL EXEMPTION CERTIFICATION**

The Department of Health and Social Care will temporarily suspend the re-certification requirement for existing prescription charge medical exemptions but retain this requirement for newly diagnosed patients.

NHS Business Services Authority (BSA) will contact patients with existing medical exemptions that are due to expire between 16 December and 26 January and supply a new certificate extending their exemption for a further six months.

Some people requiring renewals may have already received a reminder and have arranged with their GP surgery for this form to be signed. If this has not yet been done, no action needs to be taken.



## **L. FIREARMS LICENCES**

The LMC has received a number of questions from practices in regards to the new firearms licences following the change in the form given to GPs to complete.

The process has recently changed following the tragic Plymouth incident, which is now a standardised national approach, you may have seen the recent article in Pulse. We appreciate, on the face of it, the forms look complex. However, when we reviewed the new template, it was highlighted that if there are no concerns it shouldn't take long to complete. Some systems are able to extract the data automatically. If you believe it will take longer than it did originally, practices can amend their fee accordingly.

The GPC guidance on the firearms licences is [here](#).

In the recent NHS update, it stated *'The Home Office has written to the main shooting organisations to request where possible, that firearms certificate applicants who are about to submit a request wait until January before requesting the relevant medical information from their GP or from an independent doctor. We anticipate the vast majority of applicants (for example new applications for non-work purposes) will be able to wait.*

*The Home Office would be grateful, if a person has a particularly urgent application, for example, because of work commitments or the imminent expiry of their certificate, if practices could still consider providing the information'.*

## **m. DVLA CHECKS**

The Driver and Vehicle Licencing Agency (DVLA) has suspended requests for medical information for the provision of drivers licences until the 12 January (excluding essential workers e.g. bus and lorry drivers).

## **n. PCSE WEBINAR TO LMCs & USEFUL LINKS**

PCSE provided an update webinar for CCGs and LMCs on 14 December 2021, the recording of which is now available to view on their YouTube channel [here](#). They have included a series of links, which practices may find useful:

Disposal of Polylope bags for Medical Records

- [Bulletin sent to GP Practices](#)
- [Where can I recycle Polylope bags?](#)

Ordering Lateral Flow Tests through gov.uk

- [Order Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rapid lateral flow tests](#)

User Guides

- [Pensions Contribution Guide](#)
- [Guide to Patient Registrations](#)
- [GP Payments and GP Pensions User Guides](#)

How LMCs and GP Practices get in touch with GP Payment queries

- [Contacting PCSE with GP Payment queries - LMCs and Practices](#)

## **o. INCREASING THE EXPOSURE OF FOUNDATION DOCTORS TO GENERAL PRACTICE**

General Practice needs more GPs and this begins with early exposure in the Foundation Doctor years. Hosting these doctors in your practice gives an excellent opportunity to interact and influence junior doctors and is very rewarding.



The Foundation School is expanding. It is anticipated that there is going to be a large increase in Foundation Doctors in training. In addition, the Government has asked the Foundation school to increase capacity.

HEE are running a webinar on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 2022 at 1pm to find out more, which practices are welcome to join from the link in the [flyer](#) or from the link below.

Microsoft Teams meeting - [Click here to join the meeting](#)

**p. COMMS FROM OTHERS:**

- [Primary Care Bulletin - 20 December 2021 \(Issue 165\)](#)
- [GPC update to LMCs](#)

**q. SEASONS GREETING MESSAGE**

*On behalf of all at LLR LMC, we want to wish you all a very happy and healthy Christmas and New year – the LMC office will be shut between Christmas and New year, but for any urgent matters, please contact us on 0116 2962950.*