



14th September 2020

Dear Colleague

Please see below for your information our latest updates:

QOF at a glance

As reported last week, NHS England have now published [revised QOF guidance](#) which details the requirements for 2020/21. This guidance is effective immediately and the Statement of Financial Entitlement will be amended shortly to reflect this.

The BMA have drafted the attached QOF at a glance document, which summarises the changes for QOF for the remainder of 2021/22. In light of COVID-19, QOF has been refocussed to:

- support practices to reprioritise aspects of care not related to COVID-19
- serve those patients most in need of long-term condition management support
- guarantee significant income protection and the relaxing of some requirements for practices.

Flu Guidance 2020/21

Last week, NHSE/I published the updated [flu specification for 2020/21](#) and the updated [DES directions](#). Practices will need to respond to commissioners' invitation to participate in the 2020/21 Flu DES by no later than *14 September*. Additional BMA guidance and NHS England FAQs will be published shortly.

Delivering the flu vaccination programme

Practices working in their PCNs where appropriate are encouraged to work together with pharmacies to support a successful 2020/21 flu campaign. This is even more important in light of COVID-19, and the challenges that we face in delivering this year's flu programme. As in previous years, this is a national service with both practices and community pharmacies providing NHS flu vaccinations, and we all have a role to play in identifying and engaging patients and vaccinating to protect as many as possible at a very vulnerable time.

Practices and pharmacies should talk to each other about the vaccination service they are planning to offer to understand each other's plans. Where possible discussions should include how to reduce

health inequalities and how to target harder to reach or under vaccinated populations which can help achieve an effective campaign.

This year the new Investment and Impact Fund includes a shared goal across the PCN to provide immunisations to patients 65 years and over and this includes those given both by practices and pharmacies in the area. Read more in the [GP contract agreement document](#)

Automation of PCN payments (England)

From 1 September, payments for PCN (Primary Care Network) core payments, CD (Clinical Director) payments, Extended Hours Access, and Network Participation Payments, became automated (previously manually processed by CCGs). As part of this change, each practice is now required to verify the Network Participation Payment in CQRS before it is released.

COVID-19 antibody test results flowing to GP records

From 10 September, when a person undertakes an antibody test that is taken through the public antibody portal (an ELISA test), the result will be loaded directly into their patient records. This will be in addition to flowing of test results for pillar 2 viral testing and will follow the same process, according to each practice's IT system provider.

Results will be presented on patients' records as 'positive', 'negative' or 'unknown'. As for viral testing, there will be no action required from the GP practice on receipt of the test results. Bulk upload of test results into GP records will take place without any manual patient by patient process. Practices will receive further guidance by their own system supplier about how this will work.

Remote fit notes – please remember to sign them

DWP has asked the BMA to remind GPs that as per previously agreed guidance they will accept fit notes that are printed, signed, scanned and e-mailed to patients. This advice has also been given to employers, who should also be accepting signed, scanned and emailed fit notes.

However, DWP is receiving a significant number of unsigned fit notes which they cannot accept and this results in inconvenience for both patients and GPs. The BMA would therefore remind GPs that fit notes must be signed. Read more about remote fit notes in their [COVID-19 toolkit for practices](#)

BMA COVID-19 guidance

The BMA regularly updates their [toolkit for GPs and practices](#), which includes a large range of topics relating to COVID-19. There is also guidance on the following topics:

- [Model terms of engagement for a GP providing temporary COVID-19 services](#)

- [Terms and conditions for sessional GPs](#)
- [Guidance on risk assessments](#) which includes specific information for practices.

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. For hard copies of our Wellbeing [poster](#), please email wellbeingsupport@bma.org.uk. Access the [BMA's COVID-19 wellbeing pages here](#)

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*Supporting list based personalised care,
the partnership model and meaningful collaboration*