

LMC Update Email

3 August 2018

Dear Colleagues,

NHS England comments about small practices

Following on from the comments published in the press from Arvind Madan, Director of Primary Care, NHS England, we have written to him questioning this. At these testing times where, general practice has been struggling with lack of investment, increasing workload and bureaucracy, and a workforce crisis, it is even more demoralising to hear a senior NHS England official publicly stating that the profession should welcome the failing and collapse of their peers.

Whilst there are clear benefits in GP practices coming together and working in a collaborative way, we do not believe that this has to come at the expense of small practices. The collaborative approach needs to be a facilitative one that allows for all denominations of GP practices to work together in a way that works for them and for the benefits of patients.

GPC wants to make it clear that practices of all sizes have a future in the NHS, and that collaborative working is an opportunity to enhance GP services rather than rationalise them.

You can see my comments in the BMA [press release](#), as per below.

“It is extremely disappointing that Dr Madan seemingly fails to recognise the value of smaller practices, the GPs that run them and the high standards of care they provide to their patients.

“At a time when morale among the GP workforce – struggling with lack of investment, increasing workload and bureaucracy – is already worryingly low, it is no surprise that the response to such a senior NHS figure’s comments has been one of deep anger among the profession.

“We have therefore written to Dr Madan, urging him to immediately clarify his comments and reassure smaller practices that he not only values the contribution they make to the health service, but that any moves to encourage providers to work together will be done in a positive way, rather than by forcing them to fail.”

Dr Madan has responded in NHS England’s [GP Bulletin](#), to state that he, and NHS England, remain resolutely committed to supporting all practices and he has also written to me to unreservedly apologise for his comments.

Read the full article in [Pulse](#), where Dr Mark Sanford-Wood, GPC deputy chair, commented. The story was also covered in [The Times](#) and The Daily Mirror.

Millions missing out of seven-day GP access

An investigation by the BBC showed that more than five million people across England are unable to book an appointment with a GP outside of working hours as figures show that 10 % of registered patients live in areas where there is no access to GPs in evenings and at weekends.

In response to the story, Dr Richard Vautrey, GPC Chair, did an interview which featured on several regional radio stations and comments featured in [BBC news online](#) as he warned that the government should address “increased demand and unmanageable GP workloads”.

Dr Krishna Kasaraneni, GPC Executive team workforce lead, also commented “While general practice continues to struggle under the intense pressures of increased demand, unmanageable workloads and a workforce crisis, these figures show that the vast majority of patients have some access to GP services out of normal working hours.”

Read the full article in [The Daily Mail](#). The story was also covered in [iNews](#), Lancashire Evening Post, The Blackpool Gazette, The Worcester News and The Wigan Evening Post.
Read the full BMA statement [here](#).

Phased flu vaccine delivery

As you may be aware, NHS England has advised the use of adjuvanted trivalent flu vaccine (aTIV) for those aged 65 years and over in the coming flu season.

As the only licensed aTIV in the UK is manufactured by Seqirus (Fluad®), to manage supply of the vaccine, and to help ensure that there is equal access for patients and that all vaccination providers are treated fairly, GPs and community pharmacies will all receive 40% of their aTIV order in September, 20% in October and 40% in November. Any evidence of this being deviated from should be flagged up immediately with GPC (info.gpc@bma.org.uk) so that we can raise this with NHS England.

Guidance, along with a [letter](#) detailing further information, was sent out to practices yesterday. The guidance is available [here](#).

The staged deliveries are for aTIV only and will not affect supplies of the quadrivalent and live attenuated influenza vaccines.

Lack of public health labs leaves London vulnerable to pandemic

The BMA London regional council chair has written to the Mayor of London warning a lack of public health resources leaves the city vulnerable to serious infectious disease like Avian Flu or Ebola.

Dr Gary Marlowe, a GP in Hackney, has told Sadiq Khan the BMA has been made aware London’s capacity to deal with an emergency outbreak has been reduced despite ‘the clear and present danger’ posed to a global capital.

The story was covered in [the BMJ](#).
Read the BMA press release in full [here](#).

PCSE medical records transfer problems

In response to a [letter](#) from a disgruntled patient in the Telegraph, complaining about her struggles to have her paper-based medical records transferred from her previous GP practice to her new practice via the PCSE transfer process, David Gibbs (Chief Operating Officer of Derby and Derbyshire LMC) responded with the following letter, which was published in the Telegraph yesterday.

Patients’ GP records caught up in a shambles

SIR – I have every sympathy for Kirsty Muir ([Letters, August 2](#)), who has spent a year trying to get her medical records transferred to her new GP.

At Derbyshire Local Medical Committee we represent and support general practices across the county. This story is painfully familiar to all of our hard-pressed, overworked GPs and their practice managers.

The National Audit Office published a damning report into NHS England and Capita's handling of the contract of Primary Care Support England (PCSE) – responsible for patients' records. The Public Accounts Committee described the outsourcing as a shambles. These reports are welcome, but none of the nameless bureaucrats who are ultimately responsible have been held to account.

In the meantime, general practice is forced to waste precious time dealing with the multitude of problems with PCSE, rather than concentrating on treating patients, who also have to endure the frustration and cost of this incompetence. When will the NHS wake up and sort out this mess?

The letter in the telegraph can be accessed [here](#) (by subscription only).

New GMC Chair

Dame Clare Marx has been appointed as the new Chair of the GMC to succeed Professor Sir Terence Stephenson in January 2019. She becomes the first woman to hold the Chair since the GMC was established 160 years ago. She is an orthopaedic surgeon and was most recently chair of the independent review of gross negligence manslaughter and culpable homicide in medicine, and is the immediate Past President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. Read more [here](#).

Call for evidence for the Topol Technology Review

Health Education England (HEE) is [calling for evidence](#) to support the Topol Technology Review after the publication of their interim report. This is a major independent review led by Dr Eric Topol facilitated by HEE, commissioned by the Secretary of State for Health to help inform the work of the draft workforce strategy, [Facing the Facts, Shaping the Future, A health and care workforce strategy for England to 2027](#).

The Interim Report proposes three key principles, to govern the NHS's future workforce strategy:

- Patients: If willing and able to do so, will be empowered by new tools to become more actively involved and engaged in their care.
- Evidence: The introduction of any technology must be grounded in robust research evidence with a fit for purpose and ethical governance framework that patients, public and staff can all trust.
- Gift of time: Whenever possible, the adoption of technology should be used to give more time for care, creating an environment in which the patient-clinician relationship is enhanced.

HEE wants to hear from people with experience of introducing new technologies in healthcare, and workforce education and development, with a view to informing the final report. If you would like to individually respond, please visit www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/topol-review

King's College London GP Society mentoring event

King's College London's GP Society are looking for GPs to get involved in a mentoring evening in November, speaking to KCL students about aspirations and career opportunities in general practice – read the tweet [here](#). If anyone is interested in getting involved, email kclmsgpsoc@gmail.com

Read the latest GP newsletter [here](#)

Read the latest sessional GPs newsletter [here](#).

Have a good weekend

Krishna and Farah