



26th April 2021

Dear Colleague

Please see below our latest updates for your information:

COVID-19 vaccination programme

In his [oral statement to Parliament](#) this week, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock MP, confirmed that plans are being made for COVID-19 vaccination boosters to be given later this year, to help protect against new variants. As the BMA reported earlier this month, NHSE/I has committed to discuss delivery of COVID-19 boosters, and the impact on the flu campaign, with GPC England once further information is available. They are also awaiting the outcome of research in to the impact of giving COVID vaccinations and flu vaccinations at the same time.

Second vaccinations

The delivery of second vaccinations to patients continues to be progressing extremely well, with over 10 million patients now having received two COVID vaccinations. The BMA continue to be assured by NHSE/I that all sites are receiving sufficient vaccine to ensure all patients receive their second vaccination as scheduled. Therefore, if any patient believes that they have missed or not received an appointment for a second dose by 12 weeks following their first dose, they should contact the vaccination site to book an appointment.

Guidance on AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine and very rare clotting disorders

MHRA and JCVI (Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation) have published [Frequently asked questions on the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine and very rare clotting disorders](#), which advises that it is preferable for adults under 30 to be offered an alternative COVID-19 vaccine, if available.

Vaccinating during pregnancy

The JCVI has [advised that pregnant women should be offered the COVID-19 vaccine](#) at the same time as the rest of the population, based on their age and clinical risk group. Pregnant women should be offered the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines where available. Although there is no evidence to suggest that other vaccines are unsafe for pregnant women, more research is needed.

NHSE/I has published a [letter with next steps and actions to take for vaccination sites](#).

Read more about the latest changes, including the arrangements for the second phase of the vaccination programme and what practices need to do, in our updated guidance page about the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

Vaccine dose data

Over 44 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccination have been delivered in the UK, with 11 million now having received both doses. The latest [data report](#) shows that as of 22 April over 37 million doses have been given in England.

Weekly COVID-19 data

The BMA weekly COVID-19 data summary is attached.

PVC Hib MenC and Childhood 6 in 1 data collection for payment

A communication has been sent out from CQRS to commissioners regarding the automated data collection for PCV Hib MenC and Childhood 6 in 1. Due to a delay in the automated collection from the GP Clinical system, data for PCV Hib MenC and Childhood 6 in 1 will not be extracted until June 2021. To enable practices to claim for payment in respect of these services for April and May prior to this extract, GP practices will need to manually submit the data for these periods via CQRS. The manual submission will need to be declared and approved within CQRS to generate a payment instruction to the payment systems. Where there has been no manual submission, the June automated extract will include April and May. If there has been a manual claim for April and May, the first automated extraction will be for June only.

Information and guidance documents for each of the available services can be found [here](#)

Details of these services, including the live collections timetable, can be found on the [NHS Digital's GP Collections website](#)

Improving General Practice appointment data (GPAD) webinars and demos

Guidance for practices on standard national general practice appointment categories [has been published](#) to support the mapping of local appointment slots for these new categories. This follows from guidance published in August 2020 jointly GPC England and NHSE/I, which introduced an agreed definition of a general practice appointment. Recording all appointments in this way will help us to more clearly demonstrate the increased workload pressures and activity of general practice.

NHS Digital are [hosting several webinars](#) to supplement this guidance and the categorisation. There are also some short demonstrations that cover how best to carry out the national mapping exercise:

- EMIS WEB users: [GP Appointments Data \(GPAD\) - HowbeckHow2](#)
- TPP SystemOne users: [GPAD Mapping - TPP Demo](#)

Updated guidance for HGV medicals (UK)

Due to added pressures caused by the pandemic, a decision was taken by DVLA in April 2020 to waive the medical requirement for a D4 licence renewal application for those aged 45 and over. Applicants were instead issued with a single, one-year licence.

After talks with the DVLA, the BMA has agreed to aim to accommodate D4 medical appointments for working drivers to make sure that drivers are available to the transport industry. We would therefore encourage practices to enable working drivers to have this medical examination when necessary as much as public health guidelines and individual priorities allow. This excludes car driving licence renewals with small lorry (C1, C1E (107)) and minibus (D1 (101) and D1 (101,119)) entitlements issued before 1997 where these entitlements are used for driving large recreational vehicles rather than for working in the transport sector.

Further information and guidance on this can be found on the [DVLA website](#).

DWP Forms

Further to a recent meeting GPC had with the DWP, they have agreed to supply copies of all relevant GP forms prior to their publication on the [HCP pages of Gov.UK](#). Please see attached a PDF copies of the available forms.

Maternal mental health

As a result of their 2020/21 contract negotiations, the GPC secured additional funding to support a dedicated postnatal check-up for new mothers. The [National Childbirth Trust](#) has now found, in their one year follow up [survey](#), that new mothers are not yet always being given the opportunity for this important review, particularly to have the chance to discuss their own mental health. Whilst this year has been very difficult, as practices plan for the coming year, the BMA would encourage them to offer these dedicated appointments to all new mothers, and to do this at a different time from the regular baby health check.

New GP Pay and Pensions system

Following a number of delays it appears that the new GP Pay and Pensions system will become available to practices and GPs on 1 June 2021. PCSE has this week written to both [LMCs](#) and [practices](#), advising on next steps and what practices will need to consider in preparation. GPs themselves are due to receive information and guidance on using the new system in the coming weeks.

Kind regards
Kent Local Medical Committee