



CLEVELAND LMC

Cleveland Local Medical Committee

Cleveland LMC Bulletin Tuesday 14 January 2025

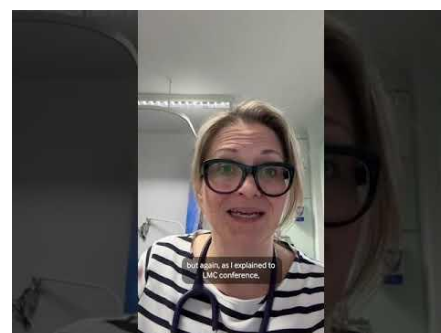
This week the Government has made a number of [announcements](#), including resourcing GPs to deliver **Advice and Guidance (A&G) at £20 per episode** to be able to sort out clinical issues and queries you have about a patient. At least £80m has been earmarked for A&G use and this is in addition to the £889m announced by the Secretary of State on 20 December.

This is a small positive step and something we had already suggested to the government. Suspending A&G is one of the items on our [Collective Action menu](#) as an unresourced piece of work, but if this is successfully negotiated into the 25/26 contract and fairly resourced, then it could be dropped from the menu. We have yet to see any detail on how the A&G plan will be rolled out and will advise you about this as soon as we can. We are in active discussion with government on this and other contract issues.

I know many of you want to see significant investment going into uplifting core contracts, and of course we are all doing more work than ever before, in the knowledge that our share of NHS funding is at a very low level. We will continue to press this issue in our current negotiation meetings.

We hope this is the beginning of NHSE and ICBs making sensible decisions about where it is best to invest, and this seems to be an example of the Government's commitment to increase funding into general practice. It is a small step forward on the journey to what we really need. But as ever – nothing is agreed until everything is agreed and we are now actively engaged with NHSE and the Department of Health on proposed contract changes for April 2025 and beyond.

I would recommend watching [the video](#) recorded by GPCE Chair, Dr Katie Bramall Stainer, for a full update on the key issues >



Can I also point you to this [statement by the GPCE](#), in response to the [Government's announcement of an £889m funding uplift for general practice in England for 2025/26](#), as set out in the [letter from Wes Streeting MP on 20 December](#).

As ever thank you for all you do for your patients and your practice and let us hope 2025 is a better year for us all so we can make NHS general practice sustainable for the future.

January 2025 collective action tracker survey

The January collective action tracker survey opened on Monday 13 January and will remain open for two weeks, closing on 26 January at 5pm. Your response to this is hugely helpful to us and we would ask you take a few minutes to complete it.

Is your practice taking part in collective action? We encourage all GP partners or practice managers to share their experiences by completing this [short survey](#). No identifiable data will be created as a result of this survey.



**Create a better tomorrow:
your actions, our future.**

Share what actions your practice is taking
through our tracker survey.
Deadline: 26 January.

GPC have produced guidance around individual collective actions to support practices in undertaking specific actions. Please refer to our refreshed [Safe Working Guidance Handbook](#) and to the [BMA's GP campaign webpage](#) for more information. We appreciate your participation in collective action.

Special England LMC Conference 2025

The Special LMC Conference will be held on **Wednesday 19 March 2025 at Friends House**, London. The day will start at 10.00am and finish at 5.00pm.

This Special Conference was called at the 2024 Annual Conference of England LMCs. Under Standing Order 2 the only business to be considered will be **“to discuss and determine what escalatory steps will be needed to ensure the survival of what still remains of English general practice”**.

The National Insurance Contributions (NICs) Bill

Following its passage through the Commons, the National Insurance Contributions Bill moved to the House of Lords where it was debated on 6 January. During the debate a motion of regret was tabled, which if agreed would signal the House disagreed with the Bill but would not stop its progress. In the event the motion was not agreed. However, there was significant debate with the BMA mentioned numerous times along with our concerns regarding the impacts of employer NICs increases on practices and patients. We have undertaken extensive lobbying and briefing of Parliamentarians prior to the debate. The Bill will next go to committee stage in the Lords, where the BMA will continue to lobby.

BMA Guidance on physician associates

In response to member queries regarding the future management of physician associates (PAs) within their practices, please note the additional guidance below:

GP practices are entitled to follow [BMA Guidance](#) and [RCGP guidance on employing PAs](#). However, it is for individual practices to decide whether to follow the guidance, and if they do decide to follow it, what steps to take to implement any changes.

A GP practice may decide to restructure how they deliver their services in order to follow the guidance. If such a restructure results in duties being removed from one or more PA in the practice, this could result in a redundancy situation arising, i.e. where there is a reduced requirement for physician associates to carry out work of a particular kind.

As a GP partner, and BMA member, if redundancy is an option your practice is considering, or you have questions regarding how to manage the employment relationship with your physician associate, please [contact the BMA Employer Advisory Service](#) at the earliest opportunity.

Virtual rally on sessional GP unemployment

Join GPC as they unite to tackle the pressing issue of sessional GP unemployment on **Wednesday 12 February, 7.30-9pm**. This is your chance to be part of the conversation, share your voice, and mobilise for change. During the rally, you'll learn about the latest insights on the issues, what the BMA has been doing, updates on GP collective action in England, ways to get involved with your LMC to drive change, and more. Speakers include BMA Chair of the Sessional GPs committee, Chair of GPC England, Co-chairs of the GP registrars committee, and a RCGP representative.

Let's raise our collective voice and demand progress. Together, we'll ensure the challenges faced by sessional GPs remain a priority. Gain valuable insights, actionable steps, and learn how the BMA is standing with you. Register [here](#)

BMA and PCSE webinars for 2023-24 type 2 pension forms for sessional GPs

We previously highlighted the change of form and upload process for type 2 pension forms for 2023-24. As a salaried GP, out of hours GP or long-term locum within a practice, you are required to complete a Type 2 Self-Assessment for each pension year, so that NHS England can ensure that all NHS pension contributions have been correctly paid and allocated correctly to the NHS Pension Scheme record.

The relevant forms must be completed by members who have undertaken practitioner pensionable work between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, and should be submitted to PCSE **by 28 February 2025**. PCSE have scheduled two webinars to explain the new form and the process to upload the forms. The deputy chair of the BMA pensions committee, Krishan Aggarwal, will also be attending the webinars to support member queries. These will be held on:

- [Tuesday 14 January](#) 6pm to 7.30pm
- [Tuesday 4 February](#) 6pm to 7.30pm

Please click [here](#) to register for the webinars.

The BMA is here to support you and [you can find more details about these changes on our webpage >](#)

RCGP clarifies new exam attempts policy

In August 2024, the BMA [won a 'landmark' legal judgement](#), supporting a trainee GP who believed they had been unfairly treated due to the way the RCGP applied its policy on the number of attempts at taking an exam. The judge found that it was irrational for the College to refuse to consider further attempts or nullification in the event that a candidate reports a late diagnosis that would have justified reasonable adjustments, quashing the policy both prospectively and retrospectively.

The RCGP has now confirmed [their replacement policy](#), which applies to both the AKT and the SCA: *Where after an unsuccessful attempt a candidate receives a diagnosis of a disability of which they were previously unaware, the RCGP may void any previous attempts which they took while having that disability without the appropriate reasonable adjustments. The candidate would still have the same upper limit of maximum attempts as they were entitled to when they entered training for the first time. Applications for previous attempts to be voided are subject to all other applicable MRCGP Regulations and Policies, including rules on eligibility and timeframes.*

The [RCGP's website includes FAQs](#) on the new policy and registrars who believe they may be eligible for additional attempts [should complete this form](#).

All-Party Parliamentary Group on Pharmacy - Call for written evidence on medicines shortages

The [All-Party Parliamentary Group \(APPG\) on Pharmacy](#) has launched an inquiry into the impact of medicines shortages, and a call for written evidence from key stakeholders across the healthcare sector. We would encourage individual GPs to submit written evidence on the impact medicine shortages have on practices and patients (deadline 24 January) – submit your evidence [here](#)