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## GPC meetings

The GPC met on 20 May 2010 and this newsletter provides a summary of the main items discussed.

It was recognised that holding GPC meetings in the afternoon and subcommittee meetings in the morning three times a year had contributed to an increase in effectiveness as well as a reduction in committee expenses, and it was therefore agreed that in October, December and March, GPC meetings would be held in the afternoon and subcommittee meetings would be held in the mornings.

## DDRB uplift

We expect a public announcement about the way this year's award will be distributed within the next few weeks. The government's decision to override the Review Body's recommendation and impose a 0.8% gross uplift, means that GP contractors will not have the full increase in their expenses met in 2010/11.

## **Pandemic flu**

The joint GPC / NHSE document, *Question and answers – the swine flu (H1N1) vaccination agreement*, has now been updated, and includes guidance on calculating the vaccinations uptake for the purpose of receiving patient survey threshold easements.

[The document is available on the BMA website.](#)

## **Patient survey**

The GPC has produced new guidance on the GP patient survey. [This can be accessed via the BMA website.](#)

## **Learning disabilities DES guidance**

The Department of Health (DH) has published guidance on the [learning disabilities \(LD\) DES which is available online.](#)

Following the introduction of the LD DES, the GPC requested that NHSE and the DH provide further guidance on the DES to assist with implementation. Unfortunately, although the guidance answers some of our concerns, many outstanding issues remain. The DH guidance has failed to address our concerns about the ambiguity in interpretation of the DES, the scope for room for unacceptable local variations in its implementation and the resulting potential for disagreements between GPs and PCTs to arise. A letter has been sent to Anne Williams, National Director for Learning Difficulties at the DH to raise these issues.

## **The Department of Health GP bulletin**

The format of the Department of Health's monthly GP and practice manager bulletin is changing. From April onwards, hard copies of the bulletin will no longer be posted out, so the DH is encouraging postal subscribers, or current non-subscribers, to sign up to the email version of the bulletin. If you would like to do this, please send your name, practice address and email addresses to: [dh\\_gp\\_subscription@etdsolutions.com](mailto:dh_gp_subscription@etdsolutions.com)

## **Dispensing doctors in England Cost of Service Inquiry (COSI)**

The Department of Health, with the full support and co-operation of the GPC and the Dispensing Doctors' Association, has commissioned PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to undertake detailed survey work on a number of practices to inform negotiations on the dispensing doctors' fee scale in the next few years. If you receive enquiries from constituent practices about this, we would be grateful if you would encourage their full co-operation.

## **Summary Care Record – Joint Statement from BMA/GPC and NHS Employers 4 May 2010**

The BMA/GPC has agreed a joint statement with NHS Employers, on behalf of the Department of Health and Connecting for Health (CfH), regarding the suspension of uploads to the SCR. This statement, below, is being sent to all SHAs by the Department of Health.

GPs and LMCs should note that uploads to the SCR should only take place where there has been agreement between PCTs and practices that patients have been adequately informed, and that practices have also been fully supported.

This agreement applies to areas working to implement the SCR prior to the "accelerated roll out" but have yet to upload patient data, as well as those deemed to be "accelerated".

CfH has agreed to work with the BMA to define an appropriate public awareness campaign, in addition to improving examples and templates for PCTs and practices to support public awareness and practice and professional involvement; further details will be available shortly.

DH will be writing to SHAs with a copy of the statement, these will be shared with the BMA/GPC and be circulated once we have received them.

### **BMA/NHSE joint statement on SCR Roll Out 4 May 2010**

CfH and BMA have agreed that the upload of information to the Summary Care Record should only take place in any practice once the practice and the PCT agree that patients have been adequately informed about the process and properly enabled to opt out should they wish. Practices must be fully supported and informed to upload data. Practices and PCTs must be satisfied that data are of an appropriate quality for sharing.

This will apply both to areas which were working to implement the SCR prior to the 'accelerated roll out' but have yet to upload patient data, as well as those practices in areas deemed to be "accelerated" and this status should not preclude uploads where agreement about adequate information has been reached.

CfH have agreed that they will continue to work with stakeholders including the BMA to improve the nationally available examples and templates for PCTs and practices to support public awareness, and practice and professional involvement. They have also agreed that the BMA and CfH will work jointly on what, within the constraints of current policy, constitutes an appropriate local campaign of public and professional awareness and practice support, in order to assist practices and PCTs in making decisions on whether local arrangements for public and professional information is sufficient.

SHAs are expected to ensure that their PCTs understand and implement appropriate communications arrangements.

## **Sessional GPs Representation Working Group**

The Sessional GPs Representation Working Group, which was set up to review the representation of sessional GPs at a national and local level, continues to make good progress. In order to support its work, it commissioned the BMA's Health Policy and Research Unit to carry out an extensive research project, taking in the views of sessional GPs, LMCs and external organisations. It expects to publish both its report on the representation of sessional GPs, and the findings from this research, shortly.

## **Notification of infectious diseases**

Under the Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984 (as amended), GPs are required to notify the proper officer of the local authority when they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a patient::

- has a notifiable disease as listed in Schedule 1 of the Act;
- has an infection (not listed in Schedule 1) which, in the view of the GP presents, or could present, a significant harm to human health; or
- is contaminated in a manner which, in the view of the GP, presents or could present significant harm to human health.

[Guidance on the amended Act is available online](#) and includes a list of notifiable diseases at table 1.

There was previously a nominal fee set out in the Act for such notification, however this fee has now been removed by recent regulations. Nevertheless, GPs must still continue to notify.

The BMA was consulted on the removal of the fee and objected to it. However, the legislative change was made.

## **GPC regional election**

Dr Alan Dow has been elected to represent Wigan and Bolton / Bury and Rochdale / West Pennine on GPC. His three year term will begin in July 2010.

## **Co-options to GPC**

In order to ensure that that sessional GPs are appropriately represented on GPC, four members of the sessional GPs subcommittee will be co-opted as voting members on GPC for the 2010-2011 session.

GPC members also agreed to co-opt an additional prison doctor onto GPC for the 2010-11 session to support the transition of representation of prison doctors from the BMA's Civil and Public Services Committee to the GPC.

## Services for GPs from the BMA library

The BMA library provides expert medical information services to members and staff and specialises in current clinical practice, medical ethics and education.

The library's extensive collections of books and journals are supplemented by audio visual materials and a growing collection of e-books and e-journals.

The library offers a postal loans service, rapid document delivery, online search services and courses on finding medical information online.

The library can also help with the following:

- Over 400 e-books and 50 e-journals online
- Articles delivered to your desktop
- Free Medline searches
- Library courses to support your development
- Core clinical texts and DVDs
- New career and professional issues book collection
- Expert support from the library team.

Email the library with any enquiries on [bma-library@bma.org.uk](mailto:bma-library@bma.org.uk), call 020 7383 6625 or [visit our website](#).

## The Claire Wand Fund

The Claire Wand Fund is a trust working to provide grants for research and the further education of doctors working in general practice. Grants can be given towards the cost of administrative assistance, for stationery costs, conference fees, dissemination of information and travel costs if the project cannot be undertaken in the UK.

Awards are generally granted for sums up to £2,000 and trustees meet in May and December to consider applications.

To apply please contact the Secretary, Mrs Jane Cope, Claire Wand Fund, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP. Email: [Clairewandfund@bma.org.uk](mailto:Clairewandfund@bma.org.uk).

## Media coverage report

Please find attached (appendix 1) a GPC media coverage report prepared by the BMA's press office, detailing GPC media activity during the last few weeks.

**The GPC next meets on 15 July 2010, 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 7 July 2010. It would be helpful if items could be emailed to Julie Goodway at [jgoodway@bma.org.uk](mailto:jgoodway@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](http://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