

CLMC Bulletin 337 – 21.11.17

eRS (electronic referrals)

We have had a number of practices contact us following correspondence from both Trusts in Tees advising they will be 'switching off paper referrals'; suggesting from the 1 March 2018 they will only accept paper referrals. CLMC has been in contact with both CCGs to voice our concerns and to highlight this is well ahead of the nationally negotiated 1 October 2018 deadline. We understand that the earlier implementation has been put in place as NHS D have adopted a rolling programme over the year as it is not practical to switch every system on the 1 October given the support that is required. This issue is not unique to Tees and is raising debate across England.

We understand this pressure is coming from NHS E and NHS Digital rather than the CCGs who both wanted to add their own flavour to the message that was sent to better engage GPs but this was driven by NHS E/D who would not permit changes. Both CCGs want to help practices move towards electronic referrals and are holding events to bring the Trusts and practices together to better communicate, understand and explore how this can work.

CLMC have been very clear that, at this time, there is no contractual obligation upon practices to utilise entirely electronic referrals and it would be inappropriate for referrals to be declined if they are made in another format. That said, there are some benefits to utilising electronic referrals – not least patient safety – but all parties need to find a way to work towards this together rather than it being imposed upon general practice. CLMC have also been very clear that there must be a backup paper approach should electronic referral not be possible for whatever reason – be it practice choice or IT malfunction.

Bearing in mind this pressure is being exerted upon CCGs by NHS E/, CLMC have contacted the programme lead and we have a meeting set up next week. We will be raising all our concerns and looking to find a way forward. We are clear there is no obligation upon practices and they need to ensure that all stakeholders are happy before continuing – it is no point in engaging with those who accept the referrals when they have not engaged with those who are making them! We will keep you updated.

Extension of Flu Programme – Enhanced Service

NHS England has announced that for the 2017/18 flu season, the delivery of flu immunisation will be extended to include social care workers that offer direct patient care – the [enhanced service](#) is now available and should be sent to practices soon..

The [influenza vaccine PGD template](#) has been amended to include the vaccination of health and social care staff, employed by a registered residential care/nursing home or registered domiciliary care provider, who are directly involved in the care of vulnerable patients/clients who are at increased risk from exposure to influenza, meaning those patients/clients in a clinical risk group (see [Appendix A](#)) or aged 65 years and over.

Note that the previous version (v04.00) is not being formally withdrawn in order to ensure continuity of service and may still be used this season (until 31 March 2018). However, this new version of the PGD will be needed to vaccinate health and social care staff in line with the NHS commissioned service when it is commenced.

Care workers can also access the flu vaccine via their community pharmacy, further information is available on the [NHS England website](#).

The GPC's [vaccinations and immunisations page](#) has been updated with links to the PGD and enhanced service.

Hep A & Hep A/B Vaccine PGDs

Public Health England has published the following [PGD templates](#) on their website:

- Hep A, which supports the provision of hepatitis A vaccine to individuals considered at high risk of exposure to hepatitis A or post exposure to hepatitis A virus
- Hep A/B vaccine, which supports the provision of Hep A/B vaccine to individuals over one year of age requiring pre-exposure immunisation against hepatitis A and B virus.
- Hep A/B vaccine (Temp) PGD, which has been issued for use during the global shortage of hepatitis vaccine affecting UK supply. It supports the administration of Hep A/B vaccine to individuals requiring pre-exposure or post-exposure immunisation against hepatitis A or B virus in accordance with PHE temporary dose sparing advice, to preserve and prioritise monovalent hepatitis vaccine stock for those with the greatest ability to benefit and highest immediate need.

These PGD templates require organisational authorisation in line with HMR2012 before they are legally valid PGDs. It is advised that PHE PGD templates are organisationally authorised in accordance with local procedures before sharing with providers.

These, along with all the other immunisation PGD templates, are available on the [PHE website](#), and a link has also been added to the GPC's [PGD guidance page](#).

Request for Medical records from the Police

This [updated pro forma](#) (original pro forma was distributed in June 2017) is for practices that receive requests for medical records from the police.

Following discussions with the NPCC (National Police Chief's Council) regarding signing off GPC have agreed that the level of police seniority that GPC recommend to GPs to obtain before considering releasing medical records to the police is lowered from Superintendent to Inspector. GPC have restated to the NPCC the need for any request from the police for medical records is only made when absolutely necessary.

Please note that this is the only change to the guidance that has been made.

Sessional GPs Working in New Models of Care

The Sessional GPs subcommittee (working with the Health Policy team) has published [this new focus on document](#) for salaried GPs working under new models of care.

Supporting GP Trainees and Training Practices

[This additional guidance](#) was developed to support GP Trainees and GP Practices with understanding the new 2016 junior doctor contract.

In addition to previous guidance, GPC have uploaded an example work template that incorporates OOH working, a practice FAQ and a document comparing the new 2016 contract with the previous 2002 one.

BMA Winter Pressures and Wellbeing Campaign

The BMA has launched a campaign to highlight the importance of looking after yourself while working under winter pressures. More information, including two month's free access to the mindfulness app Headspace, as well as links to the [BMA's counselling and doctor advisor service](#), are available on the [BMA's wellbeing pages](#).

Saving General Practice

GPC England has produced a report, [Saving General Practice](#). It focuses on the need for urgent action to address the funding deficit impacting general practice, the requirement for a sustainable expansion of the workforce, the importance of a strategy for reducing workload pressures, the need to remove the burden of the current indemnity system, to deliver IT and premises solutions fit for modern healthcare and to build this on the foundation of the national GMS contract.

STP Webinar

The BMA held a webinar for members about STPs, how they are developing and the challenges they pose. This webinar is now available to view on the [BMA's webcast library](#) (no log in required).

Clare Wand Fund

The Claire Wand Fund is a charitable fund that makes grants to General Practitioners (GPs) to fund further education and for the provision of scholarships, including traveling scholarships. The fund welcomes applications twice a year, at least three weeks prior to the April and October trustee meetings.

Please note that the next meeting of the Trustees is on **24 April 2018**. An application form can be downloaded from www.clairewandfund.org.uk. The deadline for the 2018 Trevor Silver Memorial Essay competition is the **31 July 2018**.

Please email your essay and a brief CV to clairewandfund@bma.org.uk, at any point before the deadline date.

Antimicrobial Resistance

The BMA's Science and Public Health team and International team have published new web content on *Antimicrobial resistance*, relating to an ARM resolution on the topic from this year, which is available on the [BMA website](#). There is a blog from Dr Andrew Green available [here](#).

The GPC Public Affairs team has published a briefing ahead of a Parliamentary Debate about the antibiotics awareness week on Thursday 16 November, which is available on [this page](#). The BMA has also supported a video aimed at members of the public and created by the Antimicrobial Alliance, which will be available on the website shortly.