

## LMC Update Email

22 June 2018

Dear colleagues

### **Long-term NHS funding boost announced**

After vigorous campaigning for much-needed additional NHS funding to address a decade of underinvestment, it was good to hear the announcement by prime minister Theresa May that the NHS will get an additional £20bn a year in real-terms funding by 2024. You can read the PM's speech [here](#). However, while welcome, this is still less than most health economists believe the NHS requires to meet the increased needs of our growing and increasingly elderly population. Commenting, BMA council chair, Dr Chaand Nagpaul, said: "It is refreshing that the Government has finally conceded that our health service needs extra resources, with BMA analysis showing a significant funding gap compared to other leading European countries. However, we will be scrutinising the detail of this new package of funding to assess the degree to which it will make a real difference in both the short and long term to frontline patient care."

I have met with Simon Stevens and others from NHS England this week and stressed how important it is for general practice to be prioritised as they develop the long term plan using this investment.

The BMA's response featured in [Sky News Online](#), [Pulse](#), [Huffington Post](#), [Evening Standard](#), Press Association, Yorkshire Post and a number of [regional publications](#). I was also interviewed on Sky News, Dr Chaand Nagpaul on BBC News, and GPC member Dr Peter Holden on East Midlands today.

### **New committee chairs for GPC Scotland and Northern Ireland GPC**

Dr Andrew Buist was elected unopposed as chair of the Scottish GP committee for the 2018-2021 sessions. He will take over from Dr Alan McDevitt at the next meeting of the SGPC on 23 August. Andrew is currently deputy chair of the committee, and is a GP partner in Blairgowrie, Tayside.

Dr Alan Stout was elected unopposed to be the next chair of NI GPC. Alan is a GP partner in East Belfast and is currently deputy chair of the committee. He will officially take the chair at the committee's first meeting in September when Dr Tom Black steps down after seven years as chair. Dr Frances O'Hagan and Dr David Ross have been elected as joint deputy chairs.

I look forward to working closely with Alan and Andrew in their new roles. I would also like to thank both Alan McDevitt and Tom Black for all that they have done for GPs and general practice, not just in Scotland and Northern Ireland, but also across the UK.

### **NICE guideline on hearing loss**

New [NICE guidelines on hearing loss](#) was published yesterday. It was reported by Pulse that practices should provide earwax removal services rather than referring patients to specialists, according to the recommendations. GPC prescribing lead, Dr Andrew Green, commented that "the guidance places no obligation on GPs to provide this service unless contracted to do so, and suggested CCGs must commission this service separately. NICE is responsible for clinical guidance but have nothing to do with commissioning services which are the responsibility of CCGs. The fact that NICE recommends something as suitable for primary care places no obligations on GPs to provide this service unless contracted to do so." The Daily Mail also reported that the guidance advise that doctors should prescribe hearing aids at first sign that hearing loss is affecting patients' day-to-day lives.

Read the full articles in [Pulse](#) and [The Daily Mail](#)

### **Solicitors charging a fee for SARs**

Following legal advice on the issue of solicitors charging a fee for SARs, we have updated our [GDPR guidance with an FAQ](#) which state:

#### *Can we charge solicitors a fee for SARs?*

*Under GDPR, SARs are generally free of charge. Only if the SAR is considered to be ‘manifestly unfounded’ or ‘excessive’ can a ‘reasonable’ fee be charged. We don’t yet know when the circumstances when the ICO might consider it appropriate to charge a reasonable fee – but, in the BMA’s view, these circumstances are likely to be limited.*

The updated [fees guidance](#) also includes additional information regarding the issue around what is regarded as ‘excessive’:

*A ‘reasonable fee’ can be charged for SAR if the request is manifestly unfounded or excessive, however, these circumstances are likely to be rare. The GDPR does not provide more detail than this and as yet the ICO have not issued further guidance. We are in the process of seeking clarification from the ICO on what would constitute “manifestly unfounded or excessive” and will update this guidance once we have more details.*

We are very much aware that these changes are causing serious concerns to our members and we are doing all we can to ensure doctors and their practices do not suffer under these changes. We continue to collate information to use in future planned discussions with Government.

### **Revised PHE Hib/MenC PGD template**

Please find attached a revised PHE Hib/MenC PGD template V03.00 (Gateway Number 2018057). The previous template (V02.00) expires on the 31 July 2018 after which V03.00 should be used. This PGD will be available on the [Public Health England PGD template webpage](#) from July 2018, a link to which is also available on the [vaccs and imms webpage](#) on the BMA website.

### **Annual Representative Meeting 2018**

The BMA’s Annual Representative Meeting will take place next week (24–28 June) in Brighton. The general practice section, which will be debated on Tuesday morning, focuses on the pressure that general practice is currently under, and includes motions on GP workload cap, referral management systems and practice closures. The agenda and live stream of the debates will be available [here](#).

### **Climate change and air pollution**

The BMA has published guidance on [air pollution and climate change](#), to coincide with clean air day yesterday, and to raise awareness about the importance of tackling air pollution, which has been estimated to be attributable to 40,000 deaths a year. The guidance features an infographic showing the impact of air pollution on the body and highlights the BMA’s policy recommendations, including:

- fund and create transport infrastructure that will reduce the use of polluting vehicles and enable active travel - such as cycle lanes and safe areas for walking
- legislate the phase out of coal by 2025
- continue to implement vehicle taxation to discourage the use of diesel and petrol
- how the NHS can become an exemplar for clean air and safe workspaces.

### **Mental health story of the year**

Congratulations to BMA News after winning the award for mental health story of the year at the Medical Journalists’ Association Awards, against competition from national and broadcast media. The winning piece, ‘*Far From Home, Far from Hope*’, is about out-of-areas beds in mental health care, and can be read [here](#).

**LMC queries**

We would like to remind all LMCs to please send all your queries to the dedicated LMC queries email [info.lmcqueries@bma.org.uk](mailto:info.lmcqueries@bma.org.uk), to ensure that they are answered promptly and directed to the correct policy team.

Read the latest GPC newsletter [here](#).

Read the latest GP trainees newsletter [here](#).

Have a good weekend

Richard