



West Pennine

Local Medical Committee

Representing and supporting GPs in
Glossop, Oldham & Tameside

December 2025 UPDATE FROM YOUR LMC



Dr Amir Hannan, Chair



Dr Alan Dow, Secretary/
GM GPC Representative



Dr Mark Wilshere- Vice Chair



Jane Hill, LMC Liaison Officer/
GP Practice Data Protection Officer

A message from the LMC Officers:

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

On behalf of the West Pennine LMC, we THANK YOU so much for all your hard work during what has been another very 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.

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and very best wishes for 2026!

Your LMC has your back!

It has been a very challenging year in “GP Land”, with increasing demands on General Practice teams, including the new access requirements which were implemented on October 1st, 2025. Your LMC has been extremely busy supporting and representing Grassroot GPs and teams at a local, GM and National level.

The LMC Officers offer confidential, pastoral support when needed. The West Pennine LMC team also regularly attend numerous meetings on your behalf, including the BMA’s GP Committee - regional and national meetings, the Greater Manchester Contracts & Regulations Committee, the Association of GM LMCs, the Clinical Effectiveness Group, Oldham, Tameside & Derbyshire Locality ICB meetings, GM ICB-LMC meeting, Oldham, Tameside & Derbyshire Locality Primary Care Committees, the Oldham Senate meeting, the Integrated Medicines Optimisation Group, GM Information Governance Group, NHS England DPO forum... and many more, as required.

Locally, the West Pennine LMC is now the only body whose role it is to support you in the provision of primary medical services, and it holds much of the organisational memory about local practices, services and the local NHS network. Our role in representing and lobbying for your interest has increased, and we have forged and maintained successful working relationships with NHS England, the ICBs and other associated organisations.

The statutory role of the LMC includes:

- Representing all GPs, and GP practices as a whole
- Interpretation and advice on GMS, PMS and APMS contracts
- Working with key agencies particularly those which commission services from GPs and practices
- Providing support and advice re e.g., complaints, partnership issues, pastoral support
- Playing a major role re performance issues, both as doctor’s friend and clinical adviser

In 2018, as a further way of supporting you and your practice team, we successfully established the West Pennine Data Protection Office, enabling you to appoint an independent DPO, a requirement dictated by the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. On behalf of our member practices, we have also appointed a “Freedom to Speak Up Guardian”.

If you would like to flag an issue or concern with your LMC, or you feel we can support you and your practice team in any way – please reach out: westpennine.lmc@nhs.net

Freedom to Speak Up Guardian

The National Guardian's Office and the role of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian were created in response to recommendations made in Sir Robert Francis QC's report "[The Freedom to Speak Up](#)" (2015). These recommendations were made as Sir Robert found that NHS culture did not always encourage or support workers to speak up, and that patients and workers suffered as a result.

Although it is not compulsory, the National Guardian's Office expects primary care organisations to appoint a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and this is something the CQC will look for. As a way of further supporting you and your practice team, Jane Hill has been appointed as Freedom to Speak up Guardian for LMC member practices. We have attached an updated policy and poster for your records.

Jane Hill – Freedom to Speak Up Guardian can be contacted at westpennine.lmc@nhs.net

Commissioning of services in Oldham - Update

Gynaecology, Urology and Dermatology services at Lancaster House in Oldham do not currently support patients by prescribing if required and organising ongoing tests. We have been liaising with GM ICB Leads about this - actively seeking solutions to current commissioning gaps. We will update you as soon as we have more information.

LMC Buyers Group Information

In April, the Buying Group launched a new members' portal to replace its old website. The portal allows members to view details about suppliers, request quotes and see which suppliers they've used over the last four years. The 2026-27 flu vaccine offers have recently been released and this information which includes pricing and how to order have been added to the members portal. If you haven't yet registered for access for the members' portal you won't have been sent this important information.

To set up login details go to: <https://buying.plexusportal.co.uk/Register>. Please note that the email to set up your password is automated so may end up in your junk/spam folder so check there and mark the email as not junk/safe sender, so any future notifications go direct to your inbox. Over the next few months, the Buying Group will be offering free cost analyses to members so if you'd be interested in taking part look out for an email from the Buying Group's Jenni Brooks: Tel: 0115 979 6910

Email: info@plexussupport.co.uk **Website:** <https://www.plexussupport.co.uk>

EMIS X user guidance

Mark Lowton – the West Pennine LMC’s Practice manager representative for Tameside has produced the attached video, which you may find useful. If you require any further information about this, please do not hesitate to contact Mark via the LMC office; westpennine.lmc@nhs.net



Media1.mp4

HCAs not administering flu vaccinations

We are aware that Health Care Assistants not being able to administer flu vaccinations will negatively impact on many practice teams. We are currently seeking a clear steer from the BMA’s GP Committee on this, and we will update you as soon as we have further information.

Useful resources for practices in Oldham:

Dr Mark Wilshere – LMC Vice Chair and GP Partner at Quayside Medical Practice has collated the following useful contacts for practice teams in Oldham:

Mental Health

- i-thrive - directory of services for mental health which may be helpful -
<https://www.actiontogether.org.uk/ithrive-directory-services-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-oldham>
- Riding the Rapids - for parents and carers of children with autism or severe learning disabilities. 10 week course. 2hrs a week. Started September 2025.
- Safe Haven decommissioned but now we have Listening Space at the MINF office allowing drop in for MH crisis - great alternative to A7E if not suicidal. www.togmind.org/listening-space

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MSK

Salford spinal team doing pilot in Oldham which Oldham plan to continue. MDT style assessments with spinal surgeon, physios and psychologists to help. Started in Oldham as we are the highest referral area. Hope to tackle issues of patients dealing with their pain longer term and that surgery and scans not suitable for most and can hear it from surgeons' mouth if needed!

Data Protection Office Update

OpenSafely data sharing – legal requirement

This is a national initiative, which will allow expansion to non-COVID19 analyses. Please note by law practices have to comply with the Data Provision Notice, however the data will not be able to be accessed until the GP Data Controller has signalled approval. On Tuesday 17th December 2025, NHS England sent a reminder e-mail to EMIS/TPP practices to activate OpenSAFELY, if they haven't already done so.

Please be assured it has the full support of the BMA and the RCGP.

Activation instructions for OpenSafely are available here:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/data-tools-and-services/data-services/opensafely/how-to-activate-access>

There is also a link to a 2-page "easy read" version of what OpenSAFELY is (<https://digital.nhs.uk/binaries/content/assets/website-assets/services/opensafely/the-nhs-opensafely-data-analytics-service.pdf>) including a link to a short video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GRjRqOAIv8>).

If you haven't already done so, please activate the service, note the national DPA, update your privacy notice (suggested text is in the above web page) and update your Record of Processing Activity (ROPA).

If you require any further information about OpenSafely or any other data sharing initiatives, please do not hesitate to contact me at jane.hilldpo@nhs.net

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AI Solutions in General Practice - Update

New Artificial Intelligence products designed to be used in General Practice are being rolled out at pace. It is a rapidly evolving market, and I recommend you only implement NHS approved products, which have received due diligence in advance. GP Data Controllers need to ensure there is a DPIA (Data Protection Impact Assessment) in place, as well as meeting the requirements outlined in the clinical risk management standard DCB0160. For further information, I have attached recent guidance published by NHS England, as well as AI guidelines for LMCs.

The GM Artificial Intelligence Oversight group have recently confirmed that, after the careful evaluation of several ambient scribes, that they can support the use of the following solutions:

- Heidi
- X-on Surgery Connect (powered by Tortus)
- Accurx/Tandem.

The equivalent AI oversight group in Derbyshire have approved:

- Anima

If you require any further information about any Data Protection issues or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me jane.hilldpo@nhs.net

ENJOY YOUR VERY WELL-DESERVED BREAK OVER THE CHRISTMAS PERIOD! 😊