

LMC E-BULLETIN

SOMERSET LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

Managing Potentially Inappropriate or Excessive Prescribing: Annex 8 GMS Contract Revisions

The LMC would like to point out that this is a PCT policy although the LMC was asked to submit comment during its development. We also feel obliged to point out that where the paper quotes GMC Good Practice that this guidance was in fact produced for doctors in management positions, rather than being aimed at general practitioners. GPs retain the responsibility to prescribe correctly for individual patients as well as bearing in mind the impact on NHS budgets and if challenged under the terms of this document should recall that good clinical reasons should provide sufficient justification. We would welcome early contact from any practice that feels it is being placed under pressure. The LMC position is that it is Annex 8 itself is a contractual obligation upon GMS practices rather than the PCT's interpretation of it but recognises that the policy has been made to bring into line its application to PMS (and APMS providers). Of course, many PMS practices in Somerset still have no up-to-date contract at all.

Pharmacy White Paper

Readers of the LMC Newsletter will have seen that the consultation period has now opened and will close on November 20th. The committee urges all practices and not just the 26 out of the 75 that dispense to at least some of their patients to respond to this important proposal which may have grave results for the provision of medical services in rural areas. Go To:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_087324

HPV

Practices will be aware that the programme to vaccinate school girls against human papilloma virus is to start next month. It will be run by the PCT via the school nursing service. Practices will be asked only to vaccinate 17-18 year olds not in full time education. The LMC has been assured that PPS will be organising a call and recall service for the course of three vaccinations but await confirmation. The PCT has offered to pay an item of service payment equivalent to that for a flu jab and the LMC has accepted this as long as practices are not expected to chase up non-attenders.

Whilst fully supporting the schools programme and encouraging the maximum uptake LMC policy is still to support any colleague who, approached by a family or patient asking for vaccination outside the programme, and who decides after discussion, that it is in the patient's best interest to receive the vaccination in general practice.

PCT Strategic View of Primary Care Infrastructure

The LMC welcomed the unprecedented investment plans unveiled by the PCT at its Board meeting on 10th September which has increased the money earmarked for investment to £4m in an ambitious four phase plan over the next five years. The LMC noted that satisfactory achievement in certain "management performance indicator" target areas will be expected in return for this investment which, incidentally, the PCT is under no statutory requirement to make. Whilst having reservations about the linkage the LMC understands that these practices are not being asked to achieve anything not also expected of other practices and also notes that PCT assistance is promised to aid cooperation, the production of an action plan to help "making significant progress towards" the standards.

Shepton Mallet Treatment Centre Colonoscopies

Many colleagues by now will have received communication about some patients who underwent colonoscopy at the hands of a doctor previously employed by SMTC whose work has been the subject of a detailed review. The LMC committee was pleased that this was sensitively handled by the PCT, avoiding a media "health scare" with terrifying headlines like, "1400 in Cancer Scare!" resulting in dozens of patients turning up at unprepared practices demanding that "something must be done" We have heard of some episodes where contact between SMTC and practices has not run smoothly these have reported to the PCT. Similarly we know that some colleagues are unhappy at being asked to review patients to judge whether further investigation is required. We have been assured by the PCT that as ever no-one is expected to act beyond their competency. Any concerns should be dealt with by referral back to SMTC or another provider if the patient prefers.

New Clinical DESs

Five new clinical Directed Enhanced Services were announced in London on Friday 5th September. These deal with the proportion of patients with heart failure prescribed a betablocker, questionnaires for alcohol intake screening in new patients, the services provided to patients with learning disabilities, the treatment of osteoporosis and the recording of ethnicity and first language of all patients.

Details are available at: www.somersetlmc.co.uk

Practices will want to consider whether or not to take up these DESs especially given the funding available.