

Newsletter

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Sheffield
LMC



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COVID-19 TOOLKIT AND VACCINATION PROGRAMME GUIDANCE

The British Medical Association (BMA) continues to update their [COVID-19 toolkit for GPs and practices](#), which includes updates in the COVID-19 vaccination programme section and protecting clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) patients section. There is also new or updated guidance on the following topics:

- Risk assessments;
- Terms and conditions for sessional GPs;
- Model terms of engagement for a GP providing temporary COVID-19 services.

The BMA's [COVID-19 Vaccination Programme guidance](#) also continues to be regularly updated, with recent updates including:

- The national protocols for both vaccines;
- The updated joint document on workload prioritisation;
- Funding to support rapid Care Home vaccination;
- Avoiding vaccine wastage;
- Further support to enable practices to prioritise vaccine delivery;
- Information about access to vaccines for all frontline health and social care workers.

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**ADMINISTRATION OF COVID VACCINE BY
GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL (GMC) REGISTERED DOCTORS: CHANGE IN LEGISLATION**

The Government has announced that doctors who offer their support in delivering the [Enhanced Service Specification COVID vaccination programme](#) in primary care settings will be exempt from the requirement to be included on the England Medical Performers List. The [Regulations](#), which came into force on 14 January, remove previous barriers and mean that any GMC registered doctor will be able to administer the vaccine and any ancillary vaccine services under the enhanced service specifications in a primary care setting.

Practices are reminded of their existing obligations to ensure staff have the qualifications, skill, competence, training and experience to deliver safe care under the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

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**HOW COVID-19 VACCINATIONS ARE RECORDED:
NHS DIGITAL FAQs**

A new COVID-19 vaccination information web resource has been set up by NHS Digital in the form of a series of [FAQs](#), to help Practice Managers find answers to questions about how vaccinations are recorded and common errors or difficulties.

The FAQs also contain details of the helpdesk that has been set up for instances where further information or assistance is required.

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**LMC CHAIR'S UPDATE FOR
SHEFFIELD GPs AND PRACTICES**

A link to the latest edition of the LMC's [annual update](#) written by Alastair Bradley, LMC Chair, was recently emailed to all represented Sheffield GPs and Practice Managers.

We hope this offers a helpful and interesting insight into many of the issues the LMC has been involved in over the last 12 months, such as:

- New Committee and Executive;
- Transfer of Workload;
- The Pandemic;
- South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw (SY&B) Integrated Care System (ICS).
- Sheffield GP-S Mentoring Scheme;
- Primary Care Network (PCN) Development;
- The COVID Vaccination Programme;

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**GP CONTRACT AGREEMENT ENGLAND
2021/2022**

The General Practitioners Committee (GPC) has secured an agreement with NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) that the increases in funding planned for 2021/22 will continue, but there will be minimal contractual changes for practices from April 2021. In addition, some previous agreements will be delayed. This is to give practices support and stability through the continued pandemic and whilst practices are playing a significant role in the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

Some of these changes will be implemented throughout 2021/22 depending on the pandemic, and will be agreed later in the year. Practices will then be provided with adequate time to prepare. The full details are available [here](#).

In summary, from April 2021:

- Funding increases previously agreed will be honoured.
- Funding increase to global sum to allow a 2.1% uplift in pay.
- Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) will be largely the same as for 2020/21, with some amendments to cancer and SMI domains to assist with the impact of the pandemic, and changes to vaccinations and immunisations as previously planned to continue with the move to an item of service payment arrangement for childhood vaccinations - these will see additional funding go into QOF.
- Quality Improvement (QI) modules from 2020/21 to be repeated and slightly amended.
- The core digital offer to patients has been defined, largely based on how practices are already operating due to the pandemic.

- New Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) roles will come on stream, with additional funding being made available to enable mental health practitioners to be part of the Primary Care Network (PCN) workforce.
- Investment and Impact Fund (IIF) 2020/21 indicators will remain unchanged. Further discussions to be held on other planned indicators for 2021/22, utilising the additional investment to the IIF.
- No new PCN service specifications from April (will be phased in later in the year, with dates to be agreed depending on the pandemic), and current PCN services to receive minor amendments.
- The GPC and NHSE/I will discuss the introduction (in-year) of a new enhanced service related to obesity and weight management.

The GPC will be providing further guidance in due course.

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FIT NOTES (MED 3)

GPs are reminded that they are still required to issue Fit Notes (Med 3) as normal. There are specific scenarios relating to COVID-19 where patients can use the isolation note service, instead of seeing a GP, as outlined below. Please do not signpost patients to NHS 111 in order to get a Fit Note as they are not provided by the service. During the pandemic the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is encouraging employers to use their discretion as to what medical evidence is required to support periods of sickness absence.

Previously advice was issued on issuing Fit Notes remotely during the pandemic, which remains in place until further notice. A properly signed and scanned Fit Note sent via email to the patient will be regarded as 'other evidence' and will be accepted by the DWP for benefit purposes. Not signing Fit Notes can mean that they are rejected by employers and the DWP. The original hard copy does not need to be retained if there is an electronic copy in the medical record.

If a patient is unable to receive their Fit Note electronically, they should collect a hard copy from the practice or a hard copy should be posted to them, at the practice's discretion.

The isolation service does not provide Fit Notes. It is an automated service that can be used to provide evidence of the need to self-isolate by those who:

- Have symptoms of coronavirus.
- Live with someone who has symptoms of coronavirus.
- Are in a support bubble with someone who has symptoms of coronavirus.
- Have been told to self-isolate by a test and trace service.

It can be used to cover continuing periods of isolation if patients still have symptoms or develop new symptoms following their initial isolation period.

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PRE-REGISTRATION OF PATIENTS PRIOR TO RELEASE FROM THE SECURE RESIDENTIAL ESTATE

The contractual requirement of the [General Medical Services \(GMS\) Contract 2017/18](#) (page 64) to accept patients from the secure estate prior to their release has increased importance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Among other benefits, pre-registration may help the smooth rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine. For individuals leaving the secure estate between the first and second doses of their vaccination who have been registered with a community GP, their GP record will be updated with their vaccination status.

GP practices are asked to ensure that processes are in place to meet this contractual requirement. Further information on how to do this can be found [here](#).

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NEW TO PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

The New to Partnership Scheme was launched in England in July 2020 (backdated to April 2020). So far about 400 applications have been approved and many more are being processed.

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) has now finalised the S96 contract for GMS practices, which forms the agreement between the practice, the new partner and NHSE/I. This contract has been agreed with the British Medical Association (BMA).

Contracts are now being sent out to applicants from GMS practices to sign and seek their partners' signatures, within 4 weeks. The funding will then be released to the practice to pass onto the new partner. Contracts for PMS practices are expected to follow shortly.

It is hoped that this development will now speed up the process and encourage more new partners to apply for the scheme.

The BMA has produced [guidance](#) on the scheme to assist GPs through what can be a complicated application process.

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INTERNATIONAL GP TRAINEE VISAS

The British Medical Association (BMA) has been made aware of a number of international GP trainees due to complete their training in February who are concerned about securing full time employment before their visa expires. This is because many GP practices do not hold sponsorship licences or are not actively recruiting.

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) has asked that any impacted doctors contact england.intrecruitment@nhs.net to be put you in touch with regional colleagues.

BMA members can also access free basic legal advice on their case via the BMA's [Immigration advice service](#).

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BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (BMA) BAME MEMBER FORUM LAUNCH

The BMA launched its first national BAME member forum recently. The forum aims to unify and empower the voices of BAME members and influence positive change in the pursuit of race equality, in the BMA and across the NHS.

The first event was chaired by Chaand Nagpaul, BMA Council Chair, with talks from Baroness Doreen Lawrence, Doyin Atewologun and Roger Kline. Further information and a recording of the launch event can be found [here](#).

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CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC) INSPECTION OF GP PRACTICES

Following CQC's recent update on its regulatory approach and lobbying by the General Practitioners Committee (GPC), on 28 January 2021 CQC wrote to Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) primary care leads and NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) regional directors, confirming that they will only inspect GP practices in response to significant risk of harm and when it cannot seek assurances through other routes. If an inspection is necessary, CQC will carry out as much activity off-site as possible.

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CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC) MYTH BUSTERS

Professor Nigel Sparrow, Senior National GP Advisor at the CQC issues [guidance](#) to clear up some common myths about CQC inspections, as well as sharing guidance on best practice, which practices may wish to be aware of. The following Myth Busters have been added or updated recently:

- [Nigel's surgery 36: Registration and treatment of asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants](#)
- [Nigel's surgery 99: Infection prevention and control in General Practice](#)
- [Nigel's surgery 82: Physician associates in general practice](#)
- [Nigel's surgery 89: Immunising people with an underlying medical condition](#)
- [Nigel's surgery 101: The Adult Trans Care Pathway](#)

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FLU VACCINE REIMBURSEMENT 2021/22

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) has issued [guidelines on vaccines for use during the 2021/22 flu programme](#), following the publication of [JCVI advice](#). The vaccines recommended for use are:

- Those aged 65 years and over: aQIV or QIVc (where aQIV is not available);
- At-risk adults, including pregnant women, aged 18 to less than 65 years: QIVc or QIVe (where QIVc is not available).

Practices are advised to read the guidelines and submit vaccine orders as soon as practical.

As noted in the November 2020 LMC newsletter, the LMC Buying Group's negotiations with their flu vaccine suppliers have concluded for the 2021-22 flu season. Their recommendations can be found [here](#).

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***PAYMENTS DURING SUSPENSION:
SECRETARY OF STATE'S DETERMINATION***

The General Practitioners Committee (GPC) is aware of a case where a GP has been asked to refund to the NHS a significant sum of money that had allegedly been wrongly paid during a period of suspension. The payment was made under the [Secretary of State's Determination: Payments to Medical Practitioners suspended from the Performers List](#) and there is nothing to suggest the interpretation of the Determination by NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) was anything other than correct. However, the original payment was mistakenly made on the GP's profits and not their drawings.

The Determination sets out that entitlement is based on an individual's normal monthly payments where they practise as an individual and, in the case of partnerships, 90% of the normal monthly drawings from the partnership account. NHSE/I was correct in the re-interpretation of the Determination, payment is based on drawings not profit, often a much lower sum, but not the one on which tax is payable.

It has been suggested this amounts to discrimination against contractors when compared to other GPs and hospital doctors.

The purpose of this update is to ensure members are aware of the consequences of this interpretation and the impact it might have on them if they receive payments when suspended.

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HEALTHIER TOGETHER WEBSITE

A new website has been developed so that clinicians and health and care staff seeing children and young people can signpost their patients' parents and families to accurate, quality, local health information to help them manage their health / symptoms and know when to access health services.

The [website](#):

- Has content provided by clinicians and health and care professionals from South Yorkshire;
- Provides consistent, clinically-led advice and guidance.
- Features 'Browse Aloud' to help professionals provide a reliable source of information to their patients who have visual, auditory or translation needs (makes digital content more accessible, provides access to those who cannot read / do not have English as their first language, and provides instant access to supportive features).

The project has been in development since before the pandemic, however, intensive effort has been put into ensuring the key pages could be launched to help health and care professionals to manage the bronchiolitis season, which adds extra pressure into the health system each year. The site is still under development and when it is completed it will also be a helpful tool for pregnant women, and young people themselves.

If you have any questions please contact sheffieldccg.sybhealthiertogether@nhs.net.

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***PRIMARY CARE NETWORK (PCN) DIRECTED ENHANCED SERVICE (DES)
BALLOT RESULTS***

In November 2020 the LMC England Conference passed the following resolution: *Conference notes that the BMA GPC (GP committee) England has never secured a robust democratic mandate for the PCN DES and so again asks the GPC England to secure a firm mandate from the entire profession by means of ballot before negotiating any extension or changes to the PCN DES for the year 2021 / 2022.*

As a result, the GPC held a ballot, posing the question: *Prior to any further negotiations, extension or changes for 2021 / 2022, do you give GPC England a mandate for the PCN directed enhanced service?*

The result of the ballot was: Yes: 80% (3,619), No: 20% (915), Total number responding: 4,534.

Therefore, the GPC will continue to negotiate on this, seeking improvements and further developing it, as part of the whole GP contract. Further information can be found [here](#).

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**GENERAL PRACTITIONERS COMMITTEE (GPC) UK
REGIONAL ELECTIONS**

The British Medical Association (BMA) is currently running elections to seats on the GPC, including the Barnsley / Doncaster / Rotherham / Sheffield seat. This is a by-election and is for a two-year term. All GP members in Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield may stand for election.

More information about what to expect as a committee member can be found [here](#).

Further information about the election process and how to nominate yourself as a candidate can be found [here](#).

The deadline for nominations is **12 noon on Friday 12 February**. Voting will take place from 19 February to 12 March.

Any queries regarding the role should be directed to info.gpc@bma.org.uk and queries relating to the election process or accessing the election should be directed to elections@bma.org.uk.

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GP RETENTION SCHEME WEBINAR

The British Medical Association (BMA) has scheduled a [GP Retention Scheme webinar](#) for Thursday 25 February, 7 pm to 8.15 pm.

The webinar will be looking at how the GP Retention Scheme works for employees and employers, tackling some of the common misconceptions about the scheme and hearing from GPs who are currently on the scheme. There will be a Q&A session at the end. Questions can be submitted in advance to cscott@bma.org.uk. A full list of speakers will be confirmed shortly.

Click [here](#) to sign up.

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**SESSIONAL GPs E-NEWSLETTER:
JANUARY 2021**

The latest edition of the Sessional GPs e-newsletter can be found on the British Medical Association (BMA) website [here](#). The main articles include:

- COVID vaccination programme update;
- Appraisals;
- How to access a COVID vaccine;
- LMCs – what they do and how you can get involved;
- Pensions – new type 2 form available now;
- NHSE/I legislative proposals on integrated care;
- GPs committee elections.

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Please forward any articles for inclusion in the LMC newsletter to manager@sheffieldlmc.org.uk

Submission deadlines can be found [here](#).

Contact details for Sheffield LMC Executive can be found [here](#).
Contact details for Sheffield LMC Secretariat can be found [here](#).