



## Mword Issue 80 - Dr Michelle Drage's latest update for GPs and practice teams

11 January 2021

Dear Colleague Welcome to our latest M word. Reading this, some of you may notice there is not as much of a 'Michelle' tone to this Mword. Our CEO is currently on the mend from her own bout of Covid-19 and I have the privilege of deputising for Michelle until she returns to us. I am in regular contact with Michelle and she has asked me to share her gratitude for all your efforts through 2020 and over Christmas, and rest assured that the 'M' will be back in the Mword soon. 2020 was a year of significant achievement for London general practice. You did an amazing job; your immense hard work and commitment has ensured that you've continued to offer high quality care to your patients and your communities, and you kept general practice on its feet over a very difficult Christmas period. As we move into 2021, we move into a year that offers hope and optimism to our communities. Every time you administer a Covid-19 vaccination, you are taking us closer to the light at the end of the tunnel. Everyone knows that the circumstances are now even tougher. We were tired as we entered this second wave, many suffering from acute and long-term effects of Covid-19 and suffering the grief of having lost loved ones. Yet despite being in the heights of a second spike, we continue to overcome immense challenges personally and professionally, in the best interests of the people we serve. I'm proud to be a member of our GP community and you too should be very proud of your immense accomplishments in these very difficult times. We, as always, are here to support you. Lisa

Prioritisation and essential services.

Connecting sessional GPs.

Vaccine roll-out.

PCN DES vote.

Meeting with Keir Starmer MP.

1. Prioritisation and essential services. On Thursday NHS England wrote to GPs about which services should be prioritised to free up capacity. We know that since the Christmas period practices in London have already been switching to focussing on essential services due to the need to prioritise the Covid-19 vaccination programme, an unprecedented volume of patients seeking care, stringent infection control measures, and the impact of illness and isolation requirements on workforce availability. At Londonwide LMCs we'll continue to push the message that general practice remains fully and safely open, but also call for clear communication to the public by our national leaders to ensure that our patients and communities have a clear expectation of what services can be offered. We have been sharing frontline GPs' feedback with commissioners throughout the pandemic and seeking collaboration to ensure that precious clinical time is used in the most effective way. Clinical prioritisation is essential to maintaining safe services; the RCGP and BMA guidance on workload stratification and prioritisation continues to provide a good framework for this, for example encouraging patients to continue seeking care for cancer and heart disease. 2. Connecting sessional GPs Our sessional GP matching offer is still open and we have already had hundreds of offers of availability. If you are a GP looking to take on additional sessions you can register here. If

your practice would like access to the list of available GPs, please email [connectinggps@lmc.org.uk](mailto:connectinggps@lmc.org.uk). Full details of how this offer works for all parties can be found [here](#).

3. Vaccine roll-out. In the last few weeks London general practice has pulled together a vaccination programme with almost no notice, while still doing the day job in the face of the highest Covid-19 infection rates the Capital has seen. I know the press and political attention on the vaccine can make some of you feel under pressure, but it's now down to the system to deliver the vaccine stock so you can deliver it to your patients. Last week we assisted LMC members and PCN Clinical Directors with media requests regarding the vaccination programme and our communications team remain available if anyone would like support with these – [comms@lmc.org.uk](mailto:comms@lmc.org.uk). As the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine becomes available it will begin to feel like the sort of vaccination campaign that we're all very familiar with. Please continue to feed back to us so we can help to raise and resolve the issues which will inevitably arise in this very new process.

Thursday saw an updated Covid-19 Vaccine ES service specification published and new guidance released on the movement of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine. In practice this means an altered payment schedule and an official summary of the mobility advantages/cold chain requirements of the AZ vaccine. The national protocol for the AZ vaccine was published at the weekend, while the Pfizer protocol was updated.

4. PCN DES vote. Following on from November's Conference of England LMCs the GPC are balloting the whole profession on the continuation of the PCN DES before the next round of negotiations on it. The ballot is open to partner, sessional and trainee GPs, whether they are BMA members or not, with a closing date of 19 January. Full details and voting instructions are on the BMA website. I encourage every GP to take part, whatever your role, as the outcome of this vote will have a big impact on the shape of general practice over the coming years.

5. Meeting with Keir Starmer. On Friday representatives from Camden LMC, Londonwide LMCs staff and local GPs met with Keir Starmer MP and Labour's health spokesman Jonathan Ashworth MP. A number of local issues were discussed in Keir Starmer's capacity as a London MP, alongside national issues in his capacity as Leader of the Opposition, such as the Coronavirus response and plans to legislate for Integrated Care Systems (ICS). The NHS England consultation on ICS closed on Friday and you can view our response to it [here](#). If you are contacted by an MP or wish to raise an issue with one, the Londonwide LMCs team can provide advice on this. As ever I welcome your feedback at [mword@lmc.org.uk](mailto:mword@lmc.org.uk), and as always, know that the team of experts and leaders here at Londonwide LMCs are by your side.

Keep well. Stay safe. With best wishes  
Dr Lisa Harrod-Rothwell  
Deputy CEO, Londonwide LMCs