



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER - 28 February 2022

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1. Update on 2022/23 GP contract negotiations

Please note ongoing negotiations are still underway; whilst these progress, the following matters are in the public domain:

[Contract uplift](#) for 22/23
[Primary Care Networks](#)
[PCN Service requirements](#)
[IIF](#)
[Access](#)

2. Patient access to records

The original date of September 2021 has been changed to April 2022 for general practice to complete the action required to ensure everyone who enters information into the patient record is aware of these changes. We continue to encourage practices to integrate processes into their work as this will ensure any information not appropriate for sharing is identified and hidden from patient view. This will ensure safety is maintained for those patients who already have access to their information.

PLEASE READ THE FULL INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE LINK BELOW “access to records”, in the meantime “what general practice staff should know” is shown in red:

Patients whose GP practices use the TPP or EMIS system will see new GP records entered from after April 2022.

From April 2022 we are giving patients with an online account access to their future, or prospective, full GP health record including free text, letters, and documents.

Be aware and mindful that patients will be able to see their future records.



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Know how to manage this as a change to your workflow - ensuring sensitive information is redacted as it is entered onto the clinical system, or in rare circumstances know when it may be inappropriate to give a patient access to their record.

Patients will see new information once it is entered, or filed, onto their record in the clinical system.

Patients will not see their historic, or past, health record information unless they have already been given access to it by their GP practice.

Patients will not have access to administrative tasks or communications between practice staff.

GPC England recognises the immense pressure that enabling [access to records](#) in such a short timeframe would put on GPs. We secured a delay to the original launch date and continue to work with other stakeholders to seek a resolution to ongoing concerns. As it stands the requisite infrastructure and guidance is not yet in place to enable this to launch in an effective fashion. We have concerns that without this and without an adequate public education campaign, the launch of the programme will likely drive traffic to GPs from patients unable to access aspects of their record or confused about what they find, ultimately creating more harm than good due to increased demands on GPs time.

BIRMINGHAM LMC have arranged an Information Sharing Session for all **Birmingham Practices** on *change to patient access to medical records*, which is due to come into force on 1st April 2022.

The event will be held on Wednesday 23rd March between 1300 to 1400, via Microsoft Teams. Below are the Microsoft Teams joining instructions for the event, you do not need to book, just join us on the day when we look forward to seeing you.

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

[Learn more](#) | [Meeting options](#)

3. Lifting COVID restrictions and infection control

As of 24 February, as part of the Government's '[Living with COVID-19](#)' plan, the COVID restrictions have been lifted in England, including the requirement to isolate after testing positive.

The [BMA has voiced concerns](#) that living with COVID doesn't mean ignoring its continued harm to many, and that scrapping all restrictions and allowing the infection to spread in an unmonitored and unfettered manner would be damaging to the health of millions.

GPC are also concerned that removing the protections in healthcare settings that currently exist, such as mask wearing, would be wrong and have raised this with NHSE/I, who has confirmed that the [Infection Prevention Control](#) (IPC) guidance for healthcare workers will not be changing and still advises that face masks should continue be worn by staff and patients in health care settings.

NHSE/I has published a [letter](#) to healthcare providers to update in light of the Living with COVID plan which confirms that there are no changes to IPC measures, and which also advises that healthcare staff who have tested positive for COVID-19, or who have symptoms of, should not attend work until they have had two negative LFD test results taken 24 hours apart, no earlier than day 5 after their initial positive test.



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GPC have requested urgent communications to the public about IPC expectations for public in healthcare settings.

4. COVID-19 vaccination programme

COVID-19 vaccination for all 5–11-year-olds

Following the latest [JCVI guidance on vaccinations for all 5-11 year olds](#), NHSE/I has published [guidance](#) on the actions to take to begin administering vaccinations to 5-11 year-olds from the beginning of April.

GPC also understand that the COVID-19 vaccination [enhanced service specification](#) will be extended and is being updated to align with the JCVI guidance as well as the next steps guidance (below), and will be published shortly.

Next steps for vaccination programme

NHSE/I has sent out a [letter setting out the next steps of the vaccination programme](#) asking local systems to plan for the April to September period, advising that general practice should focus on delivery of core/routine services to patients, and that it is likely that PCN sites will 'hibernate' over that period whilst being prepared to stand back up if there is a surge. Provision of COVID vaccinations over that period will be through mass vaccination sites and pharmacies, although in limited circumstances, where appropriate and agreed with local systems, PCN sites might still be utilised. Read more in the [planning parameters document](#).

The letter also announced that a second booster programme will commence in Autumn 2022, which will be limited to over 75s, care home residents and severely immuno-compromised - it will not include health and care staff. The NHSE/I letter also requests local systems about preference for delivery of the further booster programme from September.

GPC will continue to engage with NHSE/I on this over the spring and summer.

5. NHSE Coronavirus Act expiry Death certification and registration easements from 25 March 2022

The attached NHSE document summarises arrangements for death certification and registration after the Coronavirus Act expires on 24 March 2022.

6. [Check your NHS pension scheme protection](#)

If you have maintained enhanced protection under the 1995 or 2008 sections, be aware this will be lost when you transition to the 2015 scheme on 1 April 2022. Members should consider opting out of the NHS pension if they want to retain the enhanced or fixed protection and do so by 31 March 2022 – it is important that you ensure that PCSE effects this promptly. [Read more](#)

7. NHS Elective Recovery Plan

The BMA's comprehensive [summary and analysis of the new NHS Elective Recovery Plan](#) has now been published. The recovery plan sets out a range of ambitions, policies, and programmes targeted at reducing the elective care backlog in England over the next three years.



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GPC England has encouraged NHSE/I to develop a support package so general practices can deliver recovery and deal with the backlog in long-term conditions. Our briefing analyses the key details of the plan – read it [here](#).

Following the article in [Pulse](#) which revealed that more than 1,300 GPs have benefited from the new to partnership payments, GPC commented: “The New to Partnership scheme was part of NHSE/I and DHSC's commitment to the partnership model and we are glad that it is being taken up in such numbers. While we think progress has been encouraging, it can do better, and we are keen to ensure this scheme encourages GPs to become partners.”

8. Ordering DWP leaflets

A new contract for Managed Print Services with HH Global Associates Ltd (HHG) started on 21 February 2022, which provides the supply of items to DWP's external customers / partners, such as the MATB1 maternity certificate, Med 3s and Med 10s for health care professionals. Read more on [GOV.UK](#)

9. GP pressures

Dr Farah Jameel, chair of GPC England, has letter in the Daily Mail responding to the [article](#) 'What really lies behind the national crisis in GPs?'.

Dr Jameel said: "While we understand the frustration of patients who have had difficulty getting appointments, the root cause lies in chronic workforce shortages and a lack of proper investment. Without a workable plan to increase staffing, freeing up the staff we have to care for patients based on clinical need and directing investment to where it's needed most, we will see no relief from the current crisis engulfing the NHS."

Read more about NHS pressures in our [NHS under pressure hub](#), including GP workforce and pressures on our [GP analysis page](#)

10. Fuller stocktake

Professor Claire Fuller has been asked to lead a wide-ranging national stocktake of how primary care can best be supported within the emergent Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) to meet the health needs of people in their local areas. We would encourage LMCs and GP practices to take the opportunity to input into this review. You can do this by adding comments and ideas to the [Stocktake Crowdicity page](#)

11. GPC England – information and guidance, bulletins, and Sessional GPs newsletters

Read the latest GP bulletin (England) [here](#)

Read the Sessional GPs newsletter [here](#)

Read more about the work of the [GPC England](#)

Read practical guidance for [GP practices](#)



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Please note our office contact times remain 10:00-16:00 and any queries on the day should be directed to birmingham.lmc@nhs.net as we are currently remote working so would be grateful if all contact were made via the nhs.net email.

Please note that the LMC are unable to accept calls or hold communications with patients, we are GP representatives, and we would respectfully ask that Practices do not advise patients to contact us. Could we also remind Practices that any copies of patient related correspondence MUST be anonymised as the LMC cannot accept patient identifiable data.

Helpful Links:

BMA COVID-19: toolkit for GPs and GP practices <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/covid-19/gp-practices/covid-19-toolkit-for-gps-and-gp-practices> Comprehensive guidance for GPs, partners, and practice managers to manage employment and contractual issues and service provision during the coronavirus pandemic.

GOVERNMENT WEBSITE: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> for recent and upcoming changes, guidance & support.

NHS ENGLAND: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/implementing-phase-3-of-the-nhs-response-to-the-covid-19-pandemic/>