

SHEFFIELD LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2007

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CHOICE AND BOOKING DES 2007/08 – USE OF CHOICE READ CODES

In August the GPC requested that LMCs make GPs in their area aware of the Choice read codes that should be used. An article was placed in the August 2007 LMC Newsletter. Some confusion has been reported nationally so, to clarify, the following read codes have been available since October 2006:

9kK.. - Choice and Booking – enhanced services administration (4 byte and version 2)

XaMJa - Choice and Booking – enhanced services administration (version 3)

222711000000102 - Choice and Booking – enhanced services (SNOMED).

These are designed to record patients who have been referred for a first consultant outpatient appointment to a service where Choice is offered. Any practices not using these codes yet should start doing so **as soon as possible** if they wish to participate in the Choice element of the DES.

The GPC has expressed concern that in a small number of cases technological problems in the use of read codes may cause problems in the administration of the GP patient survey and associated Choice

payments. The Department of Health is seeking to address these issues to minimise potential problems.

It is important to note that if practices choose not to use the new Choice read codes they will be ineligible for the Choice payment.

0-18 YEARS: GUIDANCE FOR ALL DOCTORS

The General Medical Council (GMC) has recently issued the above guidance, which focuses on children and young people from birth until their 18th birthday. The guidance, which applies to all doctors, develops the duties and principles set out in the GMC's guidance Good Medical Practice and covers issues such as:

- Assessing best interests
- Communication
- Making decisions
- Principles of Confidentiality
- Access to Medical Records
- Child Protection
- Sexual Activity
- Complaints
- Prescribing Medicines

A copy of the guidance can be accessed via:

- The GMC website – www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/archive/GMC_0-18.pdf

- The *Other Guidance* section of the LMC's website - www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk

MEDICAL REPORTS FOR RE-HOUSING PURPOSES

The LMC continues to receive queries from GPs regarding requests for medical reports for re-housing purposes. Therefore, we have produced guidance clarifying the process for requests from Housing Associations and from Sheffield Homes (Sheffield City Council). The guidance can be found in the *LMC Guidance* section of our website at www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk or can be accessed directly from the links below:

- Housing Association Requests for Medical Reports <http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/lmc%20guidance/Housing%20Requests%20for%20Medical%20Reports.pdf>
- Sheffield Homes (Sheffield City Council) Requests for Medical Reports <http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/lmc%20guidance/Sheffield%20Homes%20SSC.pdf>

MONITORED DOSAGE SYSTEMS

Concerns continue to be reported to the LMC regarding pharmacists requesting weekly prescriptions for

monitored dosage systems. The LMC has communicated with the GPC, Department of Health and Sheffield Local Pharmaceutical Committee on a number of occasions, but the situation has still not been resolved to everybody's satisfaction. Therefore, we have produced a guidance document explaining the current situation. The guidance can be found in the *LMC Guidance* section of our website at www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk or can be accessed directly from the link below:

- Monitored Dosage Systems
<http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/lmc%20guidance/Monitored%20Dosage%20Systems.pdf>

PARKINSON'S DISEASE SHARED CARE PROTOCOL (SCP)

At the September 2007 Area Prescribing Committee (APC) meeting, it was agreed to approve the SCP for Parkinson's disease management that had been developed by the South Yorkshire Prescribing Leads (with considerable input from Doncaster). This protocol was approved in good faith as a test case for trying to rationalise traffic light systems and SCPs across South Yorkshire. There are differences to the SCP for Parkinson's disease that was originally developed for Sheffield primary care. Although there seems to be a lot of sense in trying to unify policies across South Yorkshire, there may be some local impact on prescribing.

As such, the LMC Executive would welcome feedback (via email to administrator@sheffieldlmc.org.uk) on any problems that arise in changing over to a unified South Yorkshire protocol, in order that we can feed back to South Yorkshire Prescribing Leads.

PARACETAMOL PRESCRIBING

Practices should have received correspondence from the PCT Pharmacy Advisors, regarding the price of Paracetamol and the new M List prescribing regulations. This has resulted in significant cost implications for practice drug budgets and the overall PCT prescribing financial situation.

The Area Prescribing Committee (APC) has asked the LMC to make practices aware of this issue, in order that we prescribe in the most cost effective manner. Obviously, this should not affect your clinical freedom to prescribe appropriate medication.

EXTENDED OPENING HOURS

The LMC Executive has heard anecdotal stories regarding practices being asked to consider extended opening hours. You will be aware that this issue has recently been raised by Gordon Brown and is being discussed at a national level. We are not aware of any ongoing plans to implement this at Sheffield PCT.

We would remind all practices that GPs' current contractual obligations are to provide all services between the hours of 8.00 am and 6.30 pm. We await further guidance from the GPC on contractual implications outside of these hours. However, practices may wish to explore flexible ways of fulfilling their in-hours contracts.

The LMC office would welcome communication (via email to administrator@sheffieldlmc.org.uk) from any practice that feels that they are becoming involved in these discussions on anything other than on a purely theoretical level.

CELEBRATING GENERAL PRACTICE

Following months of negative propaganda from the national press and politicians, Dr Laurence Buckman, newly elected chairman of the GPC, is keen to encourage all GPs to celebrate success, as it often difficult to raise the profile of general practice in the public's eyes.

It is a Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) requirement that all practices maintain a complaints register and that the PCT should have access to this register for inspection. It has been suggested that this should be a complaints and compliments register that is openly available for PCT inspection. All too often GPs take simple words of thanks for granted and do not use this as recognition of their good quality of care. It may well be that local practices would like to consider

(even anonymously) a register of patient thanks as a celebration of good primary care.

PRIMARY CARE NEUROLOGY SOCIETY (PCNS) / PRIMARY CARE GENETICS SOCIETY (PCGS) EVENTS

*Article submitted by Neil Bindemann,
Secretariat Director, PCNS & PCGS*

The above societies would like to make GPs aware of the neurology and genetics education support available to GPs. Details of forthcoming events are as follows:

Addressing Clinical Challenges in Primary Care Neurology

Date: 1 November 2007

Venue: Pollock Halls, University of Edinburgh

Neuropathic Pain – Primary Care Perspectives

Date: 22 November 2007

Venue: RSM, London

Genetics Conference

Date: 15 November 2007

Venue: Newcastle upon Tyne

The above events are to encourage sharing of best practice and networking with fellow GPs. Further details can be found at www.pcg.org.uk/events.asp and www.p-cns.org.uk.

To avoid bookings getting caught up in the postal strike, forms can be faxed to 020 7760 7193.

Please forward any articles, comments etc for inclusion in the LMC newsletter to the LMC office via:

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Articles for the November 2007 edition of the LMC newsletter to be received *by Monday 12 November 2007*.