



25<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Colleague

Please see below our latest updates for your information:

### **COVID-19 vaccination programme guidance (England)**

The BMA expect the specification for the COVID-19 vaccination programme to be published this week, with more information for the many practices that have identified designated sites to use for the shared delivery of the programme. The BMA have updated their newly published [guidance](#) about the CVP to explain the specific characteristics for two of the potential vaccines that are likely to be supplied in the UK and how practices can prepare for this. There is also a clarification that the latest information on the vaccines suggests that patients do not need to be observed following administration of the vaccine, but patients must not drive for 15 minutes after.

The BMA have added a new section about how practices can utilise the resources and contractual flexibilities provided, including the use of PCN staff, extended access services and using QOF and local enhanced services income protection to enable workload prioritisation, and considering what is needed to practically deliver the vaccine and workforce issues.

Kent LMC attended a meeting with the CCG last week to consider the Kent & Medway PCN designated sites for forwarding to NHSE for approval. We understand the CCG is also considering where they may set up mass vaccination sites across the county with KCHFT as lead provider at those sites.

### **Flu vaccination programme**

The Department of Health in England have announced that all those over-50 can be included in the influenza programme from 1 December. Details have been published on how to obtain flu vaccinations for this age group and can be found [here](#).

Following the impressive work of practices in recent weeks, flu vaccine uptake is higher in all vulnerable groups except pregnant women compared to this time last year. Provisional data published by PHE suggests 72.9% of those aged 65 and over, 45.0% of 2 year olds and 46.8% of 3 year olds have had their vaccine.

Kent LMC sit on the flu programme board and have been disappointed that, despite initial assurances from the CCG, there still appear to be problems in some parts of the county getting non-community caseload housebound patients immunised. We continue to push for this to be resolved ASAP.

### **Secretary of State praises GPs' pandemic response**

Matt Hancock, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care in England, led the No 10 briefing on Monday, and in response to a question from the media he said:

“What I’d say to every GP is how grateful I am for the work that you’re doing, and your whole practice, everybody in primary care, both on the flu vaccine right now, which is being rolled out in record numbers – we’ve had a record uptake, we’ve had a 10 percentage point increase in the normal uptake of flu vaccines and that’s really good news – and of course on

the normal pressures of primary care. I'm really glad that a much bigger proportion of appointments in primary care are now done either over the phone or by video because that makes life easier for GPs and patients and there's been a really positive response to that. But that doesn't of course lift the whole burden, even though it makes access easier. I want to thank in advance GPs for all the work that I know that they're doing now and that there'll be even more of this winter to keep people safe."

## Letter to Secretary of State for Health on the need for CQC support for general practice

The BMA have received a response from the CQC (Care Quality Commissioning) to their letter which urged the CQC to halt all non-essential inspections and practice monitoring to allow GPs and their teams, currently under immense pressure, to focus on the job at hand during the pandemic. Disappointingly, the CQC are not prepared to change their transitional regulatory approach, although it has confirmed that it will only inspect based on risk – i.e. where there are serious concerns around safety and quality of care.

The BMA have now written the attached letter to Matt Hancock to raise concerns about this calling again for an immediate suspension of all CQC inspections and reviews of general practice, other than those required for serious safety issues. This should be for the duration of the pandemic and to enable practices to focus on other priorities, not least the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

## BMA report on exiting the lockdown in England

BMA has launched a [new report warning that lifting lockdown](#) in England without new measures in place risks deepening the crisis in our health service, and will leave hospitals and GP practices overwhelmed, unable to provide even the most critical of patient care.

The report outlines major reforms for England, once lockdown is lifted, to keep infection rates low and pull back the NHS from collapse this winter. The BMA is calling for the new measures to be brought in, to bridge the time between the planned end of lockdown in England, on December 2nd, and an effective vaccine programme getting underway. Read more [here](#)

## Parental leave webinar and workshop

The BMA will be hosting a webinar and a workshop for [GPs on parental leave](#) on:

2 December from 12.30pm – 2.00pm – *Webinar - 'GP Maternity and Parental leave Guide: launch and introduction to the guide'*. Register [here](#)

9 December from 12.30pm – 2.30pm – *Workshop - 'GP maternity'*. Register [here](#)

If you would like to submit questions in advance to be covered at either session, please contact Christopher Scott via [cscott@bma.org.uk](mailto:cscott@bma.org.uk)

## BMA COVID-19 guidance

Read our [COVID-19 toolkit for GPs and practices](#), to help answer questions on 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](#)
- [Risk assessments](#)

Kind regards  
Kent Local Medical Committee