

COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE LMC

Feedback from colleagues on the usefulness of the LMC Newsletter has been very welcome. We are all very busy people but it is important that at least one person in your practice, perhaps the Practice Manager, downloads the attachments with an e-mail address.

GPC REPRESENTATIVE - DR STEVE EDMUNDS

Steve Edmunds represents Staffordshire and Shropshire GPs on the GPC and is happy to receive any issues you would like him to raise at national level. His e-mail address is: steve.edmunds@nhs.net.

SOUTH EAST AND SOUTH WEST GP COMMITTEES

Dr Rob Horton has resigned as chairman of the South East Sub Committee of the LMC and we are very grateful for all his hard work over the years. Rob will continue on the Committee as a member and Dr Adrian Parkes from Tamworth is the new Chairman.

Please note that there are vacancies on both of these sub-committees and the main LMC to which you are warmly invited to join. Details from the LMC office.

HEPATITIS B

A practice managers group requested further clarification so a simple flowchart has been produced and attached for your use.

PMS AGREEMENTS

Lockharts Solicitors have alerted us with their concerns about a draft PMS Agreement circulating in our area from some PCTs. The Agreement does not contain any of the financial provisions which Lockharts believe are necessary and also there are a number of technical mistakes and omissions. PCTs do not have the right on 1st October to say that there has been no Agreement and that Contractors must revert to GMS.

Please contact the LMC office for Lockharts comments which will be sent to you by e-mail.

ENHANCED CRIMINAL RECORDS BUREAU DISCLOSURES

Please read the enclosed letter about this "Catch up" exercise. PCTs will be writing to you soon with the application forms.

QOF GUIDANCE REVISIONS AND VISITS

The revised QOF guidance is attached. It includes minor amendments and clarifications with amended Read Codes. It is not intended that any substantial changes will be made to the QOF before April 2006.

Please note with respect to QOF visits it is the PCTs responsibility to seek consent to

disclosure where patient identifiable information is required.

OUT OF HOURS AND SUPERANNUATION

GPs taking part in Out of Hours work need to clarify the superannuation aspect of their remuneration.

If the PCT is directly employing the GP, then the PCT is responsible for paying the GP's pension contributions. If the GP is working for a third party provider such as a Co-op then the third party provider is responsible for the employers pension contributions. This should be factored into the contract price from the start.

POST GRADUATE EDUCATION ALLOWANCE

The 'Focus on' guidance note states that:

"Final PGEA payments due in respect of the year ending 31 March 2004, reflecting educational activity undertaken in the five years preceding that date, will be paid after 1 April. The exact timing of payments may vary depending on local agreements. However, we do know that in some areas, final payments for that quarter have been made. These payments will be based on the record of accredited postgraduate training that the practice's GPs have to their credit as set out in the former SFA (Red Book). GPs who wish to claim for PGEA until 31 March 2004 will need to submit their application as soon as possible".

In summary this means:

- From 1 April 2004, PGEA for all practices (regardless of when final payments were made or due) will be incorporated into the Global Sum.
- Payment should be made to GPs for any outstanding PGEA payments for the five years leading to 31 March 2004.
- Outstanding PGEA payments, particularly those for the first quarter of 2004 (January-March) should have been paid on or after 1 April.
- Many GPs will already have been paid their outstanding PGEA payments for the five years leading to 31 March 2004. However, some GPs may not have yet been paid. This is because payment dates differ from area to area, depending on when the PCT first began making PGEA payments.
- If a GP's payments are up-to-date then nothing further will be owed to them under the 'old' GMS contract (Red Book) and no further claims should therefore be made.
- GPs who have been paid in full their PGEA for the five years ended 31 March 2004 have no further claim for PGEA payments, whether or not they undertook additional PGEA activity during 2003-04.
- If, on looking back through records, any GP feels that he or she is owed outstanding PGEA payments and these have not been paid, this should be brought to the attention of the PCT.

The Focus on guidance gives information on how to appeal any disputed payments.

LEVEL 1 NEAR PATIENT TESTING AND ANTI-COAGULATION

The LMC has clarified that level 1 payment is for prescribing provided you follow the requirements outlined in the Blue Book. With respect to GMC obligations in prescribing you are advised when writing Warfarin FP10s to include “as directed by the laboratory.”

CONTRACEPTIVE SERVICES - RED BOOK PAYMENTS

The annual rate payments were paid quarterly in arrears at the end of each quarter based on a count of claims on the first day of each quarter. Payments were therefore due on 31 March 2004, based on figures as at 1 January 2004. If payments relating to the final 2003/04 quarter were not made to practices on 31 March 2004, practices should contact their PCT to claim this payment.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATES AND REPORTS

The GPC has produced Guidance for GPs on Medical certificates and reports – the new GMS and PMS contract which is available at <http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/MedCertRep0704?OpenDocument&Highlight=2,medical,certificates,reports>

The BMA has published fees for work for local authorities and several are included below:

- Case Conferences (Social Services)
 1. Full session (1½ to 2½ hrs) - £71.38
 2. Short Session (< 1hr) - £45.99
 - Psychiatric Examination for Purposes of Mental Health Act - £52.08
 - Children in care, adoption and fostering
 1. Examination - £37.99
 2. Report/review from GP records - £24.36
 - Blue Badges - £24.36
 - Reports for priority housing - £24.36
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FOCUS ON... SUPERANNUATION CONTRIBUTIONS

A Focus on superannuation contributions has been published and can be accessed at www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/focuspension0704

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES ON COMPLETION OF GPR

Many practices have been using software produced by their suppliers to extract a draft insurance report from the medical record. Good practice guidelines are available on the BMA website at <http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/GoodPracGPreports0804>

Reference is made to eGPR which uses automation in the request, dispatch and payment parts of the process.

SINGLE ASSESSMENT PROCESS DOCUMENTATION

Social Services currently request information on our patients using a GP1/GP2 form. A claim form is enclosed for which we are entitled to a fee of £24.36.

Following the NSF for Older People a new document has been formed and agreed with the LMC. This document will be sent out by PCTs over the next 6 months. You can still make a claim for the fee and may find it easier to have the Contact Assessment form as a template on your IT system.

NHS COMPLAINTS REGULATIONS

The NHS (Complaints) Regulations 2004 came into force on July 30th. Practices are still required to make every effort to ensure that local resolution happens when a complaint is made. The two important time limits still apply i.e. 2 working days to acknowledge a complaint and 10 working days to send a full response.

PATIENT ENQUIRIES AFTER ATTENDING HOSPITAL APPTS

The LMC recently discussed motions that were raised at the LMC Conference and BMA Annual representatives meeting. Our 4 PCTs have supported us in the following statement:

“South Staffs Local Medical Committee demands that hospitals are held accountable and responsible for patients under their care or referred by GPs, by directly responding to patients enquiries regarding:

- Chasing up appointment delays and follow up
- Investigation results
- The content of consultations with hospital clinicians
- Immediate post-operative problems.”

Hospital Trusts have been requested to ensure they have procedures in place.

HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Staffordshire Health Scrutiny Committee (sub committee of Staffordshire County Council) is undertaking a review on Health Services for Vulnerable Children - Young Carers. A small group of Members would like to meet with a group of GPs to discuss this matter specifically GP registers of young carers. Members would be willing to meet at the GP practices. If you would like to discuss this please contact Tina Randall, Health Scrutiny Manager at 01785 276154.