



## Weekly operational update for local general practice

19 June, 2019

Welcome to Insight, Devon Local Medical Committee's short weekly operational update for GPs and practice managers.

### **Bridging prescriptions for transgender patients**

GPs are sometimes asked to provide bridging prescriptions for patients awaiting their initial transgender clinic appointment. The General Practitioners Committee (GPC) has made some very clear statements on this subject and the LMC would like to draw your attention to the following:

"While awaiting specialist assessment, GPs should attend to their patients' general mental and physical health needs in the same way as they would for other patients, but are not obliged to prescribe bridging prescriptions."

"Current guidance is unequivocal that initiating hormonal treatment for patients with gender dysphoria should be done by a specialist as part of a comprehensive assessment process..."

"In the case of gender dysphoria, most GPs will have no previous experience of managing such a patient."

"Our key concern is to ensure that GPs can prescribe safely within their limits of competence, and this includes the ability to decline to prescribe, where appropriate."

### **PCN sub-contracting**

There has been a little confusion in the county about whether or not Primary Care Networks (PCNs) can sub-contract to non NHS England (NHSE) bodies. This has come about because the national position was that additional staff should be employees as per the PCN spec. During the last month NHSE has relaxed the rules and indicated that sub-contracted services will be allowable which Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) fully supports. This more permissive approach is entirely sensible.

### **Clinical Directors resource**

The LMC's PCN Clinical Directors resource is now live and all Clinical Directors have been emailed a link with instructions to join the collaborative space.

### **Social Prescribing: making it work for GPs and patients**

The GPC agreed plans with NHSE to fund social prescribing link workers for PCNs as part of the GP contract agreement. The GPC has produced [guidance](#) to help GPs harness the benefits of social prescribing schemes through close collaboration with link workers who will join their extended primary care teams from 1 July, 2019.

### **GP Mentoring Scheme**

Thank you to the FIVE GPs who have expressed an interest in this scheme. We are very keen to get around 30 to support the Next Generation GP programme and would be grateful if Devon GPs could give it very serious consideration. More details can be found [here](#).

### **Annual allowance and tax change survey**

The GPC has been [expressing grave concerns](#) about the pension taxation system and the unintended but serious consequences this is having on patient care and the wider NHS, caused by GPs being forced to cut back on their sessions or even retiring completely to try to avoid the onerous and pernicious annual allowance tax penalties which they are unfairly landed with.



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While the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and NHSE have [acknowledged the problem and have agreed to review](#) the NHS pension scheme arrangements, the GPC's modelling has shown that the solution they have proposed surrounding pension flexibility (50:50) will categorically not solve the problem. The GPC is requesting GPs complete a short survey about the impact that the current pension arrangements have had on them and decisions about the amount of work they do. Please take a few minutes to fill it in [here](#).

### **CQC Medicines Report – learning from best practice and incidents**

A recent study estimated that 237 million medication errors occur in England each year. The Care Quality Commission's (CQC) new [Medicines Report](#) shares best practice and learning from incidents for better outcomes – including in general practice.

### **Employer induction template to support general practice nurses**

NHSE has produced a new induction template for employers to ensure that nurses in a first career role in general practice are well supported. It is available [here](#).

### **Data privacy guidance from the ICO**

The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) has produced useful [guidance](#) and [posters](#) to help raise the importance of data privacy with the practice team.

### **Devon CEPN Annual Conference**

Details of Devon Community Education Provider Network's Annual Conference on Friday, 5 July, at Exeter Racecourse are available in its latest newsletter. Roy Lilley – the national NHS speaker, writer and broadcaster – is among the speakers. Read more [here](#).