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GPC meeting

The GPC met on 18 November 2010 and this newsletter provides a summary of the main items discussed.

Contract negotiations

Negotiations with NHS Employers on contractual changes for 2011/12 are continuing. We will let you have further details as soon as we can.

NHS White Paper

The GPC has published two new guidance documents in its series on the NHS White Paper:

(i) The form and structure of GP-led commissioning consortia

This document provides advice to GPs and LMCs on the form and structure of GP-led commissioning consortia. It identifies a range of considerations regarding the discussions that

will need to had locally, the relationships will need to built and the decisions that will need to made as this agenda moves forward.

[This document is available on the BMA website.](#)

(ii) Shadow consortia: Developing and electing a transitional leadership

This guidance outlines a number of options that will need to be considered when developing the transitional leadership structures that will take shadow consortia forward. It also gives guidance on how to appoint the transitional leadership, giving information about elections, and selection / election processes.

[This document is available on the BMA website.](#)

Transitional arrangements

The future destination of the current raft of functions that are performed at PCT level has yet to be decided. Those shadow consortia that are beginning to form should not make any arrangements with PCTs for the transfer of duties, nor should PCTs insist that consortia take on some of their responsibilities. The government will make clear in due course which organisations will be responsible for PCT and SHA functions, and local arrangements should be avoided until these details are available.

Pathfinder consortia

At the end of October, the Department of Health announced the introduction of an early adopters, or pathfinders, programme for GP commissioning consortia. The purpose of the programme is to identify and support groups of practices who are keen to make faster progress and can demonstrate capability and capacity. It will enable GPs to work with other health and care professionals, to test different design concepts for GP consortia and identify issues and areas of learning. They will create learning networks to enable others to learn from experience and best practice.

Applications for groups of GPs to form pathfinder sites can be made to SHAs from October 2010. It is expected that by December there will be about 30 pathfinder sites announced and these will be established and operational by January 2011. It is expected that other groups will follow shortly after.

To join the pathfinder programme, a group of practices needs to be able to demonstrate:

- evidence of local GP leadership and support
- evidence of LA engagement
- ability to contribute to the local QIPP agenda in their locality.

Once established it is essential that the pathfinder sites are flexible. The initial leaders may not be the eventual leaders of the consortium, while the shape and size of the consortium may evolve in

time. The early progress made by pathfinders will support emerging consortia; in sharing their experiences they will shape the way in which GP consortia work in the future.

[More details can be found on the Department of Health website.](#)

Care Quality Commission registration

On the 10 November CQC held a stakeholder workshop for NHS primary medical care providers about registration. The GPC and LMC representatives at the event were told about the application process and the tools that will be used by CQC to monitor compliance. CQC are working on the detail of registration for GPs and used this workshop to inform its development. This workshop will be followed CQC 'applying for registration' pilots in January 2011.

Gemma Rafferty, CQC's Regulatory Strategy Manager, will be giving a presentation on CQC registration at a practice registration workshop at the LMC Secretaries Conference on 25 November.

We would like to make clear that NHS GP practices do not yet have to comply with CQC standards. NHS GP Practices will begin to be invited to apply for registration with CQC from 1 October 2011 and all will need to be registered from 1 April 2012. In the application practices will need to declare compliance with 16 standards. Monitoring of compliance with the CQC standards will not commence until 1 April 2012.

However, it is worth noting that PCTMS practices should be registered with CQC because PCTs needed to be registered from 1 April 2010. Also organisations that provide some NHS primary medical services but whose main purpose is to provide other services, such as private healthcare, social care or NHS acute services need to have been registered for all of their services from 1 October 2010.

The GPC will be producing a guide on how to complete the application form for CQC registration and on how your practice can comply with each of the CQC standards. We aim to publish this guide in the spring of 2011.

CQC have also launched a consultation on proposed fees for all health care and adult social care (ASC) providers in England. NHS GP practices will enter the CQC registration scheme on 1 April 2012 and will be included within the fees scheme from that date. In autumn 2011 there will be a further consultation on the fees scheme. The GPC will be responding to the current consultation as part of the BMA response. [The consultation can be viewed online.](#)

Pharmaceutical Services Regulations

We have been working with the Department of Health, NHS Employers and PSNC on the drafting of a new set of NHS Pharmaceutical Services Regulations, which will be introduced in spring 2011.

As far as GPs and LMCs are concerned, these will preserve the existing rules around dispensing doctors. In the course of the work, and in relation to the current round of Pharmaceutical Needs

Assessments (PNAs) which PCTs should now be drafting and consulting on, we have considered the issue of historic rights to dispense by GPs. We have agreed joint explanatory guidance which can be found at the links below. The second refers to the Clothier Report of 1977 (the old GMSC had representatives on the committee which drafted the report) which gave rise to many of the issues which were finally resolved in the 2005 Pharmaceutical Services Regulations.

If anybody has any questions about this guidance, or the work we are doing on the 2011 regulations, please contact Matt Isom on misom@bma.org.uk.

[Rurality, controlled localities and the provision of pharmaceutical services by doctors - an explanation of the history can be found online.](#)

[The Clothier report can be found online.](#)

Using NICE guidance in general practice

NICE have launched a new website to keep primary care professionals up to date with NICE guidance. It gives access to guidance during a consultation, steps to ensure a practice is up to date with clinical guidance and support for commissioners.

NICE are accepting feedback on the site until 1 December. [Please go to the NICE website for further information.](#)

NICE Role

The GPC discussed the recent Government announcement that NICE is to lose its role in determining the cost-effectiveness of therapies and recommending which treatments are available on the NHS. A number of concerns with the proposals have been raised, and the BMA response will be discussed at BMA Council next week.

Revalidation

The GMC has published the response to its revalidation consultation, along with a "statement of intent", agreed between the GMC, CMOs for England, Northern Ireland and Wales, the Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Scotland and the Medical Director of the NHS in England. The response is [available on the GMC website](#). The main points outlined in the two documents are as follows:

- A plan to launch revalidation in late 2012, subject to a test of readiness in summer 2012, which involves a number of key criteria having to be met (this follows the decision by Andrew Lansley earlier in the year to extend the revalidation piloting period for a year).
- Commitments to simplifying and streamlining the process, making it sufficiently flexible to apply to non-mainstream doctors and ensuring that it is cost effective. The response states that the GMC will work with its revalidation partners to ensure that this occurs.

The response reflects many of the key concerns outlined in the BMA's response to the GMC's revalidation consultation but as the GMC response recognises, work needs to be done to determine how these improvements will be achieved.

The revalidation pathfinder pilots are continuing. The Revalidation Support Team has published an interim report into these pilots and [this is available online.](#)

Sessional GPs Subcommittee election results

The results of the election to the GPC Sessional GPs Subcommittee for 2010-2013 have now been announced and the full [list of members is available on the BMA website.](#) The subcommittee will hold its first meeting on 2 December.

LMC Conference 2011

The LMC Conference 2011 will take place on Thursday 9 & Friday 10 June at the Mermaid Conference Centre, EC1. LMCs have recently been emailed with details of the conference, the application form and the number of representatives per LMC, as well as evaluation feedback from the Chairman of Conference.

Please note that due to the Mermaid Centre having a smaller auditorium, it has this year been necessary to reduce the number of observers attending the conference. We are hoping that LMCs will be able to send at least one observer each and these will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Further information about this is available in the letter.

LMC secretaries are asked to send in the names and addresses of appointed representatives and observers (on the form, appendix 3, in the link below) as soon as possible, and **at the very latest by 31 January 2011**, or by 7 January for the LMC representatives also wanting to attend the ARM, to Karen Day (kday@bma.org.uk)

The conference documents, including the application form for representatives and observers, [are available on the BMA website.](#)

Media coverage report

Please find attached (appendix 1) a GPC media coverage report prepared by the BMA's press office, detailing GPC media activity during the last few weeks.

Royal Medical Benevolent Fund

Please find attached (appendix 2) details of the Royal Medical Benevolent Fund Christmas appeal.

The GPC next meets on 16 December 2010, and LMCs are invited to submit items for discussion. You may like to review these, beforehand, with the representatives in your area who serve on the GPC. The closing date for items is 8 December 2010. It would be helpful if items could be emailed to William Jones at wjones@bma.org.uk. You may also like to use the GPC's listservers to exchange views and ideas.

GPC News

GPC News is available via the Internet, via the BMA's web pages: www.bma.org.uk

LMCs are reminded that their regional representatives can provide more detailed information about the issues covered in GPC News, and other matters. Other members of the GPC would also be pleased to accept invitations to LMC meetings wherever possible. Their names and addresses are in the GPC Yearbook. The secretariat can also provide a written background brief if required, but it would be helpful to have such requests well in advance of your meetings.

Finally, if LMCs require assistance on local issues, they can also contact the BMA's local offices: addresses are on page 3 of the GPC's yearbook.

This newsletter has been sent to:

- Secretaries of LMCs and LMC offices
- Members of the GPC
- Members of the GP trainees subcommittee
- Members of the sessional GPs subcommittee