

Coronavirus - LMC Update May 22nd 2020

CQC Emergency Support Framework

The CQC has started the roll-out of its 'Emergency Support Framework' for general practice, which is [described by Dr Rosie Benneyworth, Chief Inspector of Primary Medical Services](#) as 'a structured framework for regular conversations our inspectors will be having with you'.

This will involve calling practices by phone 'to have open and honest conversations so that we can support you to resolve any issues and make tough decisions to help you to keep people safe'. Services which are felt by the CQC to have a higher risk will be prioritised for the process.

The CQC, which paused routine inspections of general practice in March due to the pandemic, stresses that the new framework is not an inspection and that results will not be published. Further details of what to expect from the process can be found on the [CQC website](#).

The LMC is here to support you with your queries regarding the CQC so if you are concerned about this new system please contact us.

School Reopening

The issue of when schools should reopen has been the subject of considerable debate this week with [the BMA issuing a statement on Wednesday](#). We are aware that practices will receive enquiries from parents and guardians concerned about the safety of their children when they return to school.

We are developing a template letter for practices to use in this situation and will be sharing this with you next week.

Bank Holiday 25th May 2020

As you will be aware NHS England have announced that GP practices will not be required to open, outside the normal bank holiday cover arrangements, for the Whitsun Bank Holiday (25 May).

Our colleagues at the LPC have published details of pharmacy opening in our region on the bank holiday which can be viewed [here](#).

COVID-19 Testing – Care Homes

Information has been published on access to testing for care home staff and residents. This [infographic for care homes](#) gives an overview of how to get the test. More information on testing for care homes can be found on our [coronavirus page](#) – see Care Homes box below Resources and Documents heading.

Our advice to practices to access testing for their staff via the CCG routes (rather than the national self-referral route) is unchanged – [see our testing page](#).

Misuse of COPI Regulations for GP Data Requests

Following concerns raised by the BMA regarding the burden being placed on GPs by requests for access to data under the current Control of Patient Information (COPI) Notices for Covid-19, NHSX, NHS Digital and Public Health England have established a single front door to triage requests for data, including research, for COVID-19 purposes.

Practice can now to direct any requests they receive for data to the single front door via covid-19datasharing@nhsx.nhs.uk. See the [NHSX response to the BMA](#).

Fit Notes and Returning to Workplaces

With people who cannot work from home being urged to return to work, we have had some queries from practices regarding requests for fit notes or letters to employers from patients anxious about returning to workplaces where adequate social distancing measures have not been put in place.

Patients making these requests should be directed to discuss this with their employers, and employers should be making reasonable adjustments and performing appropriate risk assessments for their staff, with occupational health support when necessary. In this situation a fit note should not be required.

If this phase is not managed extremely carefully there is a risk of the virus spreading and putting renewed strain on the NHS, including GP services. One of the key tests for easing lockdown is ensuring the NHS can cope – and this of course must include general practice.

Yorkshire and Humber Urgent Dental Care System – Update

Non-urgent dental activity remains suspended and this has led to some patients resorting to contacting their GP practices for help with dental care.

Urgent Dental Care Centres have been created to help patients with dental care during the pandemic. NHS dental practices are providing telephone advice and triage. All dental practices are responsible for triaging patients who contact the practice seeking access to urgent dental care regardless of whether they are considered 'regular' patients of the practice. This means patients that do not have a regular NHS dentist can still access urgent care. Patients should be advised to call their regular dental practice or, if they don't have one, a dental practice of their choosing. All dental practices should be telephone triaging all callers.

Locations of the Urgent Dental Care Centres are not being shared as they are not intended for open access. More information can be found on this [stakeholder briefing](#). We have requested that communications make clear patients should be asked not to attend GP practices with dental problems.

FAQs

See the current version of our [FAQs for practices](#).

