

Friday 20 January 2017

Issue 4

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GPC - England meeting - England

GPC England held its meeting on Thursday 19 January.

At that meeting GPC England received:

- A presentation from the GPC England Executive on the progress of annual GMS contract negotiations.
- An update on the GPFV, and the work of GPC to monitor and ensure NHS England’s implementation of the proposals and programmes outlined therein.
- An oral update on the development of STPs.
- Updated guidance on the MCP contract and spent time discussing and analysing the models.
- An update on the GPC England national survey.

The next meeting of GPC UK will take place on 16 March 2017.

The UK LMC conference will take place on 18-19 May 2017, meaning the May meeting of GPC England will instead take place on 15 June. In subsequent years there will be a GPC England meeting in May.



The England LMC conference – which is a new event following the GPC reforms - will take place on 10 November 2017. Please hold this date in your diaries.

Prime minister's statement on general practice - UK

Last Friday Theresa May demanded that GPs extend their opening hours to provide care seven-days a week to alleviate pressure on emergency departments or lose funding.

Our robust response over the weekend was reported by *BBC News Online, The Independent, The Guardian, The Daily Mirror, ITV News Online, The Huffington Post, LBC, The Daily Express* and many more national and regional titles.

The Chair of GPC was also interviewed on *BBC Radio 4's The Today Programme, BBC News Channel, ITV News, Channel Four News, Sky News* and *LBC*.

Included here is a [link](#) to the press release which we issued immediately last Friday in response to the PM's statement, and a [link](#) to a further press release which we issued on Tuesday.

On Monday the Chair of the BMA wrote to Theresa May setting out our serious concerns with her comments. [The letter is available on the BMA website.](#)

Also on Monday, the Chair of GPC spoke to the Department of Health and received clarification that there is no proposal to "withhold funds" from GPs.

NHS England has also indicated that there will be no impact on the GPFV access monies. As set out in the GPFV and the NHS Planning Guidance, CCGs will receive local recurrent funding to improve and increase capacity in general practice, totalling £138m by 2017/18 and increasing to £258m by 2018/19. This will contribute to the overall ambition of investing an extra £2.4 billion in general practice services by 2020/21.

Firearms - UK

A great deal of work continues to be carried out via the GPC Task & Finish group (which includes members from all 4 nations as a UK issue) to generate comprehensive, safe guidance on this issue. While the group is close to concluding this, we are cognisant of the importance of ensuring that guidance is 100% legally watertight in order to protect doctors.

Since November the executive has been working hard to extend BMA guidance at the same time as engaging with the Home Office to improve the system in general. We hope to deliver definitive full guidance by the end of the month.

This updated guidance must be to the highest possible standard bearing in mind professional and legal considerations and will seek to empower GPs while ensuring their safety within the licensing system. In doing so we plan to engage carefully with LMCs and the wider profession in the dissemination of this guidance, and will welcome the help and support of all LMCs in that regard.

Further work with the Home Office will continue to redefine the current system which has generated widespread concerns regarding safety. The ultimate aim of these discussions from a BMA perspective would be the removal of the request for the GP to offer an opinion, thus rendering the report a factual one compiled from the notes.

Practices with Atypical Population Guidance - England

We have now published guidance for practices serving atypical populations (following NHS England's recent publication of guidance for commissioners to provide additional support for affected practices). As part of a review of the Carr-Hill funding formula, it was recognised that the formula may not be able to account for specific types of practices due to the nature of the population they serve. In late 2015, the GPC, LMCs, commissioners and NHS England embarked on a project looking at how workload and other pressures disproportionately affect practices serving atypical populations. The group identified three such populations:

- unavoidably small and isolated populations.
- university populations.
- practices with a high number of patients who do not speak English.

Each of these types of practices have particular challenges due to the work related to their populations and the way in which the funding formula allocates funding to such practices.

NHS England has developed [guidance](#) for commissioners to provide support for such practices, and [our guidance](#) provides corresponding advice to practices who have identified themselves as falling into one of the above categories, and who require support.

National Audit Office report recommendations - England

Last week the National Audit Office (NAO) published their [report](#) on patient access to general practice. That report garnered a great deal of national press (as did our responses to it).

We issued a [press release](#) following the publication of the report, robustly stating that funding in general practice has failed to meet patient demand, NHS England and commissioners need to fully consider the consequences of their plans to extend access. To proceed without any sort of evaluation into the cost-effectiveness or the consequences of its objectives is irresponsible and could lead to much needed investment being spent on measures which don't adequately meet patient needs. The government must deliver on much needed extra investment in general practice.

It is important to reflect for a moment on the recommendations outlined in the NAO report (strongly correlating as they do with both many of our Urgent Prescription proposals and our messaging around the workforce and workload crisis facing general practice) which are that:

- NHS England and commissioners should fully consider the consequences of their plans to extend access. This assessment should cover the implications on continuity of care and existing arrangements for providing services outside core hours. NHS England and commissioners should also ensure that services provided outside of core hours are cost-effective and not paid for twice.
- NHS England should seek greater assurance that services in core hours meet the reasonable needs of patients. There are unexplained variations in practice opening hours. NHS England needs to assess and monitor what effect these variations have on patients and other health and care services.
- The Department and NHS England should seek to improve the existing data from general practice to better understand the capacity of, pressures on, and demand for services. A cost-effective service will balance access with demand; however, some of the Department's and NHS England's objectives are based on a crude understanding of the level of demand and what influences it. They need to continue to address the shortcomings in data highlighted in our first report.

We particularly draw your attention to the comment "as at October 2015, some 46% of practices closed at some point during core hours. In particular, 18% closed at or before 3 pm on at least one weekday, despite three-quarters (76%) of these practices that closed receiving additional funding in 2015-16 to provide access outside of core hours" and the first recommendation and the implications of the underlined double payment section as well as the observation that NHSE have "...used pilots to understand the demand for, and provision of, extended hours, and have used these to refine their expectations. However, they have not yet fully assessed the cost-effectiveness of the approach and overall resources that will be required," equally, the report notes that, "...we have not seen evidence that the Department and NHS England fully understand the effect of this commitment to extend hours on continuity of care or other arrangements for providing general medical services outside of core hours."

The NAO's analysis also suggests that, unless clinical commissioning groups provide more than the minimum additional consultation capacity, such as wider improvements in access, the new requirements may prove expensive compared to existing services.

[The full report can be access on the NAO website.](#)

GP Forward View (England) updates - England

CPs (Clinical Pharmacists) in GP practices

On 9 January 2017, the applications for wave one funding for CPs opened. This is part of a £112 million commitment within the GPFV (GP Forward View) to ensure all practices in England have access to a CP by 2018/19. The deadline for applications is 10 February, but those who have not yet submitted their bid or are unsuccessful in this round will have a few more

opportunities to (re)apply throughout 2017. We will keep GPs and LMCs aware of the opening and closing of each application round. For further information, visit the [BMA website](#).

NHS GP Health Service

As part of NHS England's commitment to support GPs and GP trainees who wish to remain in or return to clinical practice after a period of ill health, the new NHS GP Health Service will launch on 30 January 2017. The Hurley Group Partnership will be the service provider and it will be available throughout England. This service is separate to the [primary care OHS \(occupational health services\)](#), which is offered to GPs, dentists, pharmacists and opticians as individual performers and available to other primary care staff via a fee for service or block contract paid for by their employer.

A dedicated website will go live on the launch date and vulnerable GPs will be able to contact the service directly and seek the *confidential* support they need. Further information about the service is available on [NHS England's website](#). This will be updated further on 30 January and will include the link to the dedicated website.

Since local GP health services were first decommissioned in 2013, GPC has lobbied long and hard for a service such as this to be reinstated. Faced with demands to make what we consider to be unreasonable efficiency savings, primary care commissioning bodies decided to cease funding these services. Thankfully, however, NHS England now recognises the importance of GPs' wellbeing and the impact this has on patient care. Whilst there is a lot of work left to do to ensure GPs have manageable workloads and an appropriate work-life balance, the commitments within the GPFV are expected to go a long way to improving the day to day lives of GPs and their staff teams.

We will of course continue to lobby NHS England / the government on behalf of GP practice staff, since they currently remain without NHS funded access to occupational health services.

Growing older in the UK - UK

In September 2016 the BMA board of science published a series of briefing papers on [Growing older in the UK](#), which explore a range of topics relevant to supporting and improving people's health and wellbeing as they grow older in the UK. The briefings reflect on the substantial pressures facing underfunded health services across the UK, which are in part due to the complexity of supporting the health of a population that contains a greater proportion of older people, more likely to suffer from multiple long-term conditions. This was followed up with a stakeholder roundtable event in parliament, a report of which is [available online](#).

Government consultation on work, health and disability Green Paper - UK

The Government is consulting on plans to change the welfare system to support disabled people and people with long term health conditions to take up work. At the heart of the consultation is an aspiration to tackle the employment gap amongst disabled people and the stigma and discrimination that disabled people face in employment. As part of this review the Government is looking at how people are supported to take up work following long term illness/disability, including the role of GPs and fit notes. The consultation is particularly focussing on people with mental health and musculoskeletal conditions who are particularly disadvantaged in accessing work. More information on the Green Paper [More information on the Green Paper is available online](#) (the section on healthcare support is in Chapter 5).

The BMA is responding to this consultation and would like to hear GPs' views about how the health and welfare system needs to change to better equip disabled people who want to work with the necessary support and skills. Please send any comments/responses to: Clare Woodford, Senior policy advisor (Equality, inclusion and culture): cwoodford@bma.org.uk by 8 February 2017).

Department of Health response to the Nice terror attack - UK

The Department of Health is planning to contact people affected by the terrorist attack in Nice on 14th July 2016. It is possible that this group of people may need treatment for mental ill health caused or exacerbated by the attacks and some may require proactively supporting into mental health services via primary care and self-referral to Improving Access to Psychological therapy services.

The Department has suggested from its experience dealing with those caught up in the attacks in Tunisia, Paris and Brussels that there are three elements of a mental health response that are particularly important:

- Identifying those suffering from poor mental health as a result of the attacks and proactively inviting them into treatment
- Accessing services
- Delivering NICE approved treatment until the patient has recovered.

They therefore plan to write to individuals affected by the attack in Nice with a letter containing advice about the effects of trauma and how to access mental health services.

They will also include an NHS leaflet about the symptoms of trauma and an open letter that the individual can take to their GP or Healthcare Professional, notifying them that the individual has been the victim of a terrorist attack and may require referral to a mental health service such as IAPT, NHS England's talking therapy programme.

This process will retain the important elements of proactive outreach recommended by NICE, whilst building on the expertise in the NHS.

The Department plans to send the letters and leaflet to the 37 individuals whose contact details were recorded by the MET Police following the incident in Nice and only a small number of GPs will be affected.

Sessional GPs e-newsletter - UK

Please find a [link](#) to this month's edition of the Sessionals newsletter, which this month focuses on, amongst other things, Capita and the NHS Pension, Indemnity arrangements for sessional GPs, and death in service benefits for sessionals.

GPC Conference: Working together to sustain general practice - England

Registration is now open for the GPC Conference: Working together to sustain general practice, being held on 23rd February 2017 at BMA House, London.

[Please register on the BMA website.](#)

Please find attached the GPDF expenses guidance (appendix 1). Please note that conference reception desk will open at 10am, with a start time of 10:30am; please bear this in mind and read in conjunction with 'subsistence – accommodation' section of the guidance, when booking travel. We anticipate the conference finishing no later than 5:30pm.

Please confirm your attendance by completing the form by Monday 30 January.

For information, LMCs can register two reps; one rep will be guaranteed a place, the second will be allocated first come first served depending on capacity.

GPC Roadshows - England

The GPC are holding a series of roadshows across England. These roadshows are a valuable opportunity for you to hear from one of the Executive Team of the GPC on the 2017/18 contract changes, with an opportunity to ask questions afterwards. Please see the list below for further details on venue and times for confirmed roadshows. This list will be updated as more roadshows are confirmed.

We look forward to meeting you in your local area.

31 January 2017

- **Leeds:** Village Hotel and Leisure Club, 186 Otley Road Headingley, Leeds, LS16 5PR (7-9pm/6.30 registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Richard Vautrey
- **Plymouth:** Plymouth Science Park, 1 Davy Road, Derriford, Plymouth, PL6 8BX (6:45-9pm/6.15pm registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Mark Sanford- Wood
- **Birmingham:** Chambers of Commerce 75 Harborne Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 3DH (7-9pm/6.30pm registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Gavin Ralston

01 February 2017

- **Manchester:** The Village Hotel, Ashton-Under-Lyne, OL7 0PG (7-9pm/6.30pm registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Chaand Nagpaul
- **Newcastle:** Quality Hotel, Boldon Business Park, Witney Way, Boldon NE35 9PE (7-9pm/6.30pm registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Richard Vautrey
- **Cambridge:** Imperial War Museum, Duxford, Cambridge CB22 4QR (7-9pm/6.30 registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Gavin Ralston

02 February 2017

- **Bristol:** Aztec West Hotel, Almondsbury, Bristol, BS32 4TS (7.30-9.30pm/7pm registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Mark Sanford-Wood

07 February 2017

- **London:** BMA House, Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9JP (12.30 -2:30pm/12pm registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Chaand Nagpaul
- **Preston:** Marriott Hotel, Garstang Road, Broughton, Preston, PR3 5JB (1– 3pm/ 12.30pm registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Richard Vautrey
- **High Wycombe:** Holiday Inn, High Wycombe M40, Jct. 4, Handycross, Buckinghamshire, HP11 1TL (7.30-9.30pm/7pm registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Gavin Ralston

08 February 2017

- **Kent:** Ashford International Hotel, Courtyard Suite, Simone Weil Avenue, Ashford, TN24 8UX (7-9pm/6.30 registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Chaand Nagpaul
- **Surrey & Sussex:** Longley Suite, Arora Hotel, Southgate Avenue, Southgate, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 6LW (7.30-9.30pm/7pm registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Gavin Ralston
- **Hull:** Lazaat Hotel, Woodhill Way, Cottingham, East Yorkshire HU16 5SX (7.00-9.00pm/6.30pm registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Richard Vautrey
- **Wessex:** Holiday Inn, Telegraph Way, Morn Hill, Winchester, Hampshire SO21 1HX (7.30-9.30/6.45 Supper) – Speaker: Dr Mark Sanford-Wood

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- **Somerset:** Holiday Inn, Deane Gate Avenue, Taunton TA1 2UA (7.30-9.30/7pm registration and refreshments) – Speaker: Dr Mark Sanford-Wood

The BMA website will be updated with more roadshows as they are confirmed.

Expert witness conference - UK

The expert witness conference will take place on Friday 10 March at BMA House. This one-day conference, for all levels of experience, will cover the essentials of working competently as an expert witness. Mr Alex Leslie, RadcliffesLeBrasseur partner, will discuss the topic of when expert witnesses get it wrong. Mr Lynden Alexander, Professional Solutions, will provide tips on communication skills for experts. Mr Giles Eyre, 9 Gough Square barrister, will share good practice in medico-legal report writing. Mr Ron Miller, consultant urological surgeon will present on medical manslaughter. [For further information and to register please visit the BMA website.](#)

Private practice conference - UK

The private practice conference will take place on 5 April 2017 at BMA House. This event will look at the 'ins and outs' of private practice from the logistics of setting up a private practice for the first time, to making sure established practitioners are reaching their maximum potential. For new entrants to the private sector, the conference will offer a chance to network with colleagues who have already established and run successful practices. There is also a drinks reception straight after the conference, that delegates can attend. If you are interested in attending the event, [please register online at the BMA website.](#)

Junior members forum – 25 and 26 February - UK

The Junior members forum is a free-of-charge residential conference, which takes place in informal surroundings over a weekend, and gives you the chance to be heard on the matters that are important to you.

The JMF provides a unique opportunity for junior members to get involved with the BMA. The content of the agenda is shaped by issues important to those attending and the output can go on to become BMA policy and guide future work of the Association.

This year the theme of the JMF will be 'Healthcare access: quality and equity in uncertain times'. Attendees will hear from expert speakers and have opportunities to network with like-minded colleagues, as well as senior BMA leaders, from all branches of practice, discussing issues relevant to junior members. The conference will also:

- help you find out more about what the BMA does and how it works to support you in your career.
- help you to develop your debating skills on key issues for all doctors.
- offer the chance for you to contribute to BMA policy and start making a difference to the future of your profession.
-

Registration remains open for GPs until the end of January. Please find a link to the [registration page here](#).

BMA clinical academic trainees conference 2017 - UK

Saturday 4 February 2017

BMA House, London

The next BMA clinical academic trainees conference will take place on Saturday 4 February 2017 at BMA House, Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9JP.

Through a programme informed by the views of academic trainees from across the UK, this exciting one-day conference will provide a national forum in which to network, learn how to make the most of academic training and developing careers. Attendees will be able to gain practical advice from both experts and colleagues in the field, and personalise the programme to meet needs with a choice of workshops and parallel sessions geared to the different stages in an academic trainee's career. We hope to have sessions focussing on less than full time training, personal health and resilience, podcasts, patient and public involvement in research, mentoring, presentation skills, and leadership and management.

One of the key note speakers for 2017 will be Professor Azeem Majeed, professor of Primary Care and head of the Department of Primary Care and Public Health at Imperial College London and a GP principal in Clapham. Professor Majeed has been asked to reflect on his career and the helps and hindrances on the way.

To register your interest please simply reply to confunit@bma.org.uk and we will then notify you when registration opens shortly.

LMC observers at GPC meetings - UK

LMC observers are welcome to attend GPC UK and GPC England meetings. If your LMC would be interested in sending an observer, please contact Kathryn Reece (kreece@bma.org.uk). A maximum of three LMC observers may attend any one meeting.

GPC UK and GPC England will meet on the following dates in 2016/17. GPC meetings will commence at 10:00am and will usually finish at 5:00pm (never later than 6:00pm). Meetings are held at BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP.

Thursday 16 March 2017	GPC UK
Thursday 15 June 2017	GPC England
Thursday 20 July 2017	GPC England
Thursday 21 September 2017	GPC UK
Thursday 16 November 2017	GPC England
Thursday 18 January 2018	GPC England
Thursday 15 March 2018	GPC UK
Thursday 17 May 2018	GPC England

Please note that all travel and other expenses for LMC observers should be met by the relevant LMC.

LMC access to the BMA website - UK

It has been drawn to our attention that some LMCs may be having difficulty accessing the BMA website. All LMCs do have access, but need to use the login details registered for submitting conference motions. This may, however, be an individual's email address, registered to input conference motions only.

If you wish to create an office account, using the office email address as part of your login and a password that everyone can use, or if you are unsure of your current login details and password, please email Karen Day at kday@bma.org.uk and she will email you your relevant information.

LMCs – change of details - UK

If there are any changes to LMC personnel, addresses and other contact details, please can you email Karen Day with the changes at kday@bma.org.uk.

GPC UK next meets on 16 March 2017 and GPC England next meets on 15 June 2017. 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 for the GPC England meeting is 8 March 2017. It would be helpful if items could be emailed to Kathryn Reece at kreece@bma.org.uk. You may also like to use the GPC's listservers to exchange views and ideas.

GPC News

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. 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. Their details are available on the BMA website.

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