

## Coronavirus - LMC Update August 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

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### **Updated Standard Operating Procedures for General Practice**

NHSE/I has updated its [Standard Operating Procedures for general practice](#), which now includes sections on cases definition of COVID-19, patients at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19, patients advised to shield, safeguarding, symptom management and end-of-life care.

### **Face Coverings – BMA Statement**

Further to our advice in the last edition regarding requiring patients to wear a face covering when they attend the surgery, the BMA has also issued a statement on this issue:

*“The BMA believes that the government must do more to protect healthcare workers in community settings, including GP surgeries, and require those entering a healthcare facility to wear a face covering, as is the case for shops and other indoor settings.*

*It is for practices to decide how to deliver services to their patients. It is also a practice’s responsibility for them to protect their staff and patients, many of whom may be vulnerable to the most severe effects of Covid-19, from unnecessary risk. Therefore, if a patient refuses to wear a face covering inside a practice, without good reason, the practice can choose to provide services to that patient by means other than face-to-face consultation within the practice.*

*Practices should inform patients, in advance of their attendance, that a face covering will be required to protect other patients, clinicians and other staff who they will inevitably come into proximity with inside the building. If a patient has a legitimate reason for not wearing a face covering the practice will need to consider this on an individual basis.”*

### **Risk Assessments**

Practices are reminded of the importance of undertaking workforce risk assessments on their staff. The BMA has guidance which looks at the implications of risk assessments for practices – specifically what impact the adjustments required for high risk staff could have on practices, staff and patients.

It also suggests what mitigation practices could do, such as working from home or removal from areas that are considered hazardous. The guidance also lists risk assessment tools that are available to practices to use. Read the guidance [here](#).

### **Indemnity for Flu Vaccinations**

All three Medical Defence Organisations (MDOs) have confirmed that they will provide indemnity cover, at no extra charge, for practices who vaccinate their own staff against flu this year.

The BMA is in discussions with NHS Resolution about the indemnity arrangements for staff vaccinations for any coronavirus vaccine that may become available. We will update you on this when more information is available.

### **Covid Funding Guidance for General Practice**

Further to the announcement of details of the Covid Support Fund for General Practice, practices are now urged to:

- review additional costs already incurred and submit claims to the commissioner
- discuss with commissioners any anticipated further costs that might require approval
- keep records and evidence of additional costs

A reminder that funding will be provided to cover the additional costs of:

- bank holiday opening (for Easter and May 8) including staff and non-staff costs
- services to care home residents (from 1 May to 30 September)
- additional capacity (from 23 March to 31 July) where supported by the Commissioner
- additional consumable expenses (including PPE)
- absence cover from day 1 (from 23 March to 31 July): practices which have provided full pay for employees who were unable to work will be able to claim the costs of cover

### **Having Better Conversations Event for GPs Wednesday 23 September 2020, 19:00-21:00 Online via Zoom**

Working very much in collaboration with LMC colleagues, GPs across our region are now being offered access to this training which is delivered by this single two-hour session. The training looks to build on the consultation skills of GPs but, perhaps helpfully in some situations, provide additional confidence. To facilitate the delivery of the training, we will be supported by a clinical lead and trained individuals who are advocates for the programme, who will provide informal on-going leadership at a local level.

The training will take place via Zoom and will include a mixture of whole group and small group activities. Zoom joining details will be sent to you nearer the time of the event. [Book your place online for this event](#).