



Londonwide LMCs

The professional voice of London general practice

Friday 8 May Bank Holiday opening

With just over a week to go there still remains a lack of clarity on funding of staff payments and costs. Until clear, we continue to advise you to keep an account of all additional costs associated with these bank holidays. We still expect the BMA to negotiate that the affected Bank Holidays to be restored in due course and will press for this. Under the emergency legislation (SI 351, 2020; Part 4, S14) NHS England has deemed them to be normal working days. The key message from NHS England is that GP practices should open, but agree with their CCG in advance the level of the service needed and the staff cover required, with the possibility of PCN level cover as an alternative in view of anticipated demand. They suggest using your experience of the Easter bank holidays to ensure you have the right level of cover needed for your area.

In preparing for this we suggest you:

Review your patient demand levels over the two Easter bank holidays and think about whether all staff were required to be available.

Consider whether scaling down provision might be appropriate, always ensuring that you meet the reasonable needs of your patients.

Consider whether a different staff skill mix might be suitable on that day.

Have a discussion with your PCN colleagues and explore the option of cross cover between practices or using local access centres if available.

Working collaboratively with your local colleagues may mean that not all practices within your PCN may need to be open throughout the day.

While considering all available options, please ensure that you discuss your plans with your CCG and get their agreement in advance of putting your arrangements in place. If service provision is going to be different to what is normally expected, please ensure you communicate this clearly to your patients to manage their expectations.

As soon as any further guidance is available, from NHS England or the BMA, we will share it with you.