



Londonwide LMCs

The professional voice of London general practice

Mword Issue 55 - Dr Michelle Drage's latest update for GPs and practice teams on Covid-19

15 April 2020

Dear Colleague

Thank you so much

Supporting you to care for your patients with Covid-19 and other conditions and needs: Our Londonwide Covid-19 Living Guide

Holding on to our professional values

1. Thank you so much In as non-patronising way as I can possibly get across, I want to thank you and your practice teams for being true professionals and working over the Easter Bank Holidays to ensure your patients had access to your Covid-19 and other essential GP services during what was originally anticipated to be the peak of the pandemic in London. We know this has not been easy to you or your families, and we continue to lobby for that invaluable time to be reinstated at a later date. Thank you also for doing your utmost to get to grips with the shielded patients list. We know this has been, and continues to be, a truly confusing challenge not of our making. Please be assured that all possible representations are being made by our national professional bodies, but please also understand that everyone is working under emergency regulations governed by the Coronavirus Act, passed by Parliament on 25 March.

2. Supporting you to care for your patients with Covid-19, and other, conditions and needs: Our Londonwide Covid-19 Living Guide At Londonwide LMCs we continue to put all our efforts into supporting you through the pandemic. As GPs ourselves, working as partners, salaried and locums, with team members who are or have worked as practice nurses, managers, and support staff, we are fully cognisant of the impact this terrible virus is having on our patients, our practices, and ourselves. We are continuously updating our Londonwide LMCs Covid-19 Living Guide. This is so that you have - as real-time as we can make it – a desktop companion to help see you through. Our guide contextualises for London GPs and practice teams the myriad documents being produced by the key national, local and other bodies, which can appear to be disconnected from our reality in London, and provides timely practical and pragmatic expert GP-led professional and practical advice written to help you to get on with the job.

3. Holding on to our professional values We also have a keen eye on securing the future of general practice in our capital city – with our practice-based registered list, our relational continuity of care with patients and our holistic bio-psycho-social model of care for those who need it. This means seeing that general practices are not left weakened or vulnerable to forces who, unlike our patients, do not sufficiently understand or value the patient-centred care and advocacy we offer, and do not see the value we bring to the NHS. Now more than ever, in the absence of a vaccine or cure, we must hold onto and demonstrate these values, even as we ourselves manage the daily stresses and challenges that working during this period present. We should also take heart and broadcast to our friends and families, and the public, that as GPs we have always shown our adaptability. Over the decades we have: led a massive revolution in the management of long term conditions such as hypertension,

diabetes, and asthma to name but three; invented networks of community-based practices decades before PCNs and their contractualisation; created GP cooperatives to cover out of hours services when there were none; invented and led the IT revolution in primary care, telephone consultations, and now, in the depths of this new crisis; led and delivered a shift to remote video consulting to ensure our patients get the care they need – a transformation which will drive others. Others which, from our practices, we shall also lead. General practice should stand proud of what we do and what we achieve. Now, more than ever. As ever I welcome your feedback at mword@lmc.org.uk, and know that my team of experts and leaders here at Londonwide LMCs will always be by your side. Keep well. Stay safe. With best wishes

Dr Michelle Drage MBBS FRCGP

CEO, Londonwide LMCs