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GPC meeting

The GPC held its meeting on 20 September 2012 and this newsletter provides a summary of the main items discussed.

DDRB and negotiations

The BMA will soon submit written evidence to the Doctors and Dentists Review Body. This will, as usual, include evidence on general medical practitioners. Negotiations with NHS Employers about other contractual matters for 2013/14 are ongoing.

Pensions

The Government published the Public Service Pensions Bill on 13 September. It claims that changes to public sector pensions are needed for sustainability. However, the BMA strongly believes that the scope of these changes is unfair, unnecessary and will adversely impact staff in the NHS Pension Scheme:

- Demanding the same savings of all public sector schemes across the board is unfair – the NHS Pensions Scheme underwent major reform only 4 years ago, and continues to deliver a positive cashflow to the Treasury.

- Some healthcare workers will pay 66% of the cost of their pension benefits by 2014-2015 but the highest earning civil servants will pay a maximum 26% of theirs.
- The Government wants to link the Normal Pension Age for NHS staff to the State Pension Age, but work in the NHS is often physically, mentally and emotionally demanding, and some staff will not feel able to work effectively beyond the age of 65.

The BMA will be proposing affordable ways in which the changes can be made fairer, both now and in the longer term.

The BMA's activity on these plans involves a number of strands. First, the BMA is playing an active part in the Working Longer Review, involving the Department of Health, NHS Employers and health unions examining the impact of NHS staff working longer. Additionally, together with other health unions, the BMA is building a campaign against the planned increase to the NHS retirement age. Also, we are using the publication of the Bill to lobby Parliamentarians, to make them aware of doctors' concerns about the changes to NHS pensions and to offer alternative solutions. The BMA is among the unions currently in talks with the government about the detail of the changes to the NHS pensions scheme.

English NHS reforms - Clinical Commissioning Group constitutions

CCG constitutions

We are still receiving reports of CCGs placing increasing pressure on practices to 'sign up' to constitutions by a certain deadline in order for the CCG to meet the timescales of authorisation. *The NHSCB have been clear in meetings with the GPC that CCGs will only be authorised if they can demonstrate adequate engagement with practices.* CCGs that rush or skip this engagement may find that in their rush to be authorised, they jeopardise their chances of progressing successfully to authorisation.

It is vital that time is taken to ensure that the early development of CCG is well thought through and involves all the member practices and with input from the LMC. ***To reiterate, if GPs feel pressured into 'signing up' to constitutions before they are ready they should contact their LMC for advice. If you are concerned about the development of your CCG please email the GPC at info.commissioning@bma.org.uk.***

NHS 111

The GPC has recently written to the Department of Health once again to seek assurances that readiness checks will be and are currently sufficiently robust to ensure all local 111 services are ready to go live before their scheduled launch date. Further information will be shared with LMCs as and when it is received.

It would be greatly appreciated if members could continue to share their experiences of local 111 service development and implementation with the GPC secretariat.

Please contact Alex Ottley (aottley@bma.org.uk) to share both good and bad experiences, and any points of information you wish to raise.

Revalidation

The UK Revalidation Programme Board met yesterday to consider preparedness for the roll out of revalidation. The BMA believes that while there is significantly more work to be done to get revalidation into proper shape, its seven principles for implementation have been broadly recognised and sufficiently addressed to enable the General Medical Council to proceed with its timetable.

This is partly due to a commitment given this week that the NHS Commissioning Board (NHSCB) will establish funding to support GPs who need remediation away from their place of work, and confirmation that the responsibility for funding remedial placements and assessments for GPs will rest with commissioners. Fair and reasonable access to funding will be determined through a set of criteria determined by the NHSCB working with the BMA.

The GPC will continue to work to ensure that the ongoing issues that require further work are addressed, and that revalidation is reviewed regularly to assess whether it is proportionate and appropriate, and benefits patients.

CQC Registration

The BMA's guidance "*CQC registration - What you need to know*" is available at <http://bma.org.uk/practical-support-at-work/doctors-as-managers/managing-your-practice/cqc-registration> If LMCs are made aware of examples of requests or statements that appear to contradict this guidance, particularly if practices are informed that all of their staff require a CRB check, please email Joe Read at jread@bma.org.uk.

In July, the CQC sent out letters to primary medical services providers registering with them by April 2013, inviting them to set up an online account on their website. The CQC has been sending LMCs and PCTs lists of providers in their area showing the stage that they are at in the process, including those who have not yet set up their account. LMCs are being asked to encourage providers to do this.

Flu vaccinations for healthcare workers

Due to the continued low uptake of the flu vaccine in healthcare workers (45% for 2011/12), the Chief Medical Officer for England, Professor Dame Sally Davies, and the BMA's Chair of Council, Dr Mark Porter, have written to doctors to ensure that as many frontline staff as possible get vaccinated. The letter can be seen at:-

https://www.wp.dh.gov.uk/publications/files/2012/09/DH_flufighter_forDoctors_letter.pdf

Amendments to the Pharmaceutical Services Regulations 2012

The Department of Health has made the following amendments to the [NHS \(Pharmaceutical Services\) Regulations 2012](#), which will come into force on 1 November:

- restore rights of appeals included in the NHS (Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2005 but not included in the 2012 regulations
- make it clear that members of limited liability partnerships are to be treated, for information providing purposes, in the same way as directors of corporate bodies
- correct the list of conditions that have to be met if a dispensing doctor is to dispense a repeatable prescription in Schedule 6 to the 2012 Regulations (terms of service for dispensing doctors).

Sessional GPs: redefining success

A conference for **all salaried, locum and freelance GPs** is being held in BMA House on **Thursday 11 October 2012**. At the conference there will be talks and group workshop sessions on a range of issues, offering practical advice and guidance to support you in various aspects of your role as a sessional GP. Topics featured include [revalidation](#), [employment rights](#), and [making successful career choices](#). The launch of the Locum Handbook will also take place at the Conference, with conference attendees the first to receive hard copies of the handbook, currently available online here.

To view the full programme for the day and to register your interest in attending the conference, please visit the Events section of the BMA website.

<http://bma.org.uk/events/2012/october/sessional-gps-redefining-success>

BMA Medical Book and Patient Information Awards

Professor Baroness Hollins, the current President of the BMA, presented over thirty prizes to winning authors and patient groups on Thursday 13 September at BMA House.

Books are entered into one of 21 categories, each of which is reviewed by a BMA member who completes an online structured appraisal form, Dr Laurence Buckman selected the shortlist for the PHC category and other BMA committee chairmen were also involved. The first prize in PHC this year is:

Professional Development for Appraisal and Revalidation: The Dr Hairy Workbook by David Hindmarsh and Edward Picot (Scion 2012)

Dr Buckman commented that: "If you want to prepare for appraisal in an original way, this book will help you. If you are a trainee trying to understand management problems in the NHS, this will clarify your thinking. A peer group could use it for catharsis."

The BMA Library maintains a collection of both print and electronic books for GPs which can be borrowed free of charge by BMA members. You can search our catalogue at

www.bma.org.uk/catalogue or see our other services at www.bma.org.uk/library

These well regarded textbooks of general practice were also highly commended and are available for loan by BMA members:

- A Textbook of General Practice 3rd ed by Anne Stephenson (Hodder Arnold)
- John Murtagh's General Practice 5th ed by John Murtagh (McGraw-Hill Education)

Other books entered to the Awards and entered this year are:

- A Practical Guide to Dermal Filler Procedures (Lippincott 2011)
- Care of The Adult With Intellectual Disability In Primary Care (Radcliffe 2011)
- Caregiver Stress and Staff Support in Illness, Dying and Bereavement (Oxford UP 2011)
- COPD in Primary Care (Class 2011)
- Dermatologic and Cosmetic Procedures in Office Practice (Elsevier 2011)
- Diagnosis and risk management in primary care: words that count, numbers that speak (Radcliffe 2011)
- Effective GP Commissioning – Essential Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes (Radcliffe 2011)
- Fast Facts: Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (Health P 2011)
- Fast Facts: Depression (Health P 2011)
- Fast Facts: Eating Disorders (Health P 2011)
- HIV in Primary Care 2nd ed (Medical Foundation for AIDS & Sexual Health 2011)
- Maximising Quality and Outcomes Framework Quality Points: The QOF clinical domain (Radcliffe 2011)
- MRCGP Practice Cases: Clinical Skills Assessment (PasTest 2011)
- MRCGP Practice Questions: Applied Knowledge Test (PasTest 2011)
- Peripheral Vascular Disease in Primary Care (Radcliffe 2011)
- Pocket Guide to Spirometry 3rd ed (McGraw-Hill Australia 2011)
- Practical Guide to Botulinum Toxin Procedures (Lippincott 2011)
- Psychiatry in Primary Care (Cambridge UP 2011)
- The 5-Minute Clinical Consult 2012 (Lippincott 2011)

If you would like to review books or patient leaflets for the Awards then complete a form at <https://web2.bma.org.uk/bmalibrary.nsf/bkrevappf?OpenForm>

The GPC next meets on 18 October 2012, and LMCs are invited to submit items for discussion. You may like to review these, beforehand, with the representatives in your area who serve on the GPC. The closing date for items is 9 October 2012. It would be helpful if items could be emailed to Christopher Scott at cscott@bma.org.uk. You may also like to use the GPC's listservers to exchange views and ideas.

GPC News

GPC News is available via the Internet, via the BMA's web pages: www.bma.org.uk

LMCs are reminded that their regional representatives can provide more detailed information about the issues covered in GPC News, and other matters. Other members of the GPC would also be pleased to accept invitations to LMC meetings wherever possible. Their names and addresses are in the GPC Yearbook. The secretariat can also provide a written background brief if required, but it would be helpful to have such requests well in advance of your meetings.

Finally, if LMCs require assistance on local issues, they can also contact the BMA's local offices: addresses are on page 3 of the GPC's yearbook.

This newsletter has been sent to:

- Secretaries of LMCs and LMC offices
- Members of the GPC
- Members of the GP trainees subcommittee
- Members of the sessional GPs subcommittee