



Londonwide LMCs

The professional voice of London general practice

Mword Issue 56 - Dr Michelle Drage's latest update for GPs and practice teams on Covid-19

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Dear Colleague Thank you to those of you have fed back to me and the team via mword@lmc.org.uk. Please know that we look at every message and use them to guide our thinking, messaging and our advice. Please also know that our GP and Practice Support Team is here to help with your individual and practice concerns on gpsupport@lmc.org.uk. Please do not be afraid to make contact – however simple or complex the query, if it’s happening to you, it’s happening to others and by helping you we can support them too. We are in a completely new paradigm, changing and adapting as we go. Our role at Londonwide LMCs is to help guide us all to navigate through the complexities with the aim of future-proofing your practices for you and your teams. This is so that when this long period of uncertainty ends, your patients will continue to receive, along with their episodic care, the relational continuity of care that must remain the lynchpin of the NHS, from your practices. And so today we do just that with:

Our newly updated Londonwide Covid-19 Living Guide (v3) is published today.

An update on death verification

Our current guidance regarding shielding, self-isolation and social distancing

Our Wellbeing Guidance - Caring for yourself and your general practice team in the Covid-19 pandemic

PPE – from Professor Trish Greenhalgh, Oxford Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine

1. Our newly updated Londonwide Covid-19 Living Guide (v3) is published today As I’ve said before, our Living Guide is constantly being drafted, reviewed and updated by our GP Medical Directors, our other clinicians and all of our supporting teams who are – each and every one – working just for you. Again, please do explore it, refer to it, and use it to help you manage your patients and also the frequent system-related as well as clinically-related challenges that present on a daily basis. 2. An update on death verification You will be aware that we have been experiencing varied responses to the issue of verification of death from the different London coroners. This variation has posed real challenges to our practices at a time when we just don’t need them. As a result, we asked the BMA’s GPC England to take this on as a national issue and yesterday Dr Mark Sanford-Wood, deputy chair of GPC England issued this letter. 3. Our current guidance regarding shielding, self-isolation and social distancing In the light of the frustrations associated with our efforts over the Bank Holiday weekend, it goes without saying that the task is an ongoing one, to protect the health of those at high risk, and to enable them to access their basic needs. I therefore make no apologies for circulating our guidance which contains all you should need, and more, to see you through this essential patient safety requirement. 4. Caring for yourself and your general practice team in the Covid-19 pandemic It is important to acknowledge that many if not all of us are feeling fearful and anxious. We are reminded that, as a

profession and as individuals health care workers, we have a duty to our communities and patients, and yet many of us are also concerned about our own family members, and that we may be exposing them to risk. We are operating in a time of rapid change, taking us away from the model of care that we were trained for. We have rapidly adopted new ways of working, pushing us out of our comfort zones at best. We are trying to maintain the high standards of care for our patients - trying to keep on top of guidance, which is changing daily, sometimes hourly, and working in an understandably chaotic system in which roles and responsibilities of all providers and health care professionals in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic are urgently being determined. For many of us, this will be the toughest challenge that we have ever faced; it's understandable that many are experiencing the classic symptoms and signs of anxiety. With all of this in mind it is right and proper that we do not neglect our own physical health and mental well-being. Our guidance Caring for yourself and your general practice team in the Covid-19 pandemic offers timely advice and resources to help you and colleagues get through. Again, our GP and Practice Support Team is here for you at gpsupport@lmc.org.uk, and the BMA's counselling service is accessible 24/7 on 0330 123 1245. 5. PPE – from Professor Trish Greenhalgh, Oxford Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine As you are well aware the issue of what constitutes "adequate" PPE has at last become a nationally expressed concern and is across all the media. Professor Trish Greenhalgh, herself a trained GP, has this week published an editorial which I recommend as essential reading for every one of us – be it the lines themselves, or what lies between them. Trish would like you to share this widely amongst colleagues and friends, and on your social media networks. And I recommend you follow her on twitter. And so as we move into the second period of Lockdown, I want to reiterate this: 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

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