

CLMC Bulletin 443 – 08/12/20

COVID-19 vaccination programme (CVP) national guidance

(CLMC have provided a Q&A document via email to support practices in finding the answers to questions that have been raised locally, regionally and nationally. We have also issued specific advice on the Enhanced Service Contract and are currently exploring specific legal advice on the generic Collaboration Agreement document)

COVID-19 vaccination programme specifications and guidance

Following the agreement between GPC England and NHSE/I for general practice to play a leading role in the delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination programme, GPC have been negotiating the detail of the [Enhanced Service Specifications](#), which have now been re-published to include modifications following discussion with MHRA and to ensure patients from non-participating practices can be provided vaccinations, alongside a letter that responds to many of the issues raised by practices and highlighted at the recent LMC England conference. This does though continue to be a very fluid and fast changing situation as more information becomes available about vaccine availability and the logistics of delivery. **NHSE/I have provided further information this evening, including details on the first wave of vaccinations and a collaborative agreement. All details can be seen [here](#).**

We understand that 100% of practices with Tees have signed to the specification and will be provided at least 10 days' notice of the first vaccines becoming available. It is now important that practice have the appropriate governance and arrangements in place to safely deliver the programme and that all practices actively engage, ensuring you pro-actively seek up to date information and respond accordingly. Please see the note below about the collaboration agreement which will be a key part to ensuring the correct governance is in place.

NHSE/I have published more [information](#) about the first practices to deliver covid vaccinations as Wave 1 providers. Approximately 280 practice group sites are to be the 'Wave 1' providers and selection of these sites was largely be based on the areas where there are the highest number of people aged 80 or more, and where the sites are ready to start within the timescales. Those practices who were put forward as potential sites have now received confirmation if they were 'successful'. GPC expect these sites to be fully supported by their local systems to enable the successful delivery of this first wave of vaccinations. We will also offer them all the support necessary.

These initial sites should receive a box of 975 Pfizer BioNTech vaccines on or close to 14th December, to enable them to start vaccinating from the following day. Following the regulatory requirements set by MHRA they will need to use the vaccine within 3.5 days, not the previously suggested 5 days, and so need to ensure patients are invited to attend within that timescale. All patients will need to be offered a second appointment 21 days afterwards for their second vaccination. Vaccines are being held back nationally to ensure they are available to provide this second dose.

NHSEI has written to sites identified as part of Wave 1, setting out full details of vaccine supply dates, delivery of other consumables and equipment to the site, and the process for assuring readiness before delivery of vaccines. This will include a delivery of IT equipment necessary to deliver the programme and a fridge for each site. Access to necessary training will be provided and sites will be given full support to mobilise within the timescale.

The short timescale for delivery of this vaccine means that practices will need to re-prioritise and postpone other activities, such as non-essential health checks and reviews, in order to focus on the Covid-19 vaccination programme, particularly with the short period in which the vaccine will need to be used. Practice vaccination teams will need to work in core hours and therefore cannot be available for other more routine activity at the same time. GPC believe that patients will appreciate this prioritisation and that CCGs and NHSE/I must support practices in doing this.

Sir Simon Stevens stated around 1000 GP group sites had indicated their willingness to take part in Wave 1 of the programme. Once the vaccine becomes more widely available these other community sites will be able to start vaccinating. They will also be given at least 10 days notice of this.

COVID-19 Vaccination Collaboration Agreement

The draft national Agreement has been published and can be found [here](#). This is designed to support the delivery of the CVP by setting out the responsibilities and relationships between collaborating practices. GPC England has had legal support to scrutinise the document and is satisfied that it is fit for purpose, being in line with other similar collaboration agreements already in place.

CLMC is exploring legal advice on the general elements of the Agreement on behalf of practices to ensure that it is robust and picks up important clauses such as the financial arrangements, liabilities, managing potential clawbacks and managing disputes. **If you are interested in exploring/receiving this legal advice please do email janice.foster@nhs.net**. Depending on the arrangements you have in place it could be that further specific advice needs to be sought in linking with your PCN Network Agreement arrangements but we will try to cover the generic GMS contract links and practice relationship links.

Wessex LMC have shared an excellent presentation about the vaccinations from Professor Saul Faust, the lead investigator for the Southampton arm of the Oxford AstraZeneca trial. To watch it - [click here](#)

PHE Guidance for healthcare professionals delivering the COVID-19 vaccine

Public Health England has published [guidance for healthcare professionals who will deliver the COVID-19 vaccine](#) which includes information about the vaccines (as they become available), vaccine recommendations and eligibility, contraindications and precautions, and vaccine administration issues.

PHE has also published a new [COVID-19 chapter in the Green Book](#) which has guidance on the vaccine, provisional priority groups, advice on high risk groups and on potential adverse effects, which current evidence suggests are mild and short-term.

GPC guidance on the COVID-19 vaccine programme

The GPC [guidance page about the COVID-19 vaccination programme](#) has been updated to and has FAQs throughout to answer questions from practices. GPC continue to update this regularly, as and when new information becomes available, so please refer back to this guidance page.

GPC have also published [guidance on how practices can utilise extra workforce](#) to deliver the COVID-19 vaccine programme. Members of staff already qualified to provide vaccinations are likely to be the main part of the workforce administering vaccine in general practice, and most of the programme should be delivered by staff other than GPs, who will be more useful in other areas.

The BMA are also calling for the prioritisation of those at the greater risk, including those with underlying health conditions and those of a BAME background, when vaccinations are rolled out. Read the full statement [here](#)

Accessing your GP animation

To support general practice, the NHSE/I has created [an animation to help explain to the public how they can continue to access GP services](#), including how to get in contact, the different ways care may be delivered, and how face-to-face appointments have changed.

Christmas and New Year period

As highlighted in the [NHSE/I primary care bulletin](#) this week, general practices are not expected to open for delivery of core services over the weekend and bank holidays for this coming Christmas and New Year period. Local commissioners and primary care providers can therefore continue to plan on the basis of their planned cover arrangements.

This followed the concerns that GPC had raised of the importance of all those working in general practice needing time off during the Christmas bank holiday to rest after the difficult year we've had.

Guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people

As of 2 December, lockdown ended in England and [returned to a regionally differentiated three-tiered system](#). Due to this, the government has sent [a letter](#) this week with updated guidance to all clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) people on the Shielded Patient List.

In each tier, there is a set of rules that everyone in that area must follow. The letter, which sets out the new guidance, no longer advises CEV people to stay away from work or school, but does suggest limiting the number of social interactions. Read the government's [guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people at each local tier](#).

The DHSC has also announced that people on the CEV list and those in residential and nursing care homes [will receive free winter supply of Vitamin D](#) to help support general health, in particular bone and muscle health, during the winter months, which is even more important for those that have been shielding and may not have been able to obtain enough vitamin D from sunlight.

NHS Digital has published [letter templates for high-risk patients](#) for use by GPs when notifying patients newly identified as clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19.

GPC have also updated their [guidance about clinically extremely vulnerable people](#).

GP trainees mileage payment

NHS Employers and the BMA have published joint [guidance](#) for the reimbursement of home to principle place of work mileage for trainees in a GP practice. The guidance will provide the necessary information for employing organisations on operationalising the current provisions in the absence of an updated version of the terms and conditions. This is applicable to both back dated and future claims.

Institute of General Practice Management

A new organisation representing Practice Managers has now been formed and is called *Institute of General Practice Management*. A website is currently being designed by Wessex LMCs and there is currently a Facebook page (Institute of General Practice Management) and twitter @TheIGPM. The next webinar for all PMs is on Wednesday 16th December at 5.00 p.m. – all this information is on the Facebook page and twitter.

Integrated Care Systems consultation

Following the publication of the NHSE/I [consultation](#) about the next steps for ICSs, which raises some fundamental issues about how the NHS will be structured and work in the future, Richard Vautrey was quoted in an [article by the BMJ](#) saying that the changes offered an opportunity to “undo some of the damage” caused by the 2012 NHS reforms, but warned, “This must not be done in a way that is counter productive, and we have serious concerns about the risk of vertical integration, which would lead to an end to the independent contractor model for general practice.” I also stressed the crucial role that LMCs should play in enabling the voice of all GPs to be heard at all levels within a regional structure.

CLMC will be formulating a response to the consultation along with the Regional LMC. If you would like to submit any comments/feedback for us to build into our response, please email janice.foster@nhs.net and we will ensure your thoughts are captured. Please do also feed into the consultation directly as a practice and/or as an individual.

Conference of England LMCs 2020

The virtual England LMC Conference took place 27 November 2020. [This document](#) details the conference resolutions, election results and motions lost.

You can watch Richard Vautrey's, GPC Chair, speech to the conference [here](#) and the webcast of the conference is available [here](#). All of these, including the [agenda](#), are also available on the [BMA website](#).

Watch some edited highlights from the conference on the [BMA GP twitter page](#)

The [BMJ](#) reported on the motion which called for partners to receive same pay rise as salaried colleagues.

CQC review of the use of do not resuscitate decisions during COVID-19

The CQC has produced this [briefing](#) clarifying how it will be undertaking a [DHSC requested review](#) of the use of 'do not resuscitate' decisions during COVID-19 (made after 17 March 2020).

Some practices have already raised concerns regarding CQC 'spot checks' or communications from CCGs. Please note that these reviews are not CQC practice inspections and reports of review visits will not be published. If CQC do find examples in records which raise concerns about the way DNACPR decisions were made it will feed this back to the practice and to the CCG. CQC will also provide information to its local CQC inspection team as part of their routine monitoring.

GPC recently wrote to Matt Hancock calling for an immediate suspension of all CQC inspections and reviews of general practice (other than those required for serious safety issues) for the duration of the pandemic to enable practices to focus on other priorities, not least the COVID-19 vaccination programme. This was also reported by [BBC news online](#).

Cameron Fund Christmas Appeal

This year and subsequent years will be difficult for the [Cameron Fund](#), which is the only medical benevolent fund that solely supports GPs and their dependents, as the Fund faces increased pressure from those affected by the COVID crisis and a reduced income from investments. As such, they have launched a Christmas appeal to try and raise more money for the Fund to be able to help more GPs in need. Read more in [this letter](#) from Dr Ian Winterton, Cameron Fund Treasurer and on the [Cameron Fund website](#).

Parental leave webinar and workshop

GPC will be hosting a workshop for [GPs on parental leave](#) next week, 9 December from 12.30pm – 2.30pm – *Workshop - 'GP maternity'*. Register [here](#)

If you would like to submit questions in advance to be covered at either session, please contact Christopher Scott via cscott@bma.org.uk

Mental health and wellbeing – looking after you and your practice team

Leadership Support Circles (National Autumn Offer 2020-2021)

Leadership Support Circles are part of the National Health and Wellbeing response to Covid19 to support the wellbeing of #OurNHSpeople. They provide evidence-based guidance and tools in a series of short, themed and interactive online sessions based on 10 principles for leading compassionately. Leadership Support Circles are a reflective space for managers at all levels to come together in a multi-disciplinary setting to share their experiences and be heard. Further information and how to register click the link [here](#)

GP appraisal leads and GP tutors offer of telephone support conversations remain for any GP who feels they would like to talk through any aspect of their professional/personal life that has been affected by Covid. To organise a telephone support conversation, either with the appraisal lead or with a GP tutor, please contact the appraisal team, or email di.jelley@nhs.net

Crisis Coaching & Mentoring: [Coaching and mentoring sessions are available now](#) for all NHS and Health and Social Care leaders. Delivered by The Centre for Army Leadership and Meyler Campbell Coaching, these sessions are designed to support with the huge pressure on the ability of the NHS to deliver safe, high-quality care, sharpen focus on meeting the core needs of staff, ensuring wellbeing and sustained motivation to deal with this rapidly changing situation. The intervention will give leaders an understanding of crisis leadership that goes beyond what is necessary, and focused on engagement and motivation through Covid19. Further information and how to register [see link here](#)

CLMC continue to [offer wellbeing services via Validium](#) for **ALL working in general practice** within Tees (including locums). We understand that a number of staff have accessed this confidential service and it has been well received. It will remain in place until at least 1 April 2021.

The BMA's report on the [mental health and wellbeing of the medical workforce](#) which sets out ten recommendations to be addressed to protect staff during the pandemic and in the future. The BMA continues to offer [wellbeing services](#) and **confidential 24/7 counselling and peer support** for all doctors and medical students, as well as their partners and dependents, on 0330 123 1245. For hard copies of the Wellbeing [poster](#), please email wellbeingsupport@bma.org.uk

There is also a wealth of NHSE provided [support available](#) to you and your team including a **wellbeing support helpline**, a **24/7 text alternative**, **[peer to peer, team and personal resilience support](#)**, free mindfulness apps and the **[#LookingAfterYouToo coaching offer](#)**.

GPC GP Bulletin

See this week's GP bulletin [here](#).