

ABOUT LMCS

WHAT IS A LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE?

The Local Medical Committee is the statutory body, recognised by successive NHS Acts as the professional organisation representing individual GPs and GPs as whole to Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (StHAs)

The 1999 NHS Act extended the LMC role to include representation of all GPs whatever their contractual status. **This includes PMS GPs in Primary Care Act Pilots, GP non-principals and GP registrars.**

The LMC also represents the views of GPs to all other statutory and voluntary organisations or agencies.

▣ INDEPENDENCE

The LMC is an independent self-financing body with statutory functions. It is not a trade union. LMCs have been in existence since 1911, and constantly modernise to work effectively with the changing NHS.

▣ FUNDING

The LMC is funded by a statutory/administrative levy paid by all GPs, whether GMS or PMS. The levy is dependant upon the number of patients on an individual list and is covered by the expense component of the national pay award. Non-principals are covered by their employing practice but if free-lance they are asked to pay an administrative levy.

In addition to the statutory levy, GPs are asked to contribute to a voluntary levy, which is used to finance the LMCs contribution to the national GMS Defence Fund which supports legal cases which are of significance for all GPs.

▣ ELECTIONS

Elections take place regularly under terms stipulated in the LMC constitution which is approved by the StHA, and by the PCT from October 2005. Any GP may stand for election and we have constituencies on a locality basis.

▣ CORE VALUES

The LMC wishes to ensure a high quality medical services are delivered to patients within the resources available and is keen to see the development of primary care.

The LMC is committed to the values of:

- Equity and Fairness
- Openness
- Equal opportunities
- Representativeness – working to ensure that all advice we provide is representative of all GPs

▣ REPRESENTATION

Wherever possible, the LMC works co-operatively with our PCT and other organisations to ensure patients receive services and care in accordance with the profession's local and national priorities.

Wherever necessary, the LMC robustly defends the profession's views and policies.

The LMC represents and advises on all matters concerning:

GPs as providers of NHS services:

- GP contracts, both independent and salaried, both GMS and PMS
- The NHS regulations, the GPs' Terms of Service and the PMS (personal Medical Services) equivalent
- GPs as providers of 'intermediate care' and enhanced GMS

- Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Health Authority policy, including Primary Care Implementation Plans (PCIPs) and the Health Improvement Programme (HimP)
- The NHS complaints process and disciplinary procedures
- Liaison with other agencies, including patient organisations, local authority Social Services, voluntary services

GPs as professionals:

- Workforce planning, especially at a time of workforce crisis, and recruitment initiatives
- Education and training – undergraduate, postgraduate and vocational training, continuing professional development
- Professionally-led regulation and professional standards – ethical, conduct and performance, including clinical governance
- GP appraisal
- Liaison with consultant and hospital colleagues
- Collaboration with the General Medical Council and consultation on its major proposals
- Collaboration with allied professions – local dentists and pharmacists
- Collaboration with national professional bodies – British Medical Association, Royal College of General Practitioners
- Occupational health issues, e.g. sick doctors. The LMC must be consulted on and approve local proposals for occupational health schemes for GPs and their staff
- Liaison with other professions allied to medicine

In Addition, LMCs have an interest in the commissioning of patient services:

- PCTs introduce a radical new system of organising the commissioning of Hospital and Community Health Services and the provision of General or Personal Medical Services by GPs and enhanced GMS
- The LMC must be consulted about the use of GMS resources by PCTs (reinforced November 2001)
- The LMC is responsible for ensuring that the allocation of resources is equitable

- LMCs wish to ensure that those GPs commissioned to provide traditional secondary care services are protected by being appropriately trained and are properly recompensed
- The LMC must be consulted about Local development Schemes (Section 36 Schemes) and Local Enhanced Services.

■ HELPING INDIVIDUAL GPs

The LMC provides help and advice to assist GPs steer through the NHS. Such help is available on all matters relevant to general practice including:

- Workload issues and coping with change
- GPs' remuneration, incentive schemes, Section 36 Local Development Schemes and Local Enhanced Services.
- GPs' terms and conditions of service, both GMS and PMS
- Complaints, including accompanying GPs to Independent Reviews
- Premises
- Partnership affairs, advice on new and replacement partners
- Employment matters for non-principals and salaried GPs
- Any disputes which may occur between GPs and the PCT.
- Sick doctors and those with performance problems

■ NATIONAL REPRESENTATION AND NEGOTIATION

The LMC represents local GPs' views nationally through the professional representative mechanisms outlined below:

Local voices:

GPs can submit proposals to the LMC at any time, but have a specific opportunity to do so at an annual open meeting held by the LMC, normally in April.

In addition, proposals are distilled from debate at the LMC over the course of the year for submission to the Annual Conference of LMCs.

South East GP Committee-addresses provider issues with Burton and Good Hope Hospitals acute Trusts, South Staffs Health Care Trust and the locality commissioners for PBC from the PCT for South East.

South West GP Committee deals with Stafford Hospital acute Trust and the locality commissioners for PBC from the PCT for the South West.

National voices:

The 'parliament' for GPs is the General Practitioners Committee (GPC) which meets monthly throughout the year.

The GPC is the standing committee of the British Medical Association with full authority to deal with all matters affecting NHS GPs, whether or not they are BMA members. It is recognised by the Department of Health as the NHS GPs' sole negotiating body on GMS, and the GPC is attempting to extend this to PMS GPs.

South Staffordshire have a Shropshire colleague Dr Steve Edmunds on the GPC to present our views and debate key issues.

Throughout the year, papers are produced by the GPC for discussion as LMCs and from time to time the GPC consults all GPs directly through surveys and questionnaires to help negotiations.

National debate and policy setting:

GPC representatives and LMC representatives meet annually at the National Conference of LMCs. Proposals from individual LMCs across the country are debated alongside those from the GPC.

The outcome of the debate determines the framework for the profession's negotiations at both national and local levels.

National negotiation:

This takes place continually between the Secretary of State and his/her team of negotiators and the profession's national negotiating team. The Secretary of State's team is supported by senior civil servants, the NHSE and the resources of the NHS. The profession's national negotiating team is elected annually by members of the GPC, and is supported by other professionals including professional negotiators and the Parliamentary and Public Affairs Departments of the BMA.

The GPC is also responsible for the submission of evidence to the Doctors' and Dentists' Review Body for pay and expenses purposes.

LOCAL REPRESENTATION

The LMC consists of GPs elected on a locality basis, and includes representation from **GMS and PMS GPs, non-principal GPs and GP registrars**. In addition, members are co-opted when appropriate; e.g. GPs with educational expertise.

The LMC meets regularly in full session eight times a year.

The LMC sends representatives to PCT, Strategic Health Authority and other meetings where appropriate and has many informal liaison opportunities.

The LMC works closely with the other LMCs in the West Midlands Region to ensure that GPs are represented at this level. The GPC West Midlands is attended by the Secretary who is the Chairman.

▣ LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES

The LMC maintains an extensive network of formal and informal contacts on behalf of GPs with bodies such as:

- Primary Care Trusts
- Strategic Health Authorities
- The Regional NHS office
- The NHS Executive
- Other LMCs
- Local Patient Groups
- General Practitioners Committee
- Royal College of General Practitioners
- Overseas Doctors Association
- Small Practices Association
- National Association of Primary Care
- NHS Alliance
- Members of Parliament
- Local government
- NHS Confederation (Associate member)

▣ COMMUNICATIONS

The LMC regards communication between representatives and constituent GPs as essential, and is ever striving to improve this. The LMC communicates with GPs in many ways including:

- Newsletters – distributed to all GPs, registrars and practice managers after LMC meetings
- Website at www.southstaffslmc.co.uk containing news, guidance notes, media coverage
- Professional meetings/seminars, conferences with key national speakers
- Information bulletins on major issues and summaries of national guidance
- The medical press

- Practice networking arrangements
- Open meetings; surveys
- Consultation with specific GPs
- Telephone, email, fax and mail
- Annual Report (also on website)

▣ THE LMC OFFICE

The Office for South Staffordshire Local Medical Committee is at Suite 5b, Anson Court, Horninglow Street, Burton upon Trent, Staffs, DE14 1NG.

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Chairman: Dr Malcolm MacKinnon

Secretary: Dr David Dickson

Vice Chairman: Dr Greg Butler

SE GP Committee: Dr Adrian Parkes

SW GP Committee: Dr Ian Wilson

Administrative Officer: Lyndsey Insley

Administrative Assistance: Pauline Walker

LMC WEBSITE

www.southstaffslmc.co.uk

The LMC website contains an abundance of information to make life easier for GPs and practice managers on a wide range of topics. It features guidance on issues such as hepatitis B fees and prescribing responsibilities. It contains urgent news and local updates. It carries summaries of recent LMC meetings and policy decisions, and links to the GPC and the BMA.

Please do use the website

You can email us directly from it with your queries and comments