

LMC NEWS

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Local Medical Committee

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Items for the Newsletter should be sent to the Editor, David Purser, at Sedgemoor Centre, Priory Road, St Austell PL25 5AS (Tel 01726 627978, Fax 01726 76247, e-mail david@kernowlmc.org.uk . Dawn Molenkamp is the LMC Secretary and can be e-mailed on dawn@kernowlmc.org.uk

Extended Hours DES

We have still not seen the details of the national DES for extended hours, however we know that many Cornish practices are working with the PCT using the LES scheme.

We have not heard of any issues with implementation at this stage, but as ever please keep us informed.

We understand it is quite possible that the national guidance may not be available for a couple of months.

The BMA have produced a Focus on extended Hours which can be found on:

<http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/content/Focusextendaccess0408>

PCT Feedback

The LMC has been discussing with the PCT about the future of enhanced services and an update is given below:

The extended hours LES has been accepted by most Cornish practices. The national DES interim guidance allows for local schemes, where they are successful to continue.

The C & B LES will be backdated to 1 April, and details will follow shortly, just don't be surprised if it look like last year.

The pre and post operative work discussion is still happening with RCHT, and the PCT is still supportive of GPs getting a payment for this work.

The 18 week target is having effects on how the various units manage patients, some of them not intended by the commissioner and they would like feedback. We will shortly giving you a telephone number and e-mail for actual examples which are impacting on patient care, please send them in when you get the name, a copy to us would be appreciated.

Pensions Update

The good news, its been some time since we could say that. Is that the government have decided not to appeal against the Judicial review.

The GPC will be clarifying how this will be implemented and how the lost years will now be covered.

As ever we will tell you more when we have it.

Changes to QOF

We know that all practices will have read much about the changes in QOF for this forthcoming year, but some of those changes need reacting to now.

There are three types of change this year:

- Some indicators and points have been removed, and practices will need to be aware of these, some regardless of the indicator being removed, a practice may continue with them anyway because they are good practice. Perhaps that is why they have been taken out!
- Some changes to existing indicators, many of these will require practices to make certain their systems are adjusted now to take into account these changes
- The financial arrangement will also change. The National Prevalence Day will move to 31 March 2009. The deadline for year end achievement payments will be extended to the end of the first quarter of the following financial year (i.e. to end June 2009 for QOF 2008/09). This is because PCTs take longer than a month to carry out the year end pre payment verification checks. This is going to mean that you will not get the lump payment until, we believe, July. However to compensate for this delay the aspiration made during the year 2008/ 09 will rise from 60% to 70% of achievement in 2007/08.

The BMA have released a new focus on QOF which outlines the changes and can be found on:

<http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/focusQOF0308>

The good news is that we do not know of any more changes for next year..... yet.

Pandemic flu preparations

During an influenza pandemic, it is very likely that that all practices will experience an increase in their workload and will come into contact with flu patients. It is therefore essential that practices have a planned response which includes the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) which will protect our workforce and help to prevent the spread of the virus.

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly PCT has taken a proactive approach and is currently securing a stockpile of PPE to distribute to practices when UK alert levels indicate that pandemic flu has reached us.

The PPE consists of surgical masks, gloves, gowns etc which will be packaged into 'flu boxes' and distributed to practices. Each flu box will also contain information on the appropriate use of the PPE and contains sufficient items for a population of 3000 people experiencing up to 50% clinical attack rates. The PPE will provide an essential buffer prior to the arrival of items that will be in high demand via NHS supply chains.

Urgent Repeat Medicines

The PCT has announced that the service available through many community pharmacies offering supply of Urgent Repeat Medicines, when the OOH service is in operation has been accepted as a full service for this contract year.

A second pilot ran from 15 December 2007 to 31 March 2008. We understand that it ran smoothly, with few problems. The pilot involved 44 pharmacies across the county with over 100 pharmacists accredited.

Over the Christmas period over 100 items were dispensed by pharmacies. KUCS find that it is saving them time interrogating patients regarding their repeat medicines, and pharmacists like it because they can immediately help a patient rather than directly them to KUCS.

Now the PCT decision has been made the service will operate for a full year from April 2008 to March 2009. Another 9 pharmacists have been trained and accredited, and an extra 18 pharmacies.

Again like Christmas, over Easter the service was well use with 150 repeat prescriptions were issued.

A recent decision by the PCT and SERCO is that the public will be informed of the availability of the service, and this should increase its usage even further.

If you want any more information please contact Cathy Noakes, Community Pharmacy Clinical Governance Lead on 01726 627923 or e-mail on cathy.noakes@ciospct.cornwall.nhs.uk

MPIG

You will have all read about the number of national bodies, and figures (the list includes the National Audit Office and Number 10—who has a habit of getting what he wants) all seeing MPIG with a very short future.

Nationally the GPC is fighting to see a longer term easing of MPIG and briefing people about the impact of de-stabilisation on primary care and patients.

Looking at how the last campaign against extended hours went, we can expect to see this one being fought in the open, and potentially being quite bloody.

It is also quite possible that this will be the one debate where all practices will need to be active in explaining to their patients the implications of government policy.

David Cameron on Primary Care

As the national debate rages on the future of primary care, and polyclinics are starting to be advertised, we thought it would be useful to understand what the Tories are now saying.

Luckily David Cameron gave a speech to the Kings Fund on 21 April 2008, on this very subject! The link to the speech is:

http://www.conservatives.com/tile.do?def=news.story.page&obj_id=143765&speeches=1

We are not supporting one party or another, just attempting to make certain you have all views available for you to review.

Pharmacy White Paper

Those of you with an eye on politics will have spotted the White Paper concerning Pharmacy Services in England, published on 3 April 2008.

It will have implications for dispensing and non-dispensing practices, with a proposed increase in the range of services provided from retail pharmacies including more clinical services and a change in the current regulations controlling consent to dispense (for both doctors and pharmacies). The White Paper contains both threats and opportunities for Cornwall, and we will be pressing the P.C.T. and the G.P.C. to recognise our particular demography and the reliance of many surgeries on dispensing income to maintain the viability of rural branch surgeries.

It is inconceivable in communities where Post Offices and village shops are closing, that a retail pharmacy will open, so GP dispensing will remain the patient's most convenient choice.

Further consultation is needed on the expansion of the role of pharmacies in screening, diagnostics and treatments, as well as the sale of O.T.C. preparations in G.P. Surgeries.

As the consultation is in progress it is important that we alert the public to the possibility that GP dispensing maybe restricted and ensure they make their views known to the Department of Health.

For those with insomnia the full document and lots more can be downloaded from:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_083815

CUI Clinical Applications and Patient Safety (CAPS) Project

Volunteers for upcoming activities on the Clinical Applications and Patient Safety (CAPS) Project (part of the Common User Interface (CUI) programme within NHS Connecting for Health) are being sought.

A crucial part of this work involves gathering information and observations from front-line NHS staff. As such, the Project is looking for volunteers to take part in observations, interviews and workshops which will provide NHS professionals the opportunity to be involved in the shaping of clinical systems design guidance and potential design standards and contributing to long term efforts to increase patient safety and further reduce hazards from the differences between clinical information systems.

You will also gain an insight into the current progress of the CAPS Project and the overall CUI programme, its aims, objectives and outputs, as well as having an opportunity to influence these outputs prior to them being published for use in the wider NHS.

Volunteers do not need to have an interest in or aptitude with computers. We are looking for a range of experience, and therefore also encourage the nomination of more junior clinical staff to attend these sessions.

There are a variety of events, on-line or at a centre. If you are interested please Email the project support team at cui stakeholder.mailbox@nhs.net including "CAPS volunteer" in the title of your email, and including your area of interest from the below, your role, experience and contact details, and we will contact you to confirm your place at the earliest opportunity.

BMA employment law conferences

The 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.

There are 4 different courses, namely:

- 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 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 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. This 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.

For further information about the courses, including registration fees, contact <http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/gpemploymentlaw08>. If this link does not work, or you have other questions please contact BMA conferences on 020 7383 6923 or by e-mail on confunit@bma.org.uk.

We understand that the courses are allocated on a first come, first served basis, reduced fees are available for BMA members

S W Deanery Conference Reminder

The LMC has been asked to remind you of the following conference:

Dear Colleague

Have you booked a place at our Primary Care Conference yet? Good news – spaces are still available! The conference is taking place at St Mellion Golf & Country Club, Saltash between 13th – 15th May 2008. This is a great opportunity for the whole team - GPs, Practice Managers, the nursing team and health care assistants - to both network and update their knowledge and skills.

Tuesday 13th – with an opening address by Professor Ruth Chambers – is aimed at doctors with clinical updates as the basis for the day

Wednesday 14th – opening address by Dr Nick D'Arcy – again for doctors and also managers in primary care; the day concentrates on CPD, Co-mentoring, Appraisal and Commissioning

Thursday 15th – opening address by Mrs Dorf Ruscoe – is for the whole team and of particular interest to the nursing team and HCAs as Paul Vaughan, National Project Manager, HCA Initiative and Dr Sarah Gray, Primary Care Lead for Women's Health in Cornwall, will be delivering workshops.

The website also contains information including speakers and facilitators, http://www.pms.ac.uk/peninsuladeanery/cms/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=111&Itemid=3

Please circulate to all your staff and we look forward to hearing from you.

Conference Organisers

Dr Nick Roberts, Dr Vik Mohan, Lesley Seward, Judy Hollett
Judy Hollett, Courses and Events Administrator
NHS Education South West, South West Peninsula Deanery
Tel: (01752) 437424, Fax: (01752) 517858

Having recently formed the very reasonable point of view that feedback from patients is likely to prove about as positive as a bite on the bum from an adder, I was more than pleasantly surprised by the results of a survey by the National Consumer Council in February. Consumers were asked which services they would most like to "Kiss or Dismiss" on Valentine's Day. Family Docs were clear winners with 27% of women saying they would give their GP a kiss. Seeing as how I seem to have become the practice geriatrician in the latter stages of my distinguished career, I am not sure in my case the result of the survey is terribly good news. The sound of octogenarian puckering beckons.

Whilst on the subject of kissing or dismissing I need to share with you that I am having a spot of bother with the anklebiters, as I affectionately call the junior partners at the Abandonhope Surgery. For a start they keep talking about my retirement party, despite the somewhat salient fact that I have not mentioned any intention to retire whatsoever, either now or in the foreseeable future. To cap it all the local newsagent seems to have inadvertently left my name off the top of the letterheads in the latest delivery of practice notepaper, so I have had a few words on the matter with our Practice Manager who as I construct this literary masterpiece is busily engaged with his biro in writing my name in ink on each of 5000 sheets of Basildon Bond notepaper.

Secondly the young whippersnappers have the gall to complain that I have far too much to say for myself in practice meetings, which given that I am an inexhaustible fount of knowledge all on subjects from Arabic to Zoology shows more than a smidgeon of a lack insight on their part. I have noted one or two of them looking bored and distracted when I am giving helpful commentary on some subject or other, and even on one occasion one of the blighters actually painting their nails. Mind you the reprobate concerned in the manicuring incident, Dr Clint Thrust, has always concerned me

more than a tad, especially since his recent prolonged leave of absence from work after twanging his achilles tendon during a ballet lesson.

But perhaps the greatest worry has been the recently developed habit of Dr Hilda Bunnytunnel for leaving warning notes and post-its addressed in imperious tone to yours truly all over the place. I found one on my desk haranguing me on the subject of the untidy state of my consulting room, another on my car windscreen pointing out my car had been parked selfishly and not within the yellow lines, and yet another pinned up inside the staff toilet reminding me to do my flies up properly and warning of the likely involvement of the GMC if I should inadvertently display my wares to the punters. I am half expecting to find a missive from Hilda pinned to my lawnmower pointing out that the stripes on my lawn are not straight enough.

But all of these indignities are mere bagatelles compared with government inspired QOF directives raining down on a chap's bonce and constant threats of pecuniary slaps across the wrists from the Secretary of State for Health for failing to adhere rigidly to the latest dotty directive. In truth the joy of being a "Self-employed Independent Contractor" is rapidly beginning to lose its gloss and lustre, as increasingly any evidence of independence becomes ever more difficult to detect, rather like the needle in the proverbial bally haystack. The seductive sirenesque messages from bearded weirdo Mr Richard Branson to sign up with his outlandish Media and Transport outfit to provide General Medical Services becomes ever more difficult to resist. Apart from anything else dear readers, it would be some achievement at my time of life to be able to strut around the surgery corridors in St Salive with a badge saying "Virgin" pinned to my lapel. But don't tell my partners I am harbouring furtive yearnings in relation to jumping ship to join Captain Dick. I would hate them to pop the champagne corks just yet....