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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 Wandsworth LMC for inclusion in the agenda for the 2008 LMC Conference:

1. That conference believes that there is no longer a National Health Service as evidenced by the very different arrangements in respect of prescription charges and social care in the four countries of the United Kingdom.
2. That conference fears that the imposition of extended hours may prove harmful to evidence based patient care.
3. That conference is concerned at the growing imbalance between vacancies for salaried doctors as compared with partnerships.
4. That conference believes that prescription charges impair treatment for many patients, lead to inequity and calls for a radical review.
5. That conference rejects the imposition of polyclinics, the development of which has no evidence base and risks destabilising General Practice.
6. That conference believes that the cherry picking of many patient services by the private sector threatens first class services for all.
7. That conference rejects the downgrading of General Practice to a medical outpatients model.
8. That conference deplores the way in which the GP contract negotiations have been conducted over recent months.
9. That conference demands an urgent high profile PR campaign to boost the case for modern General Practice.
10. That conference fears the introduction of a national vascular screening programme for all over 40s will add to the existing burden of ‘Government-induced disease’ in the ‘worried- well’ and detract further valuable GP resources from the sick and vulnerable

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](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](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 Eashrat Mahmood, Corporate Services Executive, on 020 7387 2034 ext 223 or emahmood@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.