

Newsletter

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Sheffield
LMC



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RISK ASSESSMENT FOR GP PRACTICES

The British Medical Association (BMA) has revised their guidance [Risk assessment for GP practices in England](#), following the updated NHS England national infection prevention and control (IPC) manual for England.

The [IPC manual](#) is clear about the need for local risk assessments for staff in contact with COVID-19, which is particularly important now that the requirement for social distancing and mask wearing is no longer obligatory. It is still the employer's responsibility to ensure safe working for staff, and thus a risk assessment should still be carried out and appropriate mitigations.

People who come to GP practices are more likely to be ill or clinically vulnerable, so it is vital that practices are able to exercise discretion to protect patients and staff, especially in the context of rising abuse towards practice staff. People must be assured that if practices are asking them to continue wearing masks this is for the safety of everyone in the building.

The BMA will support practices and doctors who continue to ask patients and staff to wear face masks where they feel this is necessary.

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LETTER FROM GP FOR TRAVEL WITH MEDICATION

The General Practitioners Committee (GPC) has been made aware of an [airline](#) advising travellers bringing medication in their hand luggage, that they should bring a letter from their medical practitioner confirming the type of medication and what it is for.

The GPC is raising this issue with the airline but, in the meantime, would remind practices that patients can print off their medical record from the NHS App. Alternatively, practices are able to charge for travel-related requests for information.

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FAST-TRACK DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CHECKS

NHS Employers recently issued an update on the fast-track DBS checks, established at the start of the pandemic to help employers recruit more quickly. These will remain in place until the end of 2022. However, they should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

Use of this service is expected to be the exception to the rule, and where there is an explicit and demonstrable link to the legal [eligibility criteria](#). The DBS will be working with all registered bodies to ensure that checks submitted via the fast-track route are eligible.

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FIREARMS MARKER

On 6 July 2022, a new firearms marker was introduced, aimed at providing alerts to GPs during both the application process and the lifecycle of a firearms licence. The intention was for this to integrate with EMIS and SystemOne to prospectively flag patients coded as holding a firearms licence.

This new scheme should apply only to new applicants or people renewing their licences, so it would take up to 5 years for all licensed gun owners to be included within the new framework. It has been stressed that the introduction of the marker must not imply that the buck for public safety stops with the GP; as the police have acknowledged, they themselves are ultimately responsible for firearms licensing.

The BMA's guidance [The firearms licensing process](#) has been updated.

Concerns have subsequently been raised nationally regarding the implications of the firearms marker, and negotiations are ongoing. Therefore, the above is not the final outcome and we will update practices as more information becomes available.

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EXPECTED DEATHS AND DEATH CERTIFICATION OUT OF HOURS

Further to the article in the May LMC newsletter, noting that the LMC's guidance [Expected Deaths and Death Certification Out of Hours](#) had been updated, a further amendment has recently been made. A reminder has been added encouraging those GPs who wish to participate in completing Special Notes Forms to do so in a timely manner.

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EXTENDING FIT NOTE CERTIFICATION

As noted in the June LMC newsletter, new legislation allows nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists, and physiotherapists to legally certify fit notes, in addition to doctors.

To support this, the government has recently 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 from 1 July 2022 where GP IT systems will be updated to reflect the change.

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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](#)