

Dear colleagues

NHSE attempts to remove the ability of GPs as data controllers to amend GP Connect

Originally one of the actions within our GP Practice Survival Toolkit, we are inviting GP partners to follow our guidance and take steps NOW to remove the GP Connect functionality which permits third parties to add codes to GP patient records. We have been alerted to recent communications from NHS England to TPP and EMIS to frustrate this step, and remove GPs' rights as the data controller to control this, by the start of July. We will be writing urgently to TPP and EMIS to remind them of their legal responsibilities as data processors, but in the meantime advise practices to take action as soon as possible. You can read our guidance regarding the precise action to take [here](#)

Covid and Flu vaccination programme

Last week, GPC England wrote to practices to highlight our position on both the [COVID vaccination programme, and the seasonal flu programme for 2024/25](#). Since then, NHS England has also announced [a new RSV vaccination schedule from Autumn 2024](#), which is discussed below.

The COVID-19 programme is being offered by NHSE under a new procurement process which covers the delivery of the Covid-19 vaccination over a two year period between 1 September 2024 and 31 March 2026. You should note the funding arrangements relating to this programme:

- The IoS fee for the Covid vaccination, during the seasonal flu programme is £7.54, on the basis that when both programmes are concurrently delivered, this would allow co-administration.
- Outside a flu campaign period, each Covid vaccination will attract an additional payment of £2.50 as well as a £10 additional payment for patients who are housebound under the Covid-19 campaign.

These funding arrangements are being unilaterally imposed, despite the evidence and arguments that both GPC England and Community Pharmacy England have made to NHSE regarding the increased complexity, workload and related administrative burden of the Covid vaccination process in comparison to other vaccinations. **GPC England has made it clear to NHS England it believes current funding for all vaccination programmes is economically not viable.**

Should any practice wish to take part in the programme, it is recommended that as the current offer of £7.54 does not cover the costs incurred, practices should contact their LMC before writing to their ICB to highlight the lack of financial viability to support its delivery. Read more in our [guidance](#)

If not now, when? GPC England ballot for GP contractors / partners

***Protect Your Patients, Protect Your Practice
Vote YES and use the BMA GP Practice Survival Toolkit***

The ballot to Save General Practice is **open**. Following the third annual contract imposition and with general practice at crisis point, we are holding a non-statutory ballot of GP Partners. Funding for core general practice services has been severely eroded. We've lost over 10,000 GPs and over 1,300 practices in a decade while patient numbers increase, and patient dissatisfaction sadly rises.



In the referendum earlier this year almost all of you said a firm NO to the new contract - you were ignored by the Government who have refused to make any improvements or give general practice any more resources.

If not now, when? Tell your partners, friends and colleagues to join the BMA today to take advantage of [3-months free membership](#). For GP partners to vote in the ballot, they need to have joined by 22 July. www.bma.org.uk/join - spread the word.

Vote YES to keep the pressure up.
Vote YES to protect your practice and to protect your patients.
Vote YES to save general practice.



How to take part in the ballot

The ballot is open to all GP contractors and partners in England and will **close on 29 July** (to vote you must be a member of the BMA).

You should have received an email from bma@cesvotes.com - your link to vote is unique and should not be forwarded as it can only be used once. [Support for GP members in England who can't find or didn't receive a voting email](#)

If you have any questions, please email: gpcontract@bma.org.uk

Read our [GP campaign page](#) for more information about the ballot, contract guidance, and how to order campaign materials such as BMA GP Practice Survival Toolkit cards which fit inside *GPs Are On Your Side* lanyards, badges, window stickers, and patient leaflets. All can be ordered directly from the [BMA Reps Hub](#) or via the [GP campaign page](#).

GP contract Roadshows

Our next GP roadshow is on 10 July in [Tunbridge Wells](#) and the next GP roadshow webinar is on 11 July at 7.30pm. You'll hear from GPCE Officers, Dr Katie Bramall-Stainer and Dr Julius Parker, speaking about the GP campaign and the non-statutory ballot for GP contractors/partners. It's free and you don't have to be a BMA member to register - please encourage all your colleagues to attend:

- ALL GPs (partners, salaried, locums)
- GP Registrars
- Practice managers and practice nurses

Register for the in-person roadshows across the country and the online webinars [here](#)

BMA GP Practice Survival Toolkit

We will be inviting GP Partners to work with their practice teams and, in liaison with their LMC, to determine the actions they will be willing to take. Each of these actions is outlined in the [BMA GP Practice Survival Toolkit](#)

It is for each practice to pick and choose as they see fit. You may decide to add to your choices over the days, weeks, and months ahead. This is a marathon, not a sprint. You can read more about these actions in the [guidance provided or in our FAQs](#).

Read also our 2024/25 [contract guidance documents](#), which now also includes an '[Advice and Guidance update](#)', to help you consider how best to approach the contract changes.

Help spread the word to patients

We've produced a range of materials to help you engage patients in the campaign GPs Are On Your Side:

- download our MP4 video and show your next PPG meeting
- download and display posters in your surgery
- save and share our social graphics for patients.

[Patient materials](#)



The [GPsOnYourSide Campaign page](#) can be shared with patients and the public.

BMA survey shows that over 80% of locum GPs struggle to find work

A recent [BMA survey](#) showed that four out of five locum GPs in England want to work more but cannot find suitable positions, despite patients wanting and needing to see GPs, and having to wait weeks for appointments. The survey found that the majority of locum GPs have either made or are expecting to make changes to their work or career plans in the next year, and a third of respondents who are planning for change say the lack of suitable shifts is forcing them to leave the NHS entirely.

In response to this, Dr Katie Bramall-Stainer, GPCE chair, said: *"We are in a ridiculous situation where GP practices cannot use government funding to hire GPs. We have made it clear to the government that this needs to change so we can have more GPs working in local practices. In last year's BMA GP Practice Finance survey more than half of practices reported cashflow challenges that were affecting the day to day running and meant that practices were going without locum cover and partners were trying to cover for each other, to care for their patients, because of the lack resource at practice level."*

Read more here: [Over 80% of locum GPs struggle to find work, finds BMA survey](#)

New NHS Vaccination programme against Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

Following [recommendations by the JCVI](#), two new [RSV vaccination programmes](#) will begin from 1 September 2024:

- Adults aged 75 – 79 years old
- Pregnant women to protect infants

NHSE intend to commission this from General Practice as an Essential Service. This represents a single vaccination. The routine programme means adults become eligible after the age of 75 commencing 1 September 2024, but a catch-up programme will be in place until 31 August 2025.

The programme for pregnant women, designed to create immunity in infants, will commence on 1 September with eligibility after 28 weeks. The antenatal service can be commissioned via a variation to the Trust NHS Standard Contract. Whilst GPCE supports the delivery of this programme via the usual antenatal pathway, opportunistic or on-request GP delivery of antenatal vaccinations will be part of Essential Services, however, as commissioners want General Practice to routinely deliver this service it will need to be commissioned locally.

We have made it clear to NHSE that the current £10.06 IoS fee is not economically viable for practices and should be substantially uplifted. Whilst GPCE advise practices to deliver immunisation programmes included within Essential Services, it strongly recommends carefully reviewing the appropriateness of

participating in any other non-core contract programme, if this were to be offered, where a £10.06 IoS fee [or less, such as Covid-19 concurrent with seasonal flu, when the fee is £7.54] is offered.

A new RGV PGD template will be developed by UKHSA, available from the PGD collection [here](#). Detailed clinical guidance on RSV and RSV vaccination is expected imminently within Chapter 27a of the Green Book. Both professional and public facing information materials are available [here](#).

SAVE THE DATE 16 and 17 July: *Safe Working Guidance* webinars

Following the roadshow feedback, the [BMA Safe Working Guidance](#) is being refreshed - join us at these BMA / Practice Manager Association webinars to hear practical examples in how this can support practices in managing their workload. This is your opportunity to *Protect Your Patients and Protect Your Practice*. Please join with your practice management teams.

Speakers

Dr Samira Anane, GP in Manchester, Vice Chair of Manchester LMC and Deputy Chair of GPC England
Denise Smith, Practice Manager at Merepark Medical Centre in Cheshire, Fellow of the Practice Managers' Association

- [16 July 19.30 to 21.00: BMA/Practice Manager Association](#)
- [17 July 12.30pm to 1.30pm: Practice Manager Association/ BMA Safe Working Guidance](#)

Cervical Screening Management System (CSMS)

The [CSMS](#) has gone live, replacing the previous Open Exeter call/recall IT system. The CSMS is accessed via an NHS smartcard. All providers are asked to update any internal operating procedures and documentation that supports delivery of cervical screening services, to reflect access to and how CSMS should be used. GP Practices should log on and review the notification section to check:

- that the contact email details for Prior Notification Lists (PNLs) are correct (click on 'manage email' within 'notifications'). If incorrect, amend on CSMS, ensuring it's a generic email contact address.
- the details of any patients due to be invited and action accordingly.

For any technical support with using or accessing CSMS please visit: [CSAS](#)

BMA sessional GPs conference 2024: diversity, opportunity, safety

The next sessional GPs conference will be held on *Friday 20 September*. The conference will give you updates on topical issues and is a one-day conference specifically for sessional GPs, free for BMA members. Register [here](#)

GPC England committee pages and guidance for practices

Read more about the work of [GPCE](#) and practical guidance for [GP practices](#). See the latest update on X [@BMA_GP](#) and read about [BMA in the media](#). Contact us: info.GPC@bma.org.uk

Read the latest GP bulletin: [GP Connect | COVID and flu vaccination programme | vote YES in our ballot](#)

Read the latest [Sessional GPs newsletter](#)

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