

West Pennine Local Medical Committee

Supporting and representing GPs in Oldham, Tameside and Glossop

DECEMBER 2022 UPDATE FROM YOUR LMC



Dr Amir Hannan, Chair



Dr Alan Dow, Secretary



Dr Andrew Vance, Vice Chair

A message from the LMC Officers-

Dr Alan Dow, Dr Amir Hannan and Dr Andrew Vance:

*On behalf of the West Pennine LMC, we **thank you** so much for all your hard work during what has been another challenging year in NHS primary care. GPs, Practice Managers, Nurses, Receptionists, and all staff have again risen to the challenges and have worked tirelessly for our patients. Please do take some time for yourself over the Christmas break to rest and relax; we cannot care for others if we don't care for ourselves and our teams.*

Please remember your LMC is here to help and support you.

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and very best wishes for 2023!

LMC meeting – Tuesday 13th December 2022

The committee met on Tuesday 13th December at 7pm via Teams. The worryingly high rate of Streptococcus A infections in children, and strategies for best dealing with this public health crisis were discussed. Separate children's respiratory hubs are being set up in some localities. The recent NHS Digital GP appointment audit was also discussed; it was acknowledged that the audit results are flawed and could potentially aggravate the public, further contributing to some members of the public misunderstanding the service GPs have been offering. Committee members went on to discuss the Accelerating Citizen's Access to Records programme, which, having recognised the associated risks, has now been postponed indefinitely by NHS England for the majority of practices. For those practices who have not requested postponement, EMIS is looking to enable the functionality from December 13th.

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LMC meeting – Tuesday 13th December 2022 cont'd

Representatives who attended the recent BMA- LMC England conference fed back the key points to committee members. Dr Alan Dow, who attended the conference in his role as GPC representative for GM, concluded that it was one of the best 2 days conferences he's attended, with attendees having the opportunity to feed into the development of the new GP contract from 2024.

The Indigo service was also discussed, and it was recognised that in some cases, GPs are being asked to intervene in patients with gender dysphoria, with blood tests and prescribing of medication, which they believe is beyond their remit and competence. It was concluded that GPs should not do this work if they consider the request to be inappropriate and they should alert the Indigo service, run by Go to Doc Ltd, of their decision.

Dr Alan Dow flagged issues with the Tameside Hospital radiology department rejecting XR referrals and Tameside Lab unilaterally removing tests without adequate discussion and a system-wide understanding.

LMCs request to pause management of QOF/ IIF during winter months

West Pennine LMC coordinated a letter on behalf of all the 7 GM LMCs requesting a pause to QOF and IIF during the current challenges practices are facing. We have attached a copy of the letter, which was sent to ICB GM, and we will of course update you when we receive a response.

Scarlet fever/Streptococcal A infections

As you will be well aware, there continues to be a marked increase in scarlet fever/Streptococcal A infections. We have attached the most up-to-date guidance document, which you may find useful.

Antibiotics supply

We advise you to avoid using nominated pharmacies unless they are known to have suitable antibiotics stocks. Instead, please use, EPS to "Any pharmacy" or give a printed prescription.

Wellbeing

We are well aware of how stretched many GPs may currently feel. We encourage anybody who is feeling under strain to seek support, and also check in on your colleagues' wellbeing. The BMA provide a range of wellbeing and support services are available, including a 24/7 confidential counselling and peer support services, which can be accessed by phoning 0330 123 145

[wellbeing-top-tips-poster-2022.pdf \(bma.org.uk\)](#)

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Strike action across NHS

Please see the following advice from Richard Van Mellaerts, the BMA's GP Committee England Deputy Chair:

Dear colleagues

Many professional groups are undertaking industrial action this winter as part of contractual negotiations and disputes with government and their employers. Whilst practice staff are not in dispute with their employing practices, some of these actions will impact on GPs and practices. The background to these disputes is very similar to pressures that GPs will recognise as currently impacting on them and their practices. Erosion in real terms pay, lack of effective workforce planning, deteriorated terms and conditions, failure to provide sufficient training places, and a disregard for the wellbeing of an exhausted and demoralised workforce apply to all NHS profession groups.

Government and NHS England have recognised that strikes will inevitably disrupt patient care, whilst unions have committed to preserve emergency care so as not to put patients at risk.

Practices may receive requests to help support secondary care or community services at times of industrial action. Examples may include:

GPs or practice staff working in ED/urgent care

Practice nursing staff undertaking work ordinarily done in hospital

GPs supporting ambulance services whether with home visiting or at call centres

We would strongly advise practices to carefully consider the implications and impact on the care of their own patients if becoming involved in these plans. By depleting our practice workforce to support these services it will risk harm to our patients in general practice, potentially increase their waiting times, put practices at contractual risk by reducing the service that they are able to offer, and have GPs and practice staff working beyond their competence in roles they would not ordinarily fulfil. This is in addition to potentially undermining the cause of our clinical colleagues in their trade disputes, and the likelihood of their support of any potential future action by members of the BMA

GPs and practice staff are faced with unmanageable demand for our services and skills, and practices are finding it increasingly difficult to provide safe care. The care of the patient is our primary concern, and it is vital that we devote ourselves to doing this within our practices, and not artificially shoring up other parts of the NHS, which are impacted by industrial action.

More information can be found here <https://www.bma.org.uk/what-we-do/get-involved/supporting-the-profession/how-to-support-and-show-solidarity-with-your-nursing-colleagues>

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Data Protection Office Update



Jane Hill, GP Practice Appointed Data Protection Officer

Access to patient records via NHS App

As you will be aware, enabling access to records en-masse has been postponed indefinitely. Talks continue between the GPC/BMA, NHS England and the system suppliers, and hopefully a way forward which addresses all associated risks will be established. In the meantime, a handful of practices who feel they are in a position to mitigate these risks, have been engaging with EMIS with a view to allowing patients to access their prospective health data from December 13th, 2022.

I have attached the BMA GP committee's update from November 29th November 2022 and will update you further as more information becomes available.

Data Protection / Caldicott Guardian training

Having received requests for training from several practices, I am planning to deliver some Data Protection / Caldicott Guardian training sessions in the new year, which should support practices with CQC training requirements. I could deliver these training sessions via the Practice Manager forums, or if you'd prefer to do it at a PCN level, in order to involve GPs, as well as PMs, please do let me know: jane.hilldpo@nhs.net or westpennine.lmc@nhs.net or mobile 07951 530 417



Happy Christmas and very best wishes for 2023!