

# LMC NEWS

## Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Local Medical Committee

IN THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER :-

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### Index

Your Chairman writes	1
2009 patient survey	2
Revalidation starts	2
Look after our nhs	2
Your LMC	3
Channel Islands	3
Exceptional Treatments	3
Working with the PCT	4
Strange requests for medicals	4
Exter Medic-legal conference	4
GMC registration	4
Dr Bile writes	5/6

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### Your Chairman writes

I am bound by omerta not to mention the Patient Experience Survey, so here goes: how we got into this mess, I cannot understand. Our negotiators say they had no option over the arrangements for the Survey, and I have to assume that much the same 'force majeure' was used by the DoH as was used in the 'Extended Hours' debacle. There is no requirement for the survey to attain statistical significance, nor for account to be taken of any local factors influencing results: however, significant amounts of money may be diverted from Primary Care, which will have for greater significance for patients.

I hope that the national indignation at this poorly arranged farrago will produce a positive result. As a patient, I would like to ensure that my views are explored in a more reliable way to ensure that resulting changes actually reflect need.

Flu has not gone away. We have a breathing space during which it is important you ensure your mouth is covered and your practice plan is robust. We have national agreements to ensure GMS payments continue during a Pandemic when normal service will be curtailed, which will run until the end of the recovery period; practice will only be eligible for this if they are participating in or have made their resources available to their PCT.

A reminder of the flu websites:

BMA [www.bma.org.uk/health\\_promotion\\_ethics/influenza/index.jsp](http://www.bma.org.uk/health_promotion_ethics/influenza/index.jsp)  
DoH [www.dh.gov.uk/en/PublicHealth/Flu/PandemicFlu/index.htm](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/PublicHealth/Flu/PandemicFlu/index.htm)  
RCGP [www.rcgp.org.uk/clinical\\_and\\_research/pandemic\\_planning.aspx](http://www.rcgp.org.uk/clinical_and_research/pandemic_planning.aspx)  
HPA [www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&Page&HPAwebAutoListName/Page/1240812234677?](http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&Page&HPAwebAutoListName/Page/1240812234677?)  
[p=1240812234677](http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAwebAutoListName/Page/1240812234677?p=1240812234677)

Next week is the Conference of LMC's with Cornwall speaking to an eclectic variety of motions. We will take the opportunity of quizzing the negotiators regarding the Survey.

Finally, the LMC would like to wish Peter Knibbs well in his retirement from his position as Director of Primary Care and P.E.C. Chair.

## 2009 patient survey and QOF

Despite concerns being expressed by the GPC to the Department of Health and directly to the Secretary of State about the contents, methodology of the suggested patient survey the results of the recent survey are now known.

Unsurprisingly because it is now such a long questionnaire, many patients have not completed it, or in the case of PES 7 and PES8 (vital for QOF payments) not answered both. Because of this some practices may face losing thousands of pounds because of a few dozen responses. The worry extends further, because this is not a postal vote, those patients may not have tried to avail themselves of the services of the practice for some time, and you may well have changed systems since.

In the short term if you feel that the results do not reflect the service you have been offering then a practice put in an appeal to the PCT. If you wish to do so please contact the LMC for a template.

In the longer term, these surveys are happening every 3 months and the GPC is discussing with the Department of Health the real implications and outcomes of this survey. It is important to emphasize that the GPC are in favour of getting patient feedback, and believe that surveys are a good way of achieving this.

## Revalidation starts

You may not have felt it, but the revalidation process started on 1 April 2009 and any appraisals undertaken after that date will be used in your revalidation evidence. Although exact details of the revalidation process may still be discussed nationally GPs are advised to start making the appraisal process as comprehensive and complete as they can, this will aid your revalidation.

## Look after our nhs campaign

The BMA is launching a campaign to raise awareness of the impact of market driven reforms within the NHS. The BMA has developed 8 key principles, a web site and is seeking support and information.

Further details can be found on:

[Www.lookafterournhs.org.uk](http://www.lookafterournhs.org.uk)

You are encouraged to send examples of how market reforms are having on patient care, services, and the working lives of local doctors, nurses and other staff. The BMA will be sending a range of material out to you including a stand alone newsletter.

## Your LMC

The LMC operates with a main Committee which includes representatives from across the county (with the exception of the west for which there are vacancies) and representatives from the non principled GPs. The main committee meets every two months. From these a smaller number form the Cabinet, which meets monthly and is available for swifter decisions from the office to questions and issues raised by members, the local PCT or the GPC.

Recently Richard Clapp has left the Committee, Cabinet and even Cornwall to go to Reading. Whilst we wish him well in the land of David Brent the editor fears for his sanity.

Following this resignation Pete Merrin from Perranporth has volunteered and been elected by the main committee onto the Cabinet and is warmly welcomed.

The committee also elected Shelagh McCormick as deputy Chairman. Shelagh replaces Phil Dommett who has covered this role for the last year and the committee thanked Phil for volunteering and using his considerable experience, again for the LMC.

To those GPs in the west, if you are considering volunteering for the committee, please telephone us if you want to chat it over. If you want to attend a meeting or discuss membership with existing members, please let us know.

## Channel Islands—reciprocal medical care ends

The Channel; Isles are, it seems Crown Dependencies, part of the British Isles and yet not part of the UK. This rare state applies to Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, Herm and Sark, whilst in the Irish Sea we understand that it also applies to the Isle of Man. The reciprocal agreement between the UK and these islands ended on 31 March 2009 and thus:

- Channel Islands and Isle of Man residents visiting this country may have access to some NHS services e.g. free A & E but must now pay for further treatment, but will also no longer be eligible for medical services beyond the emergency services.
- Visitors to these islands need to now carry adequate travellers health insurance

## Exceptional Treatments Policy

We understand that the previous policy on low priority treatments is being revamped. To start with, they are to be known as Exceptional Treatments policy, and a section for it on the PCT public website is under construction. In the meantime copies of the current policies please contact the CIOS PCT reception on 0845 170 8000, Sedgemoor Centre, Priory Road, St Austell PL25 5AS or for further information can be obtained from the Exceptional Treatments Officer via the above telephone number and address.

## Working with the PCT

**We understand that the PCT will be paying all practices their pre and post op monies for 2008/09 in June 2009.**

**In about two weeks time, we also understand that the pre and post op specification for 2009 to 2010 will be launched in a couple of weeks time.**

**There has been much debate about QOF evidence during the last year and we will be meeting with the PCT to agree a clear policy for QOF for the current financial year in terms of visits, evidence and how it is managed. It seems as though the PCT has been reassured by the evidence it has seen this year. This will be circulated as soon as it is known.**

**Finally the LMC is meeting with the PCT to discuss the introduction of a balanced scorecard and the approach of the PCT to the "Improving Primary Care Services" paper which was launched in January and has been mentioned before in the newsletter.**

## Strange requests for medicals

Whilst not exactly the silly season, practices seem to be receiving an increasing number of strange requests for medicals.

Recent requests have included an Army Cadet medical which included an opinion as to whether the patients was emotionally stable, fitness to attend a gym and of course exam sickness letters.

Most of these strange requests are outside of your core GMS which means not only can you charge for them, but you can refuse if you feel the request is asking for an opinion that you just cannot supply.

## The Exeter Medico-Legal Society Conference 2009

We have received details of a local conference entitled "Litigation and how to avoid it."

It is being held on 25 September 2009 at the University of Exeter . It starts at 9.00am and finishes at 5.00pm. The costs are £125 per delegate and £50 for students and trainees.

More details can be found at the EMLS website on:

<http://www.emls.org.uk/>

## GMC Registration reminder

We would like to bring to your attention a significant problem that has occurred in another LMC area but could be replicated nationwide.

The other area had 2 doctors that because of personal circumstances did not pay their GMC registration and did not receive the subsequent correspondence. They were therefore removed from the GMC register - without their knowledge. This only came to light when they were involved (peripherally ) in complaints made to the GMC. Without the complaints they would have continued to practice unregistered. They both continued to practice unregistered in any case for some months.

The matter has been taken to the GMC who are considering the matter and whether and how PCTs could be notified.

GP colleagues are reminded to check their GMC registration, Practice Managers are reminded to check, GPs have checked their registration

## THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN SPECULUM

### *Episode Ten*

*[The story so far: Special agents Basildon Bond and Dolores Downunder have been recruited by the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LMC to take on dastardly bounder Sir Liam Harrumpher up at the Sadistic Health Authority who, along with his sidekick Lord Dafti, has sinister plans to destroy rural general practice...]*

Dolores and I put on the cleaner's outfits the LMC had provided us with to aid our entry into Sadistic Health Authority Headquarters, which included a rather fetching cap for us both. We approached the front door, bearing our fake ID Cards kindly placed in the pockets of our coats by Miss Spendapenny, while I carried the shoe box containing the mysterious golden Sims speculum given to us by LMC gismo geek Simon Le Bonk, which we had been told would help us in our mission but unfortunately he had irritatingly omitted to include the instruction manual. A gruff looking cove with a shaved head looked peremptorily at our ID and ushered us in, pointing us in the direction of a door halfway down a long corridor marked "Hygiene Personnel." We entered, hearts pounding. As we did so a blinding glare enveloped us and our vision was temporarily disabled. We stood transfixed.

"Ah, Mr Bond, I have been expecting you" sneered the unmistakable voice of Sir Liam Harrumpher. On one side of him was Lord Dafti, in suit and tie but somewhat inexplicably on all fours hungrily devouring a bowl of Winalot and Pedigree Chum.

On the other side was Sir Liam's Ilk, a small reindeer like creature called Charlotte bizarrely attired in a Southampton FC supporters scarf around its neck with a Southampton FC red, white and black bobble hat perched on its head between a pair of razor sharp antlers.

"Since you are both about to die I can share with you my cunning plan to control Primary Care in the South West Peninsular" he gloated triumphantly. "I have already treated the majority of GPs in Devon and Somerset using the Revalidation Chamber to exchange their brains with those of obedient animals who respond instantly with touching trust to every Government directive that lands in their in-trays. We used a Beaver once, a great mistake we shall not be repeating. Mainly we have used Rabbits and Hamsters, although in Dafti's case, (he nodded contemptuously in the direction of the Peer) I used a Poodle. Not an entire success as he has retained the table manners of a dog but otherwise perfect except when he passes lampposts. Now I have Somerset and Devon GPs under my control the next phase involves Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, and you Mr Bond and the delectable Miss Downunder will be powerless to stop me!" His voice rose to a high pitched manic shriek as he pointed to the Revalidation Chamber which we could see dominated the room.

"Kill!" he commanded Charlotte, and the beast sprang forward towards Dolores. Suddenly as if from nowhere there was a grunt and the beaver we had rescued in episode nine leapt fearlessly at the deadly deer. The two animals rolled over and over and the Ilk's antlers gored the Beaver badly, and it fell limp in agony, grievously wounded. As the Ilk sprung back and prepared to attack Dolores I suddenly remembered the Golden Speculum in its box. In the absence of anything better to do with it, I threw the speculum as hard as I could at the rampaging animal. Lord Dafti was otherwise engaged in rubbing his bottom on the carpet.

No sooner had it left my grasp than there was a loud humming noise and small lights started to flash along its length. It then soared high in to the air and started coming back towards us.

"It's a flaming boomerang" shouted my Aussie fellow secret agent gleefully. Then a concealed speaker in the flying speculum started emitting the same phrase over and over again

"Southampton have been relegated...The Saints are going down.."

Sir Liam immediately became distressed, covering his ears and crying "NO..NO..NO..!" His weak spot, his Achilles heel, had been revealed. Dolores thought quickly. While the Ilk cowered in awe of the swooping speculum she sprang forward and opened the door to the Revalidation Chamber. She picked up the felled beaver and carried it gently in to the chamber, quickly returning to the fray. The Golden Speculum swooped around the agitated Sir Liam, driving him towards the chamber door. Lord Dafti had rolled on his back to have his tummy tickled. Harrumpher tripped over him and fell head first into the chamber. I leapt forward and slamming the door tight, pulled the lever on the side of the fiendish machine firmly downwards. There was a loud rumbling noise followed by an intense flash. I turned round just in time to see the speculum swoop low and head straight for Dolores, who was gazing at the Revalidation Chamber.

“Look out!” I yelled, but it was too late. The flying weapon took her cleaner’s cap clean off, sadly taking her head with it. I gaped in appalled horror, distressed beyond belief, when it suddenly occurred to me that although my anatomy was notoriously ropey even my rudimentary knowledge suggested there should have been some blood and gore involved in a decapitation, instead of which there were only a few sparking wires. Then the truth hit me in the solar plexus. Dolores Downunder was a robot! LMC Supremo Groucho Stead would have some explaining to do when I got my hands on him back in St Austell. Meanwhile Charlotte was busily engaged in shaking Dolores’ body parts to bits, that was until the speculum clobbered the not so dear deer before parking itself back in its box.

“Don’t just stand there and gawp, you pommie waste of space” nagged Dolores’ head from where it had rolled to a halt beside the Revalidation Chamber. “Open the chamber door and see if we have transferred Sir Liam’s brain to the Beaver and vice versa.”

Gingerly I undid the elaborate locking mechanism, and the beaver scampered out apparently restored to full health despite its ghastly wounds, while the body of Sir Liam staggered out towards me. I intuitively recoiled but he grasped my hand in gratitude. It appeared the brain of the Totnes GP that had been transmogrified in to the brain of the Beaver last time he was in the Revalidation Chamber was now inside the skull of Sir Liam Harrumphier.

“I feel I have been given a second chance” enthused the former Totnes GP. “The Government will still think everything is carrying on as before, but I can gradually undo all the harm done by Sir Liam before the DOH fathom out what’s going on.”

We bade our farewells and I picked up Dolores’ head and placed it on the passenger seat of the Secret Service Fiat Panda.

“When I was at robot school I always wanted to be head girl,” she mused whimsically as we wended our way back to St Austell, “and now I really am, as that’s all that’s left of me! Next time I think I’ll ask Simon Le Bonk if I can be five foot six inches tall instead of six foot six. One thing is bothering me though. Suppose the Chamber failed to function properly, and Sir Liam is still really dastardly cunning Sir Liam pretending not to be dastardly cunning Sir Liam...?”

“Only time will tell,” I replied and patted her on the head, unfortunately causing it to roll under the passenger seat.

“Get me out of here at once!” she commanded imperiously.

I turned up the volume on the car radio and headed back to base, mission accomplished.

**THE END - FINITO - LE DERRIERE**

