

## LMC Update Email

16 November 2018

Dear Colleagues,

### **Cervical smear letters and results**

Earlier this week, NHS England confirmed that Primary Care Services England (PCSE), run by Capita, have failed to send 48,500 women information about their cervical screening appointments and results after a system error. We have written to NHS England to express our extreme concern over the unacceptable service being delivered and have urged NHS England to strip Capita of the contract and take PCSE services back in-house.

Although the majority of the correspondence relates to appointment invitations or reminder letters, some were for screening results, which will have undoubtedly caused anxiety for those involved and could have caused serious harm if it were not for the fact that laboratory systems had ensured patients were contacted directly about the need for a colposcopy.

NHS England has written to those affected and informed patients' practices. Capita have written to apologise to patients.

My comments were widely reported and I said: *"This is an incredibly serious situation, and it is frankly appalling that patients may now be at risk because of this gross error on the part of Capita. Some women will now be left extremely anxious because they have not received important correspondence, particularly letters about abnormal smear test results that need urgent follow up. This has been caused solely by Capita's incompetence. Since it took responsibility for GP back room functions three years ago, Capita's running of these services has been nothing short of shambolic and after repeated warnings from the BMA and government, this is now clear evidence that its failings have put patient safety – and possibly lives – at risk. As the body which commissioned Capita to take on this work, despite clear warning signs that it was not up to the job, NHS England must shoulder the blame for this dreadful situation; you cannot outsource responsibility."* This was reported by [BBC news online](#), [Pulse](#), [Telegraph](#), [Guardian](#), [Independent](#), [Financial Times](#), [Mirror](#), [Huffington Post](#), [Mail online](#), [ITV online](#), [Pulse](#), [Telegraph](#).

Dr Farah Jameel, GPC England executive team, was also interviewed on [BBC Radio 4](#), [BBC Three Counties](#) and by the Daily Mail. I was interviewed on Talk Radio yesterday and on BBC Breakfast this morning about this and the wider review of screening that NHS England has now commissioned.

Read our full press statement [here](#)

Read Capita's apology [here](#).

### **Phased delivery of influenza vaccination**

Practices are working hard to ensure their patients who would benefit from influenza vaccination are provided with the most effective protection. Because of the phased delivery of vaccination for older patients this has been particularly difficult this year. Even with practices providing information to their older patients about the phased delivery of flu vaccinations, meaning 40% of supplies have only just been delivered to many practices, it's no surprise that so many patients who are used to having their flu vaccine early in the autumn have been worried.

We have therefore been concerned by media reports of criticism from NHS England, which we believe is unjustified. I have made this clear to senior NHS England directors. Rather than criticising

practices and pharmacists, I have called on NHS England to support those on the frontline and step up the information they provide to patients directly. I have been assured that they will now be doing this as final deliveries have been made.

This was reported in the [Daily Mail](#), [Pulse](#), [BBC news online](#), [Mail](#), and [Press Association](#) report and earlier this week I spoke to BBC Radio Sussex about the issue. Today I have been interviewed about this for BBC Radio 4's PM programme.

In addition, in response to a survey of 650 GPs by [Pulse](#) which revealed that nearly 70% had experienced a shortage of the over-65s flu vaccine, I said "We know there is understandable frustration among GPs and patients alike because of the disruption caused by the phased delivery of this year's vaccine recommended for over-65s. However, with the next delivery of vaccines expected this month, we have been assured that there are adequate supplies to vaccinate all those who need it and patients should be encouraged to make an appointment to get protected this winter."

### **Falsified Medicines Directive guidance**

The Falsified Medicines Directive will become effective on 9 February 2019. The Directive introduces tougher rules to ensure medicines are safe and that the trade in medicines is rigorously controlled. This will have an impact on all practices and therefore, they should be preparing for implementation in order to demonstrate compliance with the Directive. Please go to our [website](#) for our guidance and read Krishna Kasaraneni's, GPC England Executive Team, blog on Brexit and the Falsified Medicines Directive [here](#).

### **GPC England Premises Survey - reminder**

A reminder to please fill in our premises survey to help us feed in to the GP premises review. The online survey can be accessed [here](#) until the 21<sup>st</sup> November. It only requires one response per practice and should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. For any questions about the survey please contact [info.gpc@bma.org.uk](mailto:info.gpc@bma.org.uk)

### **Self Care Week**

It is Self Care Week this week and the BMA has a number of resources available, including the [GP guidance on self care and patient empowerment](#) and [self care guidance for patients](#). Further resources are available from the [Self Care Forum](#).

Farah Jameel, GPC England Executive team, has written a blog about choosing self-care for life [here](#), Matt Mayer, GPC workload policy lead, has written a [blog](#) on the NHS Confederation website and Amanda Cool, Chair of the BMA's Patient Liaison Group, has written a blog about [caring for ourselves](#).

### **Northern Ireland LMC Conference**

I will be attending the annual meeting of LMCs in Northern Ireland which will be held tomorrow, Saturday 17 November, in Belfast. The meeting will be chaired by Dr Frances O'Hagan from the Southern LMC and Alan Stout will attend the conference in his new role of chair of NIGPC. There will be a debate on a range of motions, and a themed debate on out-of-hours. Mr Mark Lee, Director of Primary Care, DOHNI will present on *Health Transformation in Northern Ireland* followed by a Q&A. For more information please contact Melanie Crockett ([mcrockett@bma.org.uk](mailto:mcrockett@bma.org.uk)) at the BMA.

### **Welsh LMC Conference**

I attended the Welsh LMC Conference last weekend, where there was vigorous but good natured debate on a large range of issues. It was resolved that the Welsh Government needs to commit to the independent contractor GP model and invest in it urgently.

In her final speech to the conference as Welsh GPC chair, Dr Charlotte Jones said: 'It is a fact that sadly all too many practices cannot see any other option but to hand back their keys to the health board.' She also said it was a 'credit to the strength of the profession in Wales' that practices had maintained 86% satisfaction among patients during 'turbulent years'. Read the highlights from the Conference [here](#). Read articles about the conference in [Pulse](#) and [GP online](#).

### **Primary Care Indemnity Survey**

The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) has published the [results of their Ipsos Mori indemnity survey](#), designed to help the department understand current indemnity arrangements within General Practice, informing the development of the new state backed scheme.

As over half of the GPs surveyed were unaware of what kind of cover they had, the DHSC are encouraging GPs to be proactive in checking their current and previous indemnity coverage. GPs with claims-paid or claims-made indemnity policies will be required to purchase run off cover separately themselves to ensure they are fully indemnified for any claims that may occur.

We are expecting some further FAQs to be published towards the end of next week.

### **Hepatitis C guidance for GPs and patients**

NHS England has published resources about Hepatitis C, including guidance for GPs and patients, available [here](#).

Read the latest GPC newsletter [here](#)

Have a good weekend.

Richard