



1st November 2021

Dear Colleague

Please see below our latest updates for your information:

CCG/LMC Finance Workshop 16th November 2021

The LMC will be hosting a finance workshop for Practice Managers and the CCG finance team at 10.30am on Tuesday 16th November 2021. The main areas of concern raised so far have been:

- Not being able to easily identify what payments relate to
- Not being able to easily contact individuals within the finance team
- Communicating what payments are due and when they have been paid
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[Click here to join the meeting](#)

If you have anything you would particularly like covered during the workshop please let me know by emailing liz.mears@kentlmc.org

Free Premises Surgery

The LMC are hosting a **FREE Premises surgery** with Rosemary Jones from Invicta Chartered Surveyors and Bethan Dodd from LA-Law on Tuesday 23rd November 2021 from 9.30am.

Rosemary Jones is a Director of Invicta Chartered Surveyors, based in Kent and is a Chartered Surveyor with more than 30 years' experience. Her work is almost exclusively within the NHS and predominantly for GP Practices.

Bethan Dodd is a real estate partner with Lester Aldridge LLP. Bethan has deep experience with real estate matters in the primary care sector, and advises GPs on surgery acquisitions and development, funding (including the Premises Costs Directions, NHS capital grant funding and bank lending), co-ownership arrangements and succession planning within partnerships and surgery leases (having acted for GPs both in the capacity as landlord and as tenant).

If you would like to book a 30 minute appointment for you and/or your GPs please e-mail info@kentlmc.org. These appointments can be either face to face at our office in Harrietsham or virtually via Microsoft Teams and will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Workforce Resilience - tell us what you need!

The CCG, LMC and Training hubs are working together to understand what resilience support to roll out to practices in the future and we would value your input on the way forward.

There have been several options on offer (see: <https://www.kentandmedwayccg.nhs.uk/staff-wellbeing-support>) and we would like to understand more about what has worked for you and what you'd like to see benefit your colleagues and teams.

We would like to invite you to join a virtual meeting with CCG colleagues, chaired by Dr Farnaaz Sharief, at 1.00pm on Wednesday 3rd November to gather feedback to enable us to roll out resilience programmes that meet your needs.

To register a place to attend please click [HERE](#). A Microsoft Teams link will be sent to all those registered a couple of days prior to the meeting.

Before you join us, please share your thoughts with us by clicking on the following link and answering four simple questions <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CJT3NY5>

We look forward to seeing you on November 3rd at 1pm for this very important discussion.

Perinatal Mental Health Community Service

From 1 September 2021 the Mother and Infant Mental Health Service (MIMHS) changed its name to the Perinatal Mental Health Community Service (PMHCS).

In line with the NHS Long Term Plan the remit of our specialist perinatal mental health community service is being broadened. This includes:

- increasing access to evidence-based care for women with moderate to severe perinatal mental health difficulties, including improving access to evidence-based psychological therapies.
- increasing the availability of specialist perinatal mental health community care for women who need ongoing support from 12 months after birth to 24 months
- developing Maternal Mental Health Services with our Specialist Mental Health Midwives to provide therapy for those who have experienced birth trauma and loss (currently piloting in east Kent).

PMHCS has updated service literature and the [website](#) has gone live. These include information on the service PMHCS provides.

PMHCS specialises in the assessment, diagnosis and short-term treatment of women who are affected by a moderate to severe perinatal mental health illness in the preconception, antenatal and postnatal period.

PMHCS is a multi-professional team consisting of Consultant Perinatal Psychiatrists, Perinatal Mental Health Nurses, Psychologists, Therapists and Assistant Psychologists, Nursery Nurses, Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants, Social Workers and Pharmacists. Peer Support Workers with lived experience of perinatal mental health difficulties work within the service who can share their own personal experiences of perinatal mental health issues and using services.

PMHCS can provide education and training to other services within primary and secondary mental health to ensure perinatal mental health needs and risks are recognised, prioritised and managed.

Self-referrals can be made, as well as referrals by any health or social care professional. Contact KMPT.pmhcs@nhs.net or call 01622 722321.

During January 2022 PMHCS will be holding an evening, online event for GPs, Health Visitors, maternity and other primary care colleagues, giving an overview of the Perinatal Mental Health Community Service - what it can provide for both patients and other organisations and the referral process, as well as further detail on particular perinatal mental health presentations in primary care, and how to manage these. The event will also include protected time for forum discussion.

Further information, the date and joining details will be circulated in due course.

Cameron Fund Christmas Appeal

Last year, partly due to Covid, the Cameron Fund awarded a record amount of £304,871 to colleagues in hardship. This was primarily paid as monthly grants to enable GPs and their families to meet their essential expenditure but also included Money Advice to help applicants to improve their situation. In a few cases, where applicants had assets but no available cash, we provided interest free loans.

Once again, this year has been an incredibly challenging time for primary care. GPs have continued to work tirelessly though the pandemic, trying their best to deliver high level patient care, while under restricted working conditions. To read the Cameron Fund Christmas Appeal letter with details on how to donate please click [HERE](#)

Kent and Medway Mental Health and Wellbeing portal for staff

As part of the health service's recognition of how working above and beyond during the height of the pandemic has adversely affected the mental health and wellbeing of many of its NHS staff, NHSE has established Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs for NHS staff across England. The Kent and Medway Mental Health and Wellbeing staff portal is one of them.

The service is provided by a team of trained people; access is free of charge and without the need to be seen by a GP first.

It provides confidential psychological support across the county for health and social care professionals, volunteers and those providing care to others in the community (including care homes).

The service is available for staff if they: are dealing directly with COVID-19 patients; have been adversely affected by COVID-19 themselves; are experiencing the effects of long COVID; have family members affected by COVID-19; feel burnt-out, exhausted and overwhelmed, and just need someone to hear and listen to them.

Through the mental health and wellbeing hub staff can access:

- Rapid clinical assessment
- Care coordination and onward referral
- Proactive outreach and engagement (critical care staff and hard to reach staff, for example minority ethnicity groups)
- SHAPE-training for staff (a trauma informed model to support staff)

There is a dedicated NHS mental health and wellbeing resource and support portal at: www.kentandmedwayccg.nhs.uk/staff-wellbeing-support which provides direct access to the team by email or via Limbic (the automated chatbot) together with access to direct support where it may be needed, for example access to one-to-one therapy, talking therapies or counselling. Staff can self-refer or refer a colleague, providing they have their consent to do so. Email: kmpt.wellbeingwebsite@nhs.net

BMA to undertake an indicative ballot of practices on potential action

Further to last week's emergency GPC England meeting, the necessary preparations have been made and, this week, the BMA will proceed with an indicative ballot of all practices in England. Their condemnation of the DHSC (Department of Health and Social Care) and NHSEI plan stands, and they are now seeking the support of practices to demonstrate to Government and NHSEI that GPs and practices will not tolerate this unacceptable situation. The BMA will give practices their say on further potential actions we can all take to persuade ministers and NHSEI

to give practices the real support they require so that they can care for their patients as needed, not least over this expected very difficult winter period.

The BMA will now proceed to the indicative ballot of practices, which will open *today*.

It will be based on the resolutions passed by GPCE last week and will include questions on further actions practices might be prepared to take, such as:

- participating in a coordinated and continuous withdrawal from the PCN DES at the next opt-out period
- disengaging, on a continuous basis, from the PCN DES before the next opt-out period
- not complying, on a continuous basis, with the contractual requirement to ensure GPs earning over the earnings threshold declare their income or to provide COVID vaccination exemption certificates
- participate in a coordinated and continuous change to your appointment book, so as to impact the quality of the nationally reported appointment dataset.

It is important to stress that these actions are not directed at patients, or the care they receive, but at Government and NHSEI.

The timescales are as follows:

Launch the indicative ballot with details for how to vote electronically (**Monday 1st November**)

Physical reminder letters reach GP partner members / practices (**from 5th November**)

The electronic ballot closes (**13th / 14th November**)

The ballot data is processed (**15th / 16th November**)

Results will be communicated to members (**18th / 19th November**).

The BMA is also preparing for a formal ballot of members on IA (industrial action), which for legal reasons could not have happened sooner than *at least* six weeks after the emergency GPCE meeting last week.

Moving to an indicative ballot of practices before a formal ballot of members on IA also means they not only get to gather the views of practices on the proposed forms of actions much more swiftly, but it also means they can keep pressure up nationally by using the result as further leverage in the interim.

General Practice is being pilloried and abused and together there is a need to fight back, protect and defend. This is an extremely difficult time for us all. We must support one another and stand together. This is not going to be easy, but the BMA will do all in its power to back GPs at this time.

The BMA are also rapidly developing additional workload management resources and guidance, which we will release in the coming days.

As it is clear that neither the Government nor NHSE/I understands the scale of the crisis impacting general practice, or have provided the necessary measures to support the profession at this critical time, the BMA would encourage practices to review our [workload control in general practice paper](#).

Read the BMA statement following the GPCE vote rejecting the Government and NHSEI (NHS England and NHS Improvement) plan [here](#)

Their [analysis](#) of the Government and NHSE/I [plan](#)

Supporting general practice against abuse

The BMA continues to campaign against abuse of GPs and their staff with a number of resources available on [Support Your Surgery campaign](#) page, in order to get the changes that are so urgently needed to support general practice teams.

Please continue to show your support by signing the [Support Your Surgery petition](#) to put pressure on the Government to support general practice and use their resources to explain to patients why practices need to work in the way they are doing in order to protect patients from a rising incidence of COVID-19 and to make the best use of the available but limited workforce. You can also get involved in the [#SupportYourSurgery social media discussion](#) by sharing your support across social media.

The GPCE chair and BMA Patient Liaison Group chair have also recently written to a host of patient groups asking for their support. Please feel free to share the [template letter](#) amongst your local patient groups.

Use the BMA [template letter](#) to write to your local MP to outline the current pressures being faced by GPs across the country.

Their [GP campaign factsheet](#) can be used to rebut the misinformation in the media and to proactively include in social media posts, letters to the local press or MPs.

Covid vaccination medical exemption certification

The government has introduced an [exemption process](#) for those who are unable to be vaccinated and/or tested for COVID-19 for medical reasons.

This guidance applies to England only.

BMA guidance on the Covid vaccination medical exemption certification process is available [here](#).

Your wellbeing

The BMA is here for you and offers supportive [wellbeing services](#) which include **face-to-face counselling**. You can access one-off support or, after triage, a structured course of up to six face-to-face counselling sessions. Call **0330 123 1245** today or [visit the website](#) for more information.

For all other support, speak to a BMA adviser on [0300 123 1233](#) or email support@bma.org.uk [Read more about doctors' wellbeing during the pandemic](#) and on [Twitter @TheBMA](#)

BMA Webinar - The Health and Care Bill (England)

The BMA is holding a member [webinar on the Health and Care Bill: What it means for you and what you can do about it](#) – on **Wednesday 17th November, 7-8pm**.

The webinar will include:

- A breakdown by Dr David Wrigley, Deputy Chair of BMA Council, of what the Bill means and our lobbying activity so far
- Presentation of our new activism pack and the different steps members can take to help campaign for key changes to the Bill

The BMA believes that if this Bill is passed, it will usher in drastic changes to the NHS in England, impacting the working lives of doctors, and that urgent and significant changes must be made to it.

Therefore, they encourage all members to [register now](#) and attend this event to learn more about the Bill and what you can do about it.

If you have any questions about the event, please contact tbramwell@bma.org.uk.
For further information about the Bill and the BMA's work in this area, visit: www.bma.org.uk/hcb

Research on providing annual health checks for autistic people (England)

UCL's Centre for Research in Autism and Education ([CRAE](#)) is conducting a research project to understand the views of primary health care professionals on the value and feasibility of providing annual health checks for autistic people. By taking part, participants have the chance to shape policy recommendations and provide their opinions regarding the implementation of annual health checks for autistic people.

They are inviting GPs, nurses and other primary health care professionals in England who are involved in the implementation of other health checks (e.g., learning disability health checks, diabetes annual reviews etc) to take part in a short [survey](#).

Participants do not require any expertise in autism. Find out more by contacting Jade at j.davies@ucl.ac.uk.

BMA Covid-19 Guidance

Read BMA [COVID-19 toolkit for GPs and practices](#), which provides comprehensive guidance for practices to manage contractual issues and service provision during the coronavirus pandemic. You can access all the BMA guidance on COVID-19, including ethical guidance, [here](#)

Kind regards
Kent Local Medical Committee