

Coronavirus - LMC Update July 9th 2020

Welcome to our latest update which we are now issuing fortnightly. In this edition:

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GP Standard Operating Procedure updated

NHSEI have added two new sections to the GP Standard Operating Procedure and updated it with some additional information and links for ease of access – these can be identified as highlighted in the published GP SOP which can be found website. The updated sections are on:

1. Outbreak management in the context of COVID-19 – with a recommendation to review business continuity plans.
2. Suspected or diagnosed cancers, including ongoing cancer treatment – information on referral into secondary care.

Please refer to the [updated SOP for further information](#).

Indemnity arrangements for NHS Primary Care staff undertaking COVID-19 antibody tests

NHSE/I has now confirmed that where primary care staff undertaking COVID-19 antibody tests are not covered for this activity under their existing indemnity/insurance arrangements, they will be indemnified under the [Clinical Negligence Scheme for Coronavirus \(CNSC\)](#) which was established in accordance with new powers from the Coronavirus Act 2020. NHS Resolution has added an [FAQ](#) which states:

Where you are appropriately trained and competent to undertake this activity, and you are not covered for this activity under your existing indemnity/insurance arrangements, you will be indemnified under the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Coronavirus (CNSC). The CNSC has been established by NHS Resolution to meet liabilities arising from the special healthcare arrangements being put in place in response to the coronavirus outbreak. Antibody testing undertaken in NHS trusts will be covered under the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts. Further information on the rollout of the antibody testing programme is set out in NHSE/I letter on 25 May 2020.

Read all the FAQs on the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Coronavirus [here](#).

Use of PPE when Verifying a Death

Following requests for clarification, the LMC have pulled together some recently updated guidance on the use of PPE when verifying a death.

Guidance for care of the deceased during the COVID-19 pandemic, issued by the Royal College of Pathologists in March 2020, suggests that unless an invasive procedure is being performed (i.e. an autopsy), disposable gloves, disposable aprons, disposable eye protection and fluid-resistant (Type IIR) surgical masks (FRSM) are considered to be adequate levels of PPE.

This guidance is available here: <https://www.rcpath.org/uploads/assets/0b7d77fa-b385-4c60-b47dde930477494b/G200-TBPs-Guidance-for-care-of-deceased-during-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf>

Recent Hospice UK guidance also recommends that a surgical mask, gloves and an apron should be worn as a minimum to maintain the safety of the clinician carrying out the verification of death, and should be applied to all verifications of expected adult death irrespective of any COVID-19 status (i.e. not suspected, suspected, confirmed).

However, it should be noted that Government guidance for staff who manage the deceased includes the following: “*Placing a barrier, such as a cloth or face-mask, over the mouth of the deceased when moving them may prevent the release of droplets from the respiratory tract*”. Therefore, whilst moving the deceased is not on the official list of aerosol-generating procedures, it may be that clinicians may wish to discuss placing something over the deceased’s face with the funeral director if their examination involves any movement of the body.

The full guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-care-of-the-deceased/guidance-for-care-of-the-deceased-with-suspected-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19#guidance-for-staff-who-manage-the-deceased>

Shielding Update

Further to the changes announced regarding the easing of the shielded patients programme, the shielded patients list will continue to be maintained after August so that it can be used again in the future if necessary. Work is also being done to develop a new predictive risk tool which could lead to an updated list in the future.

There have been reports of situations where individuals, employers, businesses or insurance companies have been suggesting that shielding patients obtain a letter from their GP to engage in certain activities, including having their hair cut. There is no requirement or necessity for such letters and patients and others should follow the government guidance relating to social distancing and other necessary precautions.

Read the [Government’s guidance on shielding for patients](#) and the [letter to the NHS on shielding](#).

Clinical guidance for healthcare professionals on maintaining immunisation programmes during COVID-19

This guidance has recently been updated. Included in the document:

- Advice for general practice on maintaining the routine immunisation programme. As well as protecting the individual, this will avoid outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases that could further increase the numbers of patients requiring health services.

- Confirmation that vaccines can be transferred between different practices, subject to the conditions set out in the guidance (page 7).
- Advice on vaccinations for children and how to respond if parents/carers are concerned.
- Immunisations and use of PPE.
- FAQs for the public.

Download [Clinical guidance for healthcare professionals on maintaining immunisation programmes during COVID-19](#)

As yet there is no news on when the second flu letter, including news of any potential expansion of eligibility criteria, will be released but we will update you if we have any news on this.

PPE Portal order limits for General Practice

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) have adjusted the order limits based on size and type of provider. Limits are now as follows:

- GPs with fewer than 8,000 patients can order 100 IIR masks, 200 aprons and 400 gloves (200 pairs) per week.
- GPs with 8,000 patients or more can order 200 IIR masks, 400 aprons and 800 gloves (400 pairs) per week.

The NHS.net issues around receiving the eBay confirmation emails has now been resolved to allow registration on the Portal.

More information is available on the [DHSC PPE Portal guidance page](#) and the Portal customer service team can be reached on 0800 876 6802 for enquiries or registration support.

Support for GPs, Practice Managers and Staff

Our web pages detailing support available for GPs and other who are working in general practice have been updated this week. You can find resources and links to many useful sources of help, organised by theme, at

<https://www.humbersidelmcc.org.uk/supportgpspracticemanagers>

The Healer in Times of COVID Virtual Conference

The BMA and NHS Practitioner Health are holding [a virtual conference on Thursday 23 July 2020](#), 12.30 - 3.30pm to address the health and wellbeing of the health care workforce in the context of COVID-19. Chaired by leading experts, the conference will explore the impact of pandemics on the mental health and wellbeing of health care staff. By discussing the global impacts of the pandemic, and bringing together a vibrant community of professionals, we will share lessons learned and collaborate to build a vision moving forward post-COVID-19.

Join expert speakers and panellists including Professor Neil Greenberg, Dr Michael Myers and Anna Soubry. Register your place at this free event [here](#).