

GPC News

Friday 17 October 2008

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GPC meeting

The GPC met on 16 October 2008 and this newsletter provides a summary of the main items discussed.

Report on main negotiating issues

Please find attached (appendix 1) the written report from the GPC negotiators submitted to the committee ahead of the meeting and revised in the light of the updates given at the meeting.

2009/10 Contract negotiations

On Tuesday 14 October announcements were made regarding agreements made with NHS Employers regarding a ratio formula for distribution of the DDRB recommendations for 2009/10, the changes to QOF and prevalence within the QOF. The proposals have now been signed off by all parties, namely the GPC, NHS Employers and the Health Departments.

A joint letter outlining the agreement has been sent to the DDRB and more detailed papers regarding the changes to the contract and QOF have also been agreed. All GPs have been notified of the position via a letter from GPC Chairman, Laurence Buckman:
www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/gmsconletter14Oct2008

It has come to light that there is some inconsistency in terminology in the letter to the profession and within the accompanying letter of agreement regarding the ratio formula. The factor in the formula which has been allocated two-nineteenths should be described throughout as global sum plus correction factor. The necessary amendments are being made and the versions of all documentation on the website will be corrected.

The joint NHS/GPC letter regarding changes to the contract can be found on the BMA website here:
www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/gmsagreeOct08

The joint GPC-NHSE letter to the DDRB is available at the following link:

www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/PayRecommendsOct08

The QOF agreement is available here:

www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/QoFChangesOct08

Negotiations on changing the mechanism for calculating seniority pay are ongoing but any changes are outwith this package.

2006/07 GP Earnings and Expenses Enquiry

The 2006/07 GP Earnings and Expenses Enquiry was published on Wednesday 15 October, showing the predicted decrease in average net profit for contracted GPs of 2.1% (2.6% decrease for GMS and 1.5% decrease for PMS GPs). Clearly further losses are predicted for 2007/08 and 2008/09, which the BMA estimates will lead to a further cumulative loss at 8.2%. This is in line with what was expected and a reflection of the fact that practices are having to cope with very real cuts in their resources. These figures will be used in supplementary evidence to the Review Body to make a robust case for a fair uplift for GPs for 2009/10.

Although the methodology differs from last year and thus makes a comparison impossible, the average income for salaried GPs had increased and it is hoped that this is a reflection of practices paying salaried GPs in line with the DDRB recommendations.

Pensions

The outstanding dynamising factors (DF) have now been agreed.

The percentage increases are as follows:

2003/04 12.9% (DF of 1.129)

2004/05 20.4% (DF of 1.204)

2005/06 11.6% (DF of 1.116)

2006/07 0% (DF of 1)

2007/08 0% (DF of 1)

The cumulative dynamising increase for this period is therefore 52%; the Secretary of State had attempted to cap the figure at 48%, spread over five years.

The EEQ data show a negative growth in GPs' net profit in the year 2006/07 and it is assumed that this will also be the case for 2007/08. The dynamising factor for this period was based on the percentage annual increase in GPs' profit, with the safeguard that the dynamising factor would never be negative. This is why there is no dynamising increase in these years. The dynamising factor from 2008/09 onwards will be based on RPI +1.5%.

GPs who retired during this period, in particular up to March 2006 in the expectation of the dynamising increases, will therefore be due an increase to their pension and lump sum. The BMA pensions department is working closely with the NHS pensions agencies and it is hoped that the backdated increases will be paid in the first quarter of 2009.

Dispensing doctors consultation in England

The GPC considered its response to the Department of Health's consultation on the future of GP dispensing and is firmly of the view that there should be no change to the existing rules. The deadline for responses is 20 November and a briefing on how practices and LMCs should respond will be issued shortly.

In the meantime, the Department of Health has arranged a series of 'Listening Events' around England, the details of which were circulated on the LMC listserver last month and which are now fully booked.

The GPC and GPDF have arranged a number of roadshows to inform GPs and practice managers about the consultation document and process, led by Dr Russell Walshaw, the GPC's lead for dispensing matters and Secretary of East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire LMCs. The first meeting, held on 14 October, in Cambridge was very well attended and we are grateful to Cambridgeshire LMC for arranging such a successful event.

There will be two further meetings, the details of which are below and we are grateful to YOR LMC Ltd and Worcestershire LMC Ltd for agreeing to arrange these meetings.

Wednesday 29 October 2008

7:30pm (sandwich buffet available from 7:00pm)
Village Hotel & Leisure Club
186 Otley Road, Headingley, Leeds, LS16 5PR

If you wish to book a place, please contact:

Deborah Johnson
YOR Local Medical Committee Limited (YORLMC Ltd)
Email: info@yorlmc.co.uk
Telephone: 01423 879922

Monday, 10 November 2008

7.00 p.m. Bartlett Suite, Pear Tree Inn at Smite, Worcester, WR3 8SY (Just off junction 6 off the M5). The meeting will commence at 7.00 p.m. but refreshments will be available from 6.30 p.m. onwards. The meeting will begin as soon after 7.00 p.m. as possible for approximately 2 hours.

Please contact Michelle Hallahan at Worcestershire LMC, details below, no later than Friday, 31 October 2008.

Michelle Hallahan
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Worcestershire Local Medical Committee Ltd
T: 01527 65082
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Urgent and emergency care

The Healthcare Commission has produced a review of urgent and emergency care service in England, 'Not just a matter of time'. In many respects, this review is an improvement on the document published by the Department of Health in 2006. The Healthcare Commission report

makes the proper distinction between urgent and emergency care and also highlights the important role that GPs play in the delivery of this care. The GPC is considering this document in detail.

The review can be found on the Healthcare Commission website, here:

www.healthcarecommission.org.uk/guidanceforhealthcarestaff/nhsstaff/annualhealthcheck/reviewsandstudiesofservices/2007/08/urgent/emergencycare.cfm

Primary care federations

The Royal College of General Practitioners has published a consultation document regarding the development of primary care federations. The BMA supports the RCGP concept of practice federation, providing it is also supported by PCTs. The RCGP is considering a wide range of responses to its consultation. The GPC is in the process of developing guidance to assist federated practices.

The RCGP proposals can be viewed here:

www.rcgp.org.uk/pdf/Primary%20Care%20Federations%20document.pdf

Media coverage report

Please find attached (appendix 2) 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 20 November 2008, 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 11 November. It would be helpful if items could be emailed to Catharina Ohman-Smith at cohman-smith@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