

GP Trainees Subcommittee Newsletter



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April 2013

Dear trainees



Since I last wrote to you, the subcommittee have had a meeting where we discussed some important matters that are relevant to GP trainees. The government has announced the terms of the GP contract imposition and I've highlighted the important points across as well as some of the other matters we are currently working on.

Krishna Kasaraneni
Chairman, GP Trainees Subcommittee

GP Contract Imposition

On 18 March the Government in England confirmed changes that it will impose to GP contracts. Most of the imposed changes came into place on 1 April 2013, with a few taking effect from April 2014. These changes are being implemented despite the GPC and thousands of doctors expressing concern about them.

Ministers failed to take on board the cumulative impact of the proposals which will see general practice facing a range of new targets and additional workload responsibilities, as well as reductions in the central funding that many practices receive.

It is essential that you understand these changes and consider how they will affect you and your future practice. We have summarised each change and produced [advice](#) on what each change means for you and your practice.

Enhanced GP Training (EGPT)

As I have mentioned previously, the educational case and the vision for the future of general practice is very clear. We are waiting for the financial and implementation work to be completed and although there is a lot of work that is going on behind the scenes, there isn't a lot to report back from the last quarter.

LMC Conference – May 2013

This year's conference of Local Medical Committees will be held in London on 23 & 24 May. More information about the conference can be found [here](#)

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MRCGP – Differential Pass Rates

The ongoing issues with the MRCGP exam have taken a new turn with the GMC appointing Professor Aneez Esmail, Professor of general practice at the University of Manchester, set to conduct an independent review of the MRCGP. We have also set up a new BMA group to look at this specific issue and welcome the independent review. I am looking forward to working with the relevant stakeholders to undertake further, more detailed, work into understanding the reasons behind the huge disparity in pass rates between trainees from different backgrounds.

The terms of reference for the GMC review can be found [here](#). If you have concerns regarding the exams, please do contact the **BMA's first point of contact** support service.

MRCGP – Exam Costs

At our last meeting, we had a formal discussion with the RCGP treasurer Dr Stokes-Lampard about the costs of the exams and the e-portfolio. The college have recently changed the way the bookings for CSA are made and we hope this will translate into a more fairer costing for the exams in the future for the trainees. We hope to see more of the exam costs transferred into the membership fee thereby reducing the costs of individual examinations and increasing the proportion of fees eligible for tax relief. I have also written to HMRC asking them consider including the exam costs as a tax-deductible job related expense.

Occupational Health Vaccinations



It has come to the attention of the GPC that some GP trainees working in a general practice setting in London are being asked to pay for occupational health vaccinations. Under no circumstances should GP trainees or any other doctors in the NHS be required to pay for vaccinations where they are involved in direct patient care. This is outlined in the Department of Health 'Green Book' on Immunisation against infectious disease (pages 83-90), which states:

"Employers need to be able to demonstrate that an effective employee immunisation programme is in place, and they have an obligation to arrange and pay for this service."

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations also requires an assessment to be made (by an

employer) of a range of hazardous substances, including "biological agents", in order that suitable "control measures" can be implemented to minimise the risk. Where a risk has been identified and where effective vaccines are available these should be used as a method of control. The employer is required to make provision of the vaccines to staff who are not already immune.

Section 9 of The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 requires that this be offered free of charge to staff.

Letters are being sent to GP trainees in London by Imperial Health at Work (part of Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust), informing GP trainees that they require vaccinations and requesting payment for same. The London Deanery has confirmed that they do not recommend to trainees that they should access this service to acquire Occupational Health vaccinations, but will inform trainees that this is an option available to them if asked for advice. GPC have received confirmation from the London Deanery that they have not requested Imperial Health at Work to send any letters to GP trainees on their behalf. Consequently, the GP Trainees Subcommittee has written to Imperial Health at Work seeking an explanation.

We will distribute more information as we receive it, but in the meantime GP trainees should under no circumstances pay for their own occupational health vaccinations, and anyone who requests that you do so should be directed to the regulations mentioned above. If this is happening in any other parts of the UK, please let the GPC know by emailing cscott@bma.org.uk

You can also find me on twitter as [@GP_Trainee](#) if you prefer to have a more informal chat about issues affecting GP training and trainees.

Krishna Kasaraneni

Junior Members Forum (JMF) Conference 2013, Cardiff (by Sangeetha Sornalingam)



The annual JMF conference took place this year from 23rd-24th March. Junior members are defined as those within 12 years of qualification and so a wide range of delegates both in terms of career grade and specialty attend. The ethos of this free conference is to allow junior members, who may not have had much involvement with the organisation, an opportunity to learn more about the BMA's structure, what it stands for and how policy is made.

This was the first time I had attended JMF, as a GPSTC representative and I was not initially sure what to expect. What I found was a warm, welcoming atmosphere and an opportunity to meet medical students and doctors from all over the UK, many with shared interests and concerns regarding recent developments in the NHS. The overarching theme of this year's conference was patient safety; this was particularly poignant given the recent publication of the Francis report. The first day of conference consisted of talks, lectures and workshops. Workshops were arranged to promote discussion of relevant issues to juniors and how to formulate motions (statements) about these for debate. Common themes

included working hours, pay, pensions and current 'bad press' against doctors.

Each member of conference may, if they wish, submit two motions for discussion. These can be regarding issues affecting themselves, colleagues or patients for which they call upon the BMA to help. My personal academic interest is in doctor stress and wellbeing. I formulated a motion asking the BMA to comprehensively investigate the extent of the issue for GP trainees and hospital juniors in the UK. This was discussed on the second day of conference with all other submitted motions. As the 'proposer' I was given three minutes to talk about the topic and why the motion should be taken forward. Other delegates are then offered the opportunity to speak for or against the motion for two minutes each. At the end of the debate the motion is put to a vote amongst the conference delegates. Being amongst peers, I did not find the process of proposing the motion as daunting as I had thought I would (although I recognise the previous evening's conference dinner and ceilidh dancing may have helped!). Waiting to see if anyone would speak against the motion was agonising, but no-one

did. I was pleased that the motion was passed on vote without opposition, as I truly believe in the importance of the issue. In fact, medical students also wanted to be included within the motion and an amendment was carried accordingly.

This second day of the conference was immensely enjoyable. Listening to lively debating, particularly on issues I had not personally considered was both informative and interesting. I was pleased to see quite a few GP trainees present at the conference and participating in debate. A motion was passed at JMF to help promote GP as a career. However, another asking for longer appointment times in general practice to 20 mins, was taken as reference, which means the sentiments of the motions were acknowledged but it was felt it could not be supported outright.

So what happens to the motions passed at JMF? Well, if relevant to a particular junior BMA committee (medical students, junior doctors, GP trainees), it will be sent for debate at their individual committee conferences and if passed there will become part of the remit for the committee for that year. Alternatively, the motion may directly go to the Annual Representatives Meeting (ARM) in June for debate and, if passed there, will become BMA policy.

I would really urge anyone interested in finding out more about the BMA to get involved and to apply for a place at JMF next year. The application process opens in the winter of each year and details are available on the BMA website. In the interim if there are any issues of concern in regards to your training please do inform your GPSTC rep, and perhaps consider becoming one yourself – election for available seats open this summer!

Important documents you should know about

(by Oliver Jardine)

Source	Document	What it is
BMA	GP Registrar Framework Contract	Model contract for your employment in GP practices. Details terms and conditions – your contract should adhere closely to this. Available through here
	“Guide to a clinical session”	Explanation of typical working hours and responsibilities for GP trainees including out-of-hours commitments. Available through here
	European Working Time Directive	Working time requirements for junior doctors in order to be compliant
	Travel expenses information	NHS allowance rates for car and public transport use. Your deanery should also have more information.
COGPED (Committee of General Practice Education Directors)	Guidance on less than full-time training	National guidance on applying for and organising LTFT training. Available here .
	Out-of-hours Position Paper	National guidance on what is expected of GP Registrars when doing out-of-hours work and how it fits in with training. Available here .
RCGP	Standards for GP Training ePortfolio – a guide for trainees	Full GP training standards that your Deanery must fulfil RCGP guidance on how to best use the ePortfolio.
GMC	Good Medical Practice Information for trainee Doctors	GMC’s guidelines about good medical practice Guidance for trainees and relevant information about quality assurance

Get involved!

Adam Borowski talks about being a subcommittee member

What made you want to join the committee?

In 2012 I found myself becoming increasingly frustrated and disillusioned with the changes being forced upon the NHS and doctors. I considered changes to our pensions, changes to our contracts and aspects of the Health and Social Care Act to be unfair and unnecessary.

I decided to get involved with the BMA GP subcommittee to do my small bit to try and help the working lives of doctors.

What’s it like? Is it what you expected?

It’s great fun! I’ve met some really inspiring and influential people and got some great experience of the political side of medicine. I’d received a thorough handover from my predecessor so I knew what I was getting myself into!

What does it involve?

The subcommittee meets once a quarter at BMA House in London, where we discuss issues affecting trainees and aim to find solutions. It also involves some email work as the subcommittee are in daily contact with each other electronically.

Additionally, you get the opportunity to attend other committees so that the BMA can have a voice elsewhere – for example, I also attend the London School of General Practice quarterly meetings.

How have you helped trainees in London?

I’ve helped trainees who have approached me with concerns about annual leave, working hours and out of hours requirements. We’ve also been addressing concerns about occupational health requirements in London.

Some trainees were having to pay for all their vaccinations, rather than their employer meeting the costs. We highlighted that legally it is the employer’s responsibility to meet the costs and have asked the trainees affected be reimbursed.

What difference has it made to you?

I feel I have considerably enhanced my negotiation and communication skills being part of the subcommittee, and have developed attributes that will be hugely beneficial to my future career as a GP. It has been fascinating to get an insight into the political aspects of medicine.

Would you recommend it?

Absolutely! It’s been a great experience and I have made some good friends. Many of the subcommittee, including myself, will be stepping down this summer as we will have completed our GP training.

I would highly recommend anyone who has an interest in medical politics and wants to help GP trainees to put their names forward for the forthcoming elections to the subcommittee.

GP Trainees Subcommittee membership 2012/13



Chairman
Krishna Kasaraneni



East Midlands
Kalindi Krishna Tumurugoti



Eastern
Rahiel Riasat



Kent, Surrey & Sussex
Sangeetha Sornalingam



London North
Adam Borowski



London South
Thomas Nolan



Mersey
Mark Willcox



North West
Vacant



Northern
Oliver Jardine



Oxford
Kiren Collison



Northern Ireland
Conor Bradley



Scotland, North
Vacant



Scotland, West
John Kyle



Scotland, South East/East
Sarah Mills



Severn
Nick Jestico



Wales
Kashif Samin



South West
Wayne Sturley



Wessex
Laura Edwards



West Midlands
Jairam Kaasula



Yorkshire
Ansar Hayat



Armed Forces
Toby Holland

There will be elections for some subcommittee seats this summer.

If you are interested in getting involved in the subcommittee, please email CScott@bma.org.uk or visit the subcommittee's [website](#) for more information.