



22nd November 2021

Dear Colleague

Please see below our latest updates for your information:

Message from Dr Farah Jameel, New Chair of GPC England

I am delighted and honoured to have been elected to represent GPs as the new GPC England chair at a time of enormous challenge to the profession and I would like to thank the former chair, Dr Richard Vautrey for his dedication and commitment to this committee and all that he has achieved over the years for the profession. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the rest of the Executive Team, who I have had the pleasure of working with over the past 4 years. Working through the pandemic as a team presented enormous challenges and I want to acknowledge their tireless efforts on behalf of the profession.

I am proud to represent grass-root colleagues, and in particular, to make history as the first woman to chair GPC England.

I don't underestimate the difficulties that lay ahead but we must recognise this as an opportunity to reset our relationship with Government and begin to rebuild general practice.

I want a fresh start for general practice and intend to use the next three years to work closely with general practice leaders, grassroots GPs, Local Medical Committees (LMCs) alongside other stakeholders. I intend to hear a range of diverse views and be innovative in navigating the stormy waters ahead. Together, we will seek to design and deliver a stable and sustainable general practice, fit to serve generations of patients to come.

I acknowledge some of the biggest issues the profession is currently facing - workload pressures, workforce shortages and funding depletion, and I will work with you to address these crucial issues.

I also know that the experiences for patients must improve, and how important it is to you, to be supported to provide the high quality, safe and equitable care you want to continue providing. I promise to bring hope back into the profession.

Read the press statement, [and](#) General Practice (@BMA_GP) / Twitter

Dr Farah Jameel's Report from GPC England meeting - 8 November 2021

I had the honour to attend my first GPC England meeting as Chair yesterday, after being elected into post that morning. In addition to thanking the former Chair, Dr Richard Vautrey, and team above, I would also like to thank Dr Chandra Kanneganti, who contested this election with me. I tweeted a picture of us just prior to the election to mark the day, when two overseas trained doctors contested the election for Chair of GPCE. This was a huge moment for me for many reasons and I want to thank him for his part in making history. Dr David Wrigley, Deputy Chair of Council, opened the meeting and chaired up until the election results were announced and also attended the remainder of the meeting. Dr Zoe Greaves, who has been elected the new speaker of the Committee, taking over from Dr Fay Wilson who had been the speaker for nearly 4 years, very ably fulfilled that role for the first time.

The main item of discussion following the election was the outcome of the indicative ballot, which closed earlier this week. The ballot asked what actions practices might be willing to take in response to the lack of support from Government and NHS England for general practice in the face of unprecedented pressures, which risk the quality and safety of care GPs are able to offer patients. These included withdrawing from the PCN DES, disrupting appointment data, refusing to provide COVID vaccination certification and refusing to declare earnings.

Following a thorough and engaging debate amongst committee members, GPCE is now considering the results in detail before deciding on next steps, which will be communicated to members in due course. There have been some questions on social media about why we have not released these results. I have explained our position above, in addition, I am day 1 in post, and commit to being completely open and transparent with you in as timely a way as possible. I promise to keep you updated, as I know that this is important to you.

GPCE also heard updates from:

- the Sessional GPs Committee Chair, Dr Ben Molyneux
- the GP Trainees Committee Chair, Dr Euan Strachan-Orr
- the GPC Gender Champion, Dr Rachel Ali
- the Chair of the LMC England Conference, Dr Shaba Nabi, about the Agenda for the Conference to be held next week 25-26 November.

At the end of the meeting, the Committee was divided into breakout groups to discuss the Health Select Committee [inquiry into the future of general practice](#), where many useful points and suggestions were raised. The notes from these discussions will be collated and will form the initial basis of the BMA/GPCE response to the inquiry.

There were a number of strong debates throughout the day and given that this was my maiden meeting in the hot seat, I was so impressed with the tenor, tone and ethos. There were some slight IT hiccups but we got through it and kudos to Zoe and David for managing to chair through these hiccups. Well done to the committee for being so brilliant and my final thanks is to the staff for running the day so smoothly.

GP earnings declaration

Dr Richard Vautrey and Chaand Nagpaul (Chair of council), have continued to raise with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) the BMA's serious concerns about earnings declarations for GPs. They had further discussions with them on Wednesday and they have now confirmed that they will delay both the submission and publication of earnings declarations until at least next Spring.

With GPs facing some of the most intense pressures many have ever experienced, the BMA have been clear that this policy was likely to be counter-productive. Crucially, these changes could have caused disruption over the winter period – distracting from the immediate priorities facing practices and their patients.

The BMA are pleased that the Secretary of State is delaying these plans, providing some breathing space for hard-working GPs. They will continue to lobby on this matter. Read BMA guidance on GP earnings.

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 BMA 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.

COVID-19 vaccinations

Booster vaccination for over 40s

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has advised this week that, all adults aged 40 to 49 years (cohort 10) should also be offered an mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine booster, 6 months after their second dose, irrespective of the vaccines given for the first and second doses.

Second doses for 16 and 17-year olds

The JCVI has also advised that all 16 to 17 year olds who are not in an at-risk group should be offered a second dose of the Pfizer vaccine. The second vaccine dose should be given 12 weeks or more following the first vaccine dose.

Note that for both of these group, it is on an opt-in bases, and provision to these groups won't be required if PCN groups want to just continue with existing provision.

Read the guidance from NHSE/I on COVID-19 vaccination deployment for both groups.

COVID-19 vaccination for the housebound

NHSE/I has increased the supplementary fee detailed in the [phase 3 general practice enhanced service specification](#) to £20 per visit (increased from the current £10 supplementary fee) to a housebound patient for each vaccination dose given to a housebound patient, by PCN-led and CP-led LVS sites. This supplement is on top of the £12.58 Item of Service fee. This increased supplement will apply for COVID-19 vaccinations (booster and third primary dose only) administered to housebound people from 16 September 2021 until 5 December 2021.

3rd Doses on NHS App

It has been brought to our attention that 3rd doses of the COVID vaccination are appearing on the NHS App as Boosters. Apparently, this is a national coding issue and will not affect those patients being able to access their Booster dose 6 months after their 3rd dose.

Vaccination Data Resolution Service (VDRS)

The Vaccination Data Resolution Service (VDRS) has been established to resolve missing or incorrect vaccination records for people who are registered with a GP practice in England and who were vaccinated in England, Scotland or Wales. The primary aim of the VDRS is to ensure progression of the COVID-19 vaccination programme and ensure people's records are correct and allow recommended doses of the vaccination to be booked and received, including booster doses.

As well as citizens being able to access the service via 119, a system has been established whereby sites can access the VDRS to support vaccination record entry and queries. This service should also be used by sites if a person presents for vaccination and has missing vaccination records relating to vaccine administered at sites elsewhere in England and requires sites to complete a form for the VDRS team to process.

For full information on how to access this service, please visit the VDRS page within the [COVID vaccinations tech and data workspace](#) on FutureNHS. Register [here for a FuturesNHS account](#).

Health Select Committee inquiry into the future of general practice

This week the Parliamentary Health and Social Care Committee (HSCC), chaired by former Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt MP, has launched a timely [inquiry into the future of general practice](#). The inquiry presents a key opportunity for the BMA to push their GP campaign asks, as well as to raise wider concerns and recommendations. The BMA will submit a formal response, but members of the public can also [submit their comments](#) directly to the inquiry by 14 December.

Kind regards
The Kent Local Medical Committee