London’s healthcare: the case for General Practice – update

Following the launch last month of London’s “A Framework for Action” strategy which proposes the development of polyclinics across the capital, we understand that PCTs will be asked to develop proposals to consult locally from September 2007.

Londonwide LMCs is taking the lead across the capital in ensuring that any PCT implementation of the framework retains: GPs as the key gateway to the NHS; that patient satisfaction in locally-based GPs is maintained; that continuity of care is maintained via a registered patient list; and that valued local GP services are not sacrificed for the polyclinic model.

Patient experience survey – latest news!

As you will know by now, results from the Department of Health’s (DH) GP Patient Survey 2006/07 showed that practices achieved high levels of patient satisfaction in relation to access to services. Last month we emailed all GPs and Practice Managers with our congratulations on this excellent achievement along with various tools that can be used to inform the media, patients or colleagues about your success. These tools are all available on our website at http://www.lmc.org.uk/news/general.html#pesresjuly07.

Despite this success, the DH has already instructed the Chief Executive of your PCT to formulate plans to improve access, responsiveness and choice by the end of September. In addition, PCTs will be expected to demonstrate tangible improvements to patients by December 2007. Remember that your LMC is here to help. If you feel unduly pressurised by your PCT please do not hesitate to contact us.

Hib catch up

The DH has announced the launch of a Hib B catch up campaign.

This involves for some children a change in vaccination schedule/vaccine and for a small cohort a further visit to the GP practice for a catch up vaccination.

The DH has decided that this further work should be negotiated through a Local Enhanced Service (LES). The General Practitioners Committee (GPC) did inform the DH that the as the flu DES and pneumococcal catch up campaign are priced at £7.51, it would be best if this could be negotiated nationally as a DES to avoid repetition of local
negotiations. However, the DH has decided to progress down the LES route.

The GPC has written to the DH to clarify the prospect of a DES but in the absence of a national agreement, LMCs will need to negotiate a LES in line with the current payment system.

4 **New PCT Chief Executive**

Our congratulations go to Gill Galliano on her recent appointment as the PCT’s Chief Executive. Gill has been working as the interim Chief Executive up until her recent full time appointment. We look forward to continuing to work with her.

5 **PBC LES and effective referral management incentive scheme 2007-08**

The LMC has worked very closely with the PCT and with colleagues from the PBC Federation to ensure that the new PBC Incentive Scheme is as clear and as fair as possible. Given the very difficult financial situation of the PCT, the LMC feels that the scheme is as good a way forward as can reasonably be achieved.

It aims to continue the collaborative working developed through the PBC clusters and provide resources to enable innovative and developmental work to be undertaken. In addition, by linking inextricably with delivery of the Effective Referral Management programme in Lewisham, it provides the potential for an additional incentive scheme. This scheme could, dependent upon the year end expenditure on acute care, deliver up to two million pounds for investment in primary care services during 2008/09.

Any practices with queries are welcome to contact their LMC representative for help.

6 **Farewells to Dr Khalid Ismail and Dr Kevin Brinkhurst**

As the LMC says farewell to Dr Khalid Ismail and to our GP Registrar representative Dr Kevin Brinkhurst, we would like to express our sincere thanks for their time and hard work on Lewisham Local Medical Committee. Their contributions to the committee have been invaluable and they will be much missed.

We wish them both all the very best for the future.

7 **LMC vacancies**

We are therefore looking for a GP and a Registrar to join the LMC. The LMC discusses GP contract matters with Lewisham PCT and represents your views at a national level. It supports and advises practices especially at times of change. Being a LMC member involves attending a meeting of the main LMC from 1.30pm to 3.30pm on the third Wednesday of every even month, and a meeting with the PCT from 1.00-4.00pm on the third Wednesday of every odd month. The next LMC meeting is scheduled for 15 August 2007. In addition, LMC members serve on various working groups. LMC work attracts an honorarium for attendance at meetings.

If you are interested in being co-opted onto the committee, please send your expression of interest to Marie Vassallo at the LMC office – mvasallo@lmc.org.uk.

8 **Pensions – important news on buying in added years**

One of our LMCs was advised recently that GPs would have to apply to buy in added years before their next birthday or they would no longer be able to do this.

We checked this position with the GPC and they understand that there is a 99.9% chance that the option to buy added years will be removed from next April. There will be a 12 month grace period from that date where members can buy them. Therefore for a lot of members there will be just one more birthday from which to buy added years. We will keep you informed when we know more.

In the meantime, if you have any queries please contact the NHS Pensions Agency on 01253 774774 or visit the website at [http://www.nhspa.gov.uk/site/contact/contact_us.cfm](http://www.nhspa.gov.uk/site/contact/contact_us.cfm).

9 **GP involvement with the Health Screen Clinic**

We have been informed by the GPC that a company called Health Screen Clinic has been targeting practices in different regions with regards to its screening services.

The company involves the practice by paying a fee to rent space at the weekend to carry out in particular Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm screening. It also involves the practice in sending out letters to the target group of patients, on practice headed...
paper, inviting them to take up this private screening service.

Please note that there are significant risks that the practice will take if you become involved with this company and its current business model.

You could be deemed to be in breach of your GMS or PMS contract for breaking regulation 24 in relation to fees and charges as well as being in breach of the Data Protection Act. Your practice could also be deemed to be in breach of the GMC’s Good Medical Practice (probity guidance) and therefore may be open to ‘fitness to practice’ procedures.

Further information is available on our website at http://www.lmc.org.uk/news/general.html#hscgp cjul07.

10 Access to services
Are you providing a service for a particular group of patients, for example, on a weekend or evening that you would like to tell us about? We want to build up a library of good case studies in light of what has been recommended from Professor Darzi’s review of healthcare in London.

Please contact Sue Broome on 020 7387 2034 ext 238 or sbroome@lmc.org.uk with any good news stories!

11 Key roles for London GPs
Dr Laurence Buckman, a single handed Barnet GP, has been elected as the new Chair of GPC. His negotiating team already includes Dr Stewart Drage, Joint Chief Executive of Londonwide LMCs and a sessional GP, and they will be joined by Dr Chaand Nagpaul, whose practice is in Harrow. Congratulations to all three.

We are delighted that London will be so well represented nationally, especially with the launch of Professor Darzi’s review of London healthcare.

12 Londonwide LMCs’ diversity review – latest news
We would like to thank the 100 GPs who have participated in the focus groups for the diversity review to date. They have helped us by sharing their experiences and views on a wide range of questions.

The suggestions of the GPs who took part will be key in determining how we improve the diversity and richness of representation of GPs on LMCs as well as new services to support the increasingly diverse range of GPs working in London.

The report will be presented to Londonwide LMCs in September and its important findings and action points will be shared with you all.

13 Management of healthcare waste
You may recently have received a paper from the Department of Health (DH) on management of healthcare waste "Environment and sustainability Health technical memorandum 07-01: safe management of healthcare waste".

This is a best practice guide to the management of healthcare waste. It explicitly says that ‘the advice in this document and any recommended courses of action are not in themselves mandatory.’

You may continue with your current systems so long as they comply with the regulations.

14 Calling all Practice Nurses!
Londonwide LMCs is collaborating with the Working in Partnership Programme (WIPP) to look at how we can provide support, education and development for practice nurses across London. A questionnaire will shortly be coming to your practice which we ask you to complete and return.

15 Calling all GP Registrars!
You must be registered with the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) if you expect to complete your training programme on or before 3 August 2007. You should submit your final VTR forms to the RCGP in order to receive a CCT application form.

You should then submit your completed CCT application form, supporting evidence and required fee to the Postgraduate Medical Education Training Board (PMETB) immediately.

You will not be able to practise as a GP until your paperwork has been processed.