Newsletter

Camden LMC
Representing GPs and practice teams in Camden

May 2008

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1 Keep my NHS GP local campaign
Have you had your poster and patient petition that we sent to you last month? Are you using them? Do you think that they’re helpful?

To help us in producing such documents in the future, if you have any comments, or if you have not seen the poster or the patient petition, please contact Hannah Millard, PR Executive on 020 7387 2034 ext 239 or hmillard@lmc.org.uk.


2 Preparing for the future – important Londonwide LMCs’ tendering skills seminar
In response to demand from our GPs we will be holding an all day event called ‘Preparing for the Future’ on Thursday 19 June 2008 at the Brunei Gallery, Lecture Gallery, 10 Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG.

There will be a number of expert speakers providing their experience of the tendering process at the seminar. Attendees will also gain an in depth understanding of the complex issues that GPs and their practice teams face when bidding for local tenders.

The seminar will be chaired by Dr Stewart Kay and will cover areas such as Healthcare for London, the procurement process, the GP experience of a successful tendering bid, a Harmoni presentation on the benefits of partnership working with a large organisation and a questions and answers session.

Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

If you would like to attend this important event, please return the reply slip that can be downloaded from our website (http://www.lmc.org.uk/uploads/files/member%20community/events/preparingforthefuture.pdf) with a cheque for £120 made payable to ‘Londonwide LMCs’.

3 PMS employers’ superannuation contributions
In March 2006 we wrote to you about your Lockharts PMS Agreement and the responsibility in it for PCTs to fully fund the employer’s 14% superannuation contribution in respect of all clinicians identified in the agreement either as providers or as performers. This can be found on our website at http://www.lmc.org.uk/downloadfile.aspx?path=/uploads/files/guidance/pmscontractsandemployerssuperannuationlmcmarch06.pdf.

We have recently been made aware that the Agreement allows for a period of three years within which a dispute must be referred. This period begins “with the date on which the
matter giving rise to the dispute happened or should reasonably have come to the attention of the party wishing to refer the dispute.” This means that the deadline for submitting a notice of dispute connected with the superannuation payment for 2004/5 is fast approaching. If you think that you have an outstanding claim you should first re-read our guidance on this and then take further professional legal or accountancy advice.

4 Motions to the Annual Conference of LMCs
The following motions have been submitted by Camden and Islington LMC for inclusion in the agenda for the 2008 LMC Conference:

Polyclinics
- That Conference believes that the siting of polyclinics in acute hospitals will adversely affect patient care and destroy general practice.
- That Conference deplores the government’s use of the polyclinic agenda to destabilise all small practices, the majority of which are long established and give a very good service to their patients.
- That Conference condemns those in government and PCOs who seek to use the polyclinic agenda to accelerate the takeover of health care provision by private corporations.

Extended hours
- That Conference believes that the extended hours agenda has no evidence base and is being forced upon practices inappropriately given that the vast majority of practices are completely satisfied with the current hours of availability of their general practice.

External tender of local GP services
- That Conference strongly objects to the politically led, non transparent and unfair privatisation of NHS GP services.
- That Conference demands that private sector organisations, or their subsidiaries, providing support to PCOs should not be allowed to bid to provide healthcare services to the population of those PCOs.
- That Conference demands that the contract terms and contract monitoring of private corporations winning tenders to provide GP services are on a par with those for local nGMS and PMS practices.
- That Conference demands that private corporations winning tenders to provide GP services should not be allowed to seek variation in the terms and conditions of their contract once signed.

Funding of practices
- That Conference deplores the incompetence of government and many PCOs which, by their stop-start approach to the funding of enhanced services, has led to the financial destabilisation of many practices.

Reimbursement for GPs undertaking LMC work
- That Conference recommends that GPs are paid a realistic rate for undertaking LMC work, including attendance at the LMC Annual Conference, which should at least meet the cost of funding a GP locum for the cover time required.

Sessional GP issues
- That Conference recommends that:
  (i) LMCs should continue to represent the interests of all GPs whatever their contractual status
  (ii) salaried GPs should be offered terms of employment by GMS, PMS, APMS SPMS and PCTMS employers which are no less advantageous than the model terms and conditions of service for a salaried general practitioner published in 2004.

GP trainee issues
- That Conference recommends that the curriculum for GP Trainees includes:
(i) an introduction to medico-political issues and the role of the LMC
(ii) a requirement that GP trainees attend at least one LMC meeting in their area as an observer.

Out of Hours

- That Conference calls on the Government to encourage PCTs to look favourably on applications from GPs who wish to opt back in to having responsibility for organising out-of-ours care for their patients so as to encourage and support good continuity of care.

5 DDRB message for salaried GPs

The recent report from the Doctors’ and Dentists’ Review Body (DDRB) stated the view that the DDRB would be surprised to find that salaried GPs were entering into contracts that did not provide for some form of annual pay review. The DDRB expects salaried GPs to ensure that this aspect is covered in their contractual arrangements. As the demand for salaried GPs is increasing, the DDRB believes that salaried GPs should be able to negotiate an annual pay review as part of their terms and conditions. The DDRB also recommends that the salary range for salaried GPs is increased by 2.2 per cent for 2008-09.

6 It’s election year – complete your nomination form!

You will shortly be receiving a nomination pack for you to complete if you would like to become a member of your LMC. Any GP working in the area may be nominated for election. Don’t forget that we welcome representation from all GPs including partners, salaried, sessional and freelance GPs. If you are interested in standing for election please ensure that the nomination form is completed and returned to the Electoral Reform Society by 5.00pm on Friday 6 June 2008.

We would particularly welcome nominations from those GPs who are underrepresented on current LMCs. Dr Stewart Kay, Chair of Southwark LMC and Londonwide LMCs’ Governance Board and a GP partner, says: “GP representation is uniquely democratic; membership of an LMC gives us the opportunity both to represent colleagues locally in negotiation with the PCT, and to influence policy in London through Londonwide LMCs and nationally through the GPC and BMA. We need representation from GPs irrespective of their contractual status or career stage to function efficiently.”

7 GP trainers – £750 CPD payment

In addition to the disappointing 2.2% uplift for GP trainers, the DDRB has confirmed that the £750 payment for continuing professional development should continue to be paid on an annual basis to GP trainers with a trainee. This means that GP trainers, in addition to the £750 payment for the years 2005-06 and 2006-07, should also have received such a payment in 2007-08 and should now receive such a payment in 2008-09. This is provided that within any part of these years they had a GP trainee.

8 QOF changes for 2008-09

At the end of March, changes to QOF for 2008-09 were announced and a Focus On guidance note to explain these changes was published. You can download the guidance from our website: http://www.lmc.org.uk/news/news-detail.aspx?dsid=1790.

The QOF changes include the reallocation of 58.5 QOF points to new QOF indicators in the patient experience domain to reward patient satisfaction with access. The QOF payment for these points will be dependent on the results of access questions in a new patient experience survey on 48 hour access and advanced booking. The QOF payments related to the outcome survey will be completely separate from the payment tied to the extended hours access DES. Other changes to indicators are based on the evidence review and expert panel recommendations, and there...
are some additional alterations to the financial arrangements. All of these changes took effect from 1 April 2008 and apply UK wide. All the clinical changes and subsequent updates to the guidance are complete although the GPC is continuing to negotiate with NHS Employers and the Department of Health on the details of the patient experience indicators and the national survey. When the details of the patient experience indicators have been signed off, the revised 2008 QOF will be published in its entirety.

9 National investment offer
As part of option A, which GPs selected as unacceptable but the least worse option in the contract poll, GMS contractors were offered a 1.5% national investment offer that would be made available to practices for 2008/09. It was agreed that the first call on this money would be for any DDRB uplift recommendation. The DDRB has now reported and stated that, following its recommendation, the overall impact of the award is estimated as a 0.2% average increase in payments to GP practices. The GPC has serious reservations about the competence and legality of its recommendation in respect of GMS contractors. Until such time as this has been clarified and the financial effect of the DDRB recommendation is known, discussions about the remaining funding available as part of the National Investment Offer, which would have been invested into new clinical DESs and other local access priorities, have been put on hold.

10 We’re going electronic!
Don’t forget that we will be increasing the use of emails in our communications with you throughout this year. This is in order to do our bit for the environment and to speed up the communications process.

Between now and June, GP colleagues will continue to receive paper copies of newsletters as well as electronic versions. Practice managers already receive an electronic copy of the local newsletter.

We send out our newsletters as Portable Document Format (PDF) files. In order to read PDF files you need to download Adobe Acrobat Reader. This is easy to do and can be downloaded, free of charge, from Adobe’s website (http://www.adobe.com/uk/products/acrobat/readstep2.html?promoid=BPCQR).

Please note that from July onwards, newsletters will only be sent electronically.

If you need to inform us of your email address in readiness for our move to electronic communications, please contact Karen Cooper, Corporate Services Executive, on 020 7387 2034 ext 261 or kcooper@lmc.org.uk.

11 Frequently asked questions – guidance from the GPC
The GPC has released a list of frequently asked questions on ‘patient charging’ and ‘involvement with private companies and other health professionals’. Both of these documents can be downloaded from the guidance section of our website (http://www.lmc.org.uk/guidance/).

12 GP employment law courses 2008
BMA Regional Services are offering a series of one day courses on employment law for GP partners. Running throughout the year in venues across England, these courses will help you to keep track of employment legislation, best practice and human resources issues. Four different courses are available:

- **Managing change** will include recruitment and selection, contracts of employment, terminating employment, and redundancy and will help you to handle change among staff fairly and consistently.
- **Managing performance** will help you to get the most from your staff and will include performance management, dealing with staff grievances, handling disciplinary matters and absence.
- **Managing equal opportunities** will include the development of an equal opportunities policy, flexible working, managing diversity and avoiding discrimination and will help you
to ensure that your staff are treated fairly and with respect.

- **Managing health and safety** will help you to understand your legal duties as an employer to minimise health and safety risks. The course will include the development of a Health and Safety Policy, creating a safe working environment and protecting staff who work on your premises but are not employed by you.


Places are strictly limited and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Reduced registration fees are available for BMA members, to whom priority will be given. If you have any questions about the courses please contact BMA Conferences on 020 7383 6923 or by email at confunit@bma.org.uk.