

ARM 2022

The [BMA's Annual Representative Meeting \(ARM\)](#) brought meaningful discussion, debate and strong representation on behalf of the medical profession. A motion calling on GPC England and the BMA to organise the withdrawal of GP practices from the PCNs by 2023, was passed. It's clear from this result that there are ever-growing concerns about how well PCNs are actually working, and whether all practices can provide the safe, quality care they want to for their patients within the constraints of the current NHS-system as organised. GPC England will discuss how to enact this new policy at its next meeting in July.

In addition, other motions of relevance to general practice were debated on GP estates, [doctors' right to switch-off](#) to be able to recuperate, and greater awareness of the prevalence of abuse towards healthcare staff.

Read the reports from the GPCs across the UK, including GPC England, [here](#).

Read about the highlights and resolutions from the ARM [here](#)

Read the news stories from the ARM [here](#)

Tees Valley Primary Care Training Hub newsletter

You can view the June edition of the Tees Valley Training Hub Newsletter [here](#)

Important FREE Training, Breakaway training

Practices may recall the winter pressures security funding that was made available to all practices in November. CLMC entered a bid on behalf of all practices across Tees Valley and was successful in obtaining NHSE funding to provide breakaway training.

CLMC proposed this training following calls and concerns of practices due to the increase of abuse practice teams were facing from patients and very valid concerns that, in utilising panic buttons, there was a risk that staff members could unwittingly enter a room with physical confrontation without adequate training to safely disengage. Practices have experienced an increase in physical abuse of practice staff which cannot be tolerated and should be actively denounced.

Working with the Tees Valley Training Hub, who of course are the experts in sourcing and providing training, CLMC are pleased to provide free courses available to all practice staff. Places are limited and will be on a first come first serve basis but waiting lists will be held.

Further details and links for bookings are available [here](#)

NHSE Primary Care Policy and Guidance Manual updates, including template zero tolerance policies and warning letters for inappropriate patient behaviour

Further to the increase of abuse and inappropriate behaviour experienced in practices, NHS have updated their [Primary Care Policy and Guidance Manual](#). There is a new chapter (chapter 6) which covers how practices should manage non – violent inappropriate and unacceptable patient behaviours including templates for behaviour agreements and warning letters etc, along with examples of what could be included in zero tolerance policies. Practices who are experiencing difficulties or are needing to implement behaviour agreements may find this useful.

There are also some updates within chapter 7 (the Special Allocation Scheme (SAS) chapter) including how a practice notifies the commissioner that a patient needs to go onto an SAS. This is still done via PCSE but is now done via an online form completed by the practice rather than a form sent via email.

Fees calculator

A reminder about the BMA's [Fees calculator](#), which helps doctors decide how much to charge for their services based on their own circumstances. The Fees calculator uses your overheads to calculate a fee range for the time it takes to complete a piece of work. The calculations are specific to you, and you can see what rates you would need to charge to make sure your costs are covered. You can find out more about [how the tool can help you save money and save time](#).

Letter from GP for travel with medication

It has been brought to GPC attention that some [airlines](#) are advising travellers bringing medication in their hand luggage, should bring a letter from their medical practitioner confirming the type of medication and what it is for.

GPC will raise this issue with the airline, but in the meantime, remind practices that patients can print off their medical record from the NHS app, or alternatively, practices are able to charge for travel-related requests for information.

Fit note update

From 1 July, new legislation comes into force which allows nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists, and physiotherapists to legally certify fit notes, in addition to doctors. To support this, the government has published [guidance](#) to help individuals and employers identify the knowledge, skills and experience required to certify fit notes. A new training package is also [available](#) and should be completed before taking up this task - this is freely accessible for all healthcare professionals. There is a rollout period where GP IT systems will be updated to reflect the change.

CVD enhanced service specification

NHS England have now published an updated [enhanced service specification for the Covid 19 vaccination programme](#), alongside a [covering letter](#). Practices should note that the programme from September will pay a reduced Item of Service fee of £10.06 per dose. As a result, GPC strongly recommend that practices review the impact that this funding reduction will have on their ability to undertake the enhanced service. Practices should also be aware that the deadline if they do decide to sign up for the service is 5pm on 14 July.

Warning over GPs leaving NHS

In response to the [Royal College of GP's report 'Fit for the Future'](#) and its warning that England could lose almost 19,000 GPs over the next five years, Dr Kieran Sharrock, GPC England deputy chair, said:

"This stark warning from the College is one that the Government can ill afford to ignore. The number of fully-qualified GPs is already plummeting, meaning each day more people are losing 'their family doctor', and such projections lay bare the potentially devastating impact for both the NHS and patients if politicians and policymakers fail to act.

The RCGP has laid out a number of areas that need urgent attention, many of which the BMA has raised continuously. Ministers must work with the profession and organisations such as the BMA and RCGP to come to workable solutions that protect general practice so that doctors and GP teams have the capacity to provide the standard of care that patients deserve." Read the [full statement](#)

Rebuild General Practice: support the campaign

The [Rebuild general practice campaign](#) continues to tackle the crisis facing general practice. The campaign has been building awareness of the key issues in the media, with the public and with politicians. We need your support to amplify the message and make the campaign a success.

Parliamentary event

On 15 June, GPC hosted a drop-in event attended by 21 MPs to raise awareness of the challenges facing general practice. This was a real opportunity to influence policymakers, and we are pleased that so many MPs were able to join Drs Kieran Sharrock, Katie Bramall-Stainer, Rachel Ward, John Canning and Rob Barnett on the day. You can see coverage and photographs of the event on the [Rebuild General Practice Twitter feed](#)

Access to GP Services – House of Commons debate

There was an opposition day debate in the House of Commons on access to GP Services and NHS Dentistry. During the debate a number of MPs, including Shadow Secretary of State, Wes Streeting raised concerns about demand for GP services outstripping the number of GPs. The BMA and GPC concerns were raised a number of times by MPs during the debate particularly in relation to GP abuse being a driving factor for those leaving the profession or retiring early, and the need to address sponsorship issues to support international trainee GPs to stay in UK. The wider debate included a range of topics such as pensions, retention, mental health support, wider general practice staff, community pharmacy, workforce planning and funding. Read the debate transcript in full [here](#).

BMA calls for independent review of the GMC referral pathway

Following the GMC's decision not to challenge Dr Arora's tribunal appeal and call for her one month suspension to be dropped by the High Court, the BMA has repeated its call for independent review of the GMC referral pathway. In response to this, Dr Chaand Nagpaul, chair of BMA council, said:

"The fact that the GMC has effectively overturned Dr Arora's suspension shows that the current system is structurally disproportionate, with insufficient checks and balances, and is manifestly unjust. While this is the right response, it does not address the systemic flaws in the entire referral pathway to the GMC—ranging from the decision by an employer to refer, through to the decision to investigate, the process of investigation and finally the tribunal hearing.

This is precisely why the BMA is calling for a root and branch independent evaluation of the entire GMC referral pathway. The immediate safeguard of an external scrutiny panel is needed to assess each potential employer referral to ensure that it is fair and objective, and consider whether the issue could be more appropriately dealt with locally and swiftly. Nothing less will secure justice or fairness in medical regulation." Read the BMA statement [here](#)

New BMA Council Chair

The BMA has elected Professor Philip Banfield as its next UK [council](#) chair. Professor Phil Banfield is an obstetrician, educator and academic based in north Wales. He is currently the chair of the BMA Welsh Consultants Committee, is the immediate past chair of the BMA Welsh Council and has been on UK Council since 2012. He lives in Wales, is married to a GP, and has a son who is also a GP.

Professor Banfield will serve a three-year term, providing overall leadership in developing and implementing the policies, objectives, and strategies of the BMA. He takes up his post with immediate effect. Read his statement [here](#)

Validium and supportive documents July 2022

The seventh month of resources for employees (and potentially useful for patients) has been released by Validium, the NENC Regional LMC commissioned provider of mental health and wellbeing services.

You know what they say, "life is better with friends and family." This month, in honour of World Friendship Day, we're celebrating the importance of relationships to our wellbeing.

Infographics

- [What to say to someone dealing with isolation](#) - If you know someone isolating themselves, here's what to say to help them feel supported.
- [Fun, free activities to try across the UK](#) - Searching for ways to boost your mental health outdoors? Look no further!

Guides

- [Simple, easy to cook summer sharing recipes](#) - These sharing recipes are a great way to connect with friends and family this summer.
- [I have social anxiety but still want to socialise](#) - Simple steps for preventing fears and worries around social situations.

Animated Short

- [The 7 pillars of inclusion, and what they mean](#) - A guide to creating an inclusive working environment where everyone feels welcome.

Healthwatch South Tees Annual Reports

The final annual reports for 2021-2022 on the links below share where and what Healthwatch South Tees have influenced, based on what local communities have told them, over the year.

- [Healthwatch Middlesbrough Annual Report 2021-2022](#)
- [Healthwatch Redcar and Cleveland Annual Report 2021-2022](#)

Healthwatch South Tees would welcome any feedback from you from a delivery perspective or would like to hear if any of the contents influence your priorities or decision making going forward.

If you would like to receive their monthly ebulletin with updates of work, local opportunities and activities, please click the link [here](#). Or you can get in touch on the contact details below if you want to know more about their work, or explore how they can support what you do.

The Live Well Centre
Dundas Shopping Centre
Dundas Street
Middlesbrough
TS1 1HR

General enquiries:

Tel: 0800 118 1691

Text only: 07451288789

E: healthwatchsouthtees@pcp.uk.net

Committee of Medical Managers (CMM) elections

Nominations to the [Committee of Medical Managers \(CMM\)](#) are now open and doctors with recognised positions within the management structures of healthcare organisations, and who are BMA members, are eligible to stand for election. The deadline for nominations is 12pm Monday 11 July 2022. To submit your nomination, please login to the BMA's [election system](#). If you have any queries regarding the election process, please contact elections@bma.org.uk.

BMA Employer Advisory Service

As a membership benefit, the BMA provides an [employer advice service](#) for GP partners and your practice managers. With no expensive contracts, you can get tailored advice from the BMA's specialist team of HR & employment advisers and regulatory knowledge, who can support you with HR & employment law case management, employment tribunal support, and much more. *The service is available to BMA members - [contact the BMA GP employer advisory service](#)*

GPC GP Bulletin & Informal Messaging

Read the latest GP bulletin (England) [here](#)

Read GPC Chair twitter page: [Dr Farah Jameel \(@DrFJameel\) / Twitter](#)

Read BMA twitter page: [General Practice \(@BMA_GP\) / Twitter](#)

Read more about the work of the [GPC England](#)

Read practical guidance for [GP practices](#)

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

Primary care coaching - communications toolkit

In these pressured times it is absolutely critical you look after yourself and your teams. NHSE/I have launched their new communications toolkit, supporting promotion of the NHS England and NHS Improvement Looking After You national coaching service: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1aS8-sTH1W9qv49d9Tq3hhwg9jJZZ5MFs>

Within the toolkit you will find social media images, banners, bulletin copy, website copy and quotes from those who have used the free services. There has been some excellent feedback from those who have accessed coaching, but we are aware there are still many colleagues who are not aware of this available support. It remains a difficult time for the workforce, so we would appreciate any help you are able to give to share these offers.

A member of their team would also be happy to come to meetings or events within regions and systems to talk about the offers: england.lookingafteryou@nhs.net

A coaching landing page hosts all three offers: www.england.nhs.uk/lookingafteryou . Recognising that frontline primary care colleagues involved in the delivery of primary care services, both clinical and non-clinical, continue to face many challenges, NHSE have developed three coaching offers for the workforce:

- 1) Looking After You Too – coaching about you and your wellbeing
- 2) Looking After Your Team – coaching about you and your team
- 3) Looking After Your Career - coaching about you and your career

The coaches are highly skilled and experienced, and all coaching is free and confidential. The sessions are delivered virtually, preferably via a video platform, but telephone appointments are also available. Thousands of people have booked sessions and given positive feedback on their experience.

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.

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 is here for you and offers supportive [wellbeing services](#) which include face-to-face counselling. You can access one-off support or, after triage, a structured course of up to six face-to-face counselling sessions. Call 0330 123 1245 today or [visit the website](#) for more information.

For all other support, speak to a BMA adviser on [0300 123 1233](tel:03001231233) or email support@bma.org.uk

[Read more about doctors' wellbeing during the pandemic](#) and on Twitter [@TheBMA](https://twitter.com/TheBMA)

There is also a wealth of [ICS provided support through their North East Support Hub](#) Telephone: 0191 223 2030 or Email: Hubstheword@cntw.nhs.uk or via online form on the website

NHSEI have recently developed a new [communications toolkit](#) and resources to help promote their offers to the workforce. The toolkit has an overview of each offer, including bulletin, email and social media copy, and links to some case studies and posters.