

LMC Update Email

6 July 2018

Dear Colleagues,

Future of QOF in England and responding to digital-first primary care

NHS England discussed the review of QOF and a consultation on digital-first primary care providers at its board meeting this week. They are now inviting feedback on these two reports and I would encourage LMCs to do this. Both documents and more information on how to send feedback can be found [here](#).

We have worked with NHS England, RCGP and others to review QOF and expect the report to stimulate further discussion. Our intention is that any changes to QOF must provide stability for practices and better enable them to better respond to the needs of their patients. The review document and the feedback we receive will inform, but not determine the outcome of negotiations which will begin shortly.

While we recognise the many advantages that technology and innovation can provide for general practice, we have serious concerns about the model used by providers, such as GP at Hand, that unfairly exploits the out of area registration arrangement, cherry picking largely health young adults who often only want brief episodes of care, and which risks destabilising other practices and the funding they receive to treat patients in their local community. However the suggestions made by NHS England to reduce the funding such providers receive have wider implications and therefore GPC England will carefully consider them as part of our response to the consultation.

Read NHS England full press release [here](#).

Amesbury Novichok Incident: Advice for GPs

This week another incident involving the dangerous chemical nerve agent Novichok was reported, this time in Amesbury. Once news broke, and before the identity of the chemical had yet been confirmed, members of the GPC executive immediately contacted Public Health England to begin a process for issuing guidance to GPs regarding how to handle and advise patients who may or may not have come into contact with the nerve agent. Attached is a copy of the agreed guidance between NHS England, Public Health England, the BMA and the RCGP.

NHS at 70

To mark the 70th birthday of the NHS, I attended a special service was at Westminster Abbey. Simon Stevens, NHS England's Chief Executive, gave an address and I was pleased to hear him highlight the important role of GPs and general practice. Many BMA members have been interviewed in recent weeks relating to this anniversary and yesterday I was interviewed by BBC Look North and Talk Radio.

NHS App

This week the government announced plans to release an app that will be available to everyone in England in December 2018. The new NHS app will give patients safe and secure access to their GP record and will allow patients to make GP appointments, order repeat prescriptions and state their preferences relating to issues such as data-sharing and organ donation. I highlighted in the [Mail Online reports](#) [The Daily Mirror](#) and [ITV News Online](#) that whilst it might help book GP consultations it cannot create appointments out of nowhere and that GPs understand and shared the public's frustration at not always being able to get an appointment because of the workforce crisis we

currently experience. Our response was mentioned on news bulletins on commercial radio stations across the country and in an interview I did for BBC Radio Sheffield.

One in six GP posts vacant

Pulse's annual vacancy survey of 658 GPs found that 15.3% of GP positions are currently empty, up from 12 per cent last year, and 11 per cent in 2016. I responded to this and said: "The fact that so many surgeries are unable to recruit GPs provides yet more evidence of the scale of the crisis impacting general practice. The Government must prioritise general practice and urgently invest in it to address this growing crisis which is threatening to undermine the foundation on which the wider NHS is built. We cannot allow a situation where patient safety is being compromised by a lack of political action. This is placing an intolerable pressure on local GP services, especially as they increasingly need to deliver intensive, specialist care in the community to the growing number of older patients with complex health conditions." This was covered in [The Daily Mail](#), [The Daily Telegraph](#) and [The Daily Express](#).

ARM Election results

At last week's BMA Annual Representative Meeting, the following members were successfully elected to GPC UK.

- Om Parkash Aggarwal (Wales)
- Stuart John Blake (Scotland)
- Annapurna Rao
- Surendra Kumar
- Bethan Roberts (Wales)
- Gaurav Gupta
- Fay Wilson
- Thomas Shaun Micklewright
- Punam Krishan (Scotland)
- Ronald William David Ross (Northern Ireland)

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

Have a good weekend

Richard