

Newsletter – January 2012

IN THIS ISSUE: -

Cervical Cytology Training

Long term Conditions Case Management LES

Care Homes LES Pilot

084 Numbers Again

Referrals

Sessional GPs Group

New LMC Member

Welcome New GPs

Changes to the structure of local commissioning

Injury Benefits Review

BMA Council Elections

Cervical Cytology Training

Earlier this year, a number of PCTs were insisting that all GPs working in their areas undertake either a half day or a full day's update training in taking cervical smears. As a result of GPC intervention, the Dept. of Health (DoH) wrote to all PCTs on 15 December 2011 confirming that there is no contractual requirement for GPs to have cervical cytology update training.

The GPC view was this also applied to nurses, and the DoH has now confirmed that they agree with this interpretation as the letter is about the principles which apply to services provided as part of the contract, whether these services are provided by GPs or others employed by practices such as practice nurses.

Further details, including the quality monitoring advice as a means of assessing training/competence, are contained in the letter, available on the LMC website

<http://www.rotherhamlmc.org/guidance.htm>

Long term Conditions Case Management LES

The LMC have concerns that, despite the LES not

offering a profit buffer to practices, financial risks could remain with practices, relating to, for example, employment contracts; such as short term sickness cover, or other statutory reason to be away from work and the difficulty in finding short-term fixed-contract staff.

A further concern was also raised that this should not set a precedent of work being undertaken by primary care on a cost only basis. It was felt however that an attempt to recognise the transfer of work into primary care should be supported if possible.

Care Homes LES Pilot

The LMC Chairman noted correspondence received from Public Health at NHR relating to a pilot for six GP practices and Homes linked to high emergency admission rates; this followed pilot work at St Ann's. There then followed discussion amongst LMC Members about how and which six practices would be chosen and the contradiction of a self-selecting pilot within a LES regime. Concerns were raised around the open and contestable nature of this LES, a lack of consultation, and duplication with the case management pilot.

084 Numbers Again

Members discussed the front page article in the Rotherham Advertiser on 6th January regarding 084 numbers. John Healey MP was leading a local campaign highlighting the use of these numbers by Rotherham GPs. This issue had also been raised last year also by a national campaigner.

The accepted principle was that patients should not be charged more than the cost of a local call for contacting practices. However, members noted that, historically, all practices had been encouraged by the government to sign-up to 084 numbers with telecoms companies. Hence, as some practices had signed-up to long-term deals, there were significant capital costs in switching out of these contracts.

The GPC guidance on this issue can be accessed on the LMC website here: -

<http://www.rotherhamlmc.org/guidance.htm>

The regulations do not include any specific requirement for practices to consider the cost of calls from mobile phones. In terms of call tariffs, the call rates which patients are charged depend on their mobile phone service provider. It is a matter for individual members of the public to ensure that they are happy with the terms and conditions of the mobile phone arrangements that they enter into with their mobile phone provider.

Referrals

The NHSR Medical Director, Dr Plews, wishes to express gratitude for the work GPs have done regarding referrals – Rotherham Hospital NHS FT have noticed significant drops in referrals in the areas recently targeted.

Sessional GPs Group

Sessional GPs groups have been recognised as providing invaluable peer support for sessional GPs, with groups offering a range of services and benefits, including educational and social meetings, electronic mailings systems for vacancies and educational events. Models differ but there are some common themes and challenges.

The BMA have issued new guidance which aims to share some of the models of good practice and successful ideas, and raise awareness about pitfalls. This is available on the LMC website at: -

<http://www.rotherhamlmc.org/guidance.htm>

New LMC Member

Dr R Daly from Swallownest Health Centre was co-opted to the LMC at its last meeting on 9th January.

Welcome New GPs

Dr Donna Elizabeth Bridgwood has been added to the NHS Rotherham Performers list with affect from 5th January 2012. She will be working as a salaried GP at Market Surgery.

Dr Geeta Tyagi has been added to the NHS Rotherham Performers list with affect from 4th January 2012. She will be working as a salaried GP at Dalton Health Centre.

Changes to the structure of local commissioning

The LMC recently discussed the changes to the decision-making structure which took place before Christmas for commissioning in Rotherham, and following the introduction of PCT 'clusters'.

Following the changes, we have the 'Clinical Commissioning Group Committee' the 'Strategic Clinical Executive' and the 'GP Reference Group'. For a fuller explanation of how these various bodies interface to make clinical commissioning decisions, and which Rotherham GPs are involved in which committee, please visit the NHS Rotherham website at: -

<http://www.rotherham.nhs.uk/about/board/clinicians-in-commissioning.htm>

Injury Benefits Review

The NHS has conducted a review of its injury benefits scheme, which currently provides benefits to GPs who suffer injuries and a resultant loss of earnings as part of their employment.

The outcome of the review is that the current Injury Benefit Regulations are to be replaced by contractual provision held within a new section of the Agenda for Change (A4C) Terms and Conditions Handbook.

Future injury benefit provision would be limited to the period of the employment contract only.

Full details of what is covered as part of the benefits can be found at the website here (BMA members only):-

http://www.bma.org.uk/employmentandcontracts/pensions/general_pensions_information/injbensoct2011.jsp

Following this news, GPC's legal advice on this matter was that GPs should consider getting their own injury benefits insurance.

BMA Council Elections

Nominations have just opened for the election of the 17 voting members of BMA Council. If you want to find out more about becoming a candidate please go to the BMA web page here: -

http://www.bma.org.uk/representation/bma_councils/index.jsp

which also has details on the role of the UK Council and an election timetable. You can also download a nominations form and information pack for candidates from this page.

Nominations for these positions close on the 10th February at 5pm.

Attendance at Meetings

Constituents are reminded that they are always welcome to attend meetings of the LMC as observers.

The Committee meets on the second Monday of every

month in the Board Room at Rotherham General Hospital

OFFICERS OF THE LMC

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**NEXT
LMC MEETING
MONDAY
13th FEBRUARY
COMMENCING
AT 7.30 PM**

DISCLAIMER

The content of this newsletter is confidential and intended solely for GPs and Practice Managers in Rotherham.

Rotherham LMC does not provide individual legal or financial advice but provides general guidance and support for the benefit of GPs and their practices in Rotherham

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More information about the LMC can be found on our website at: -

www.rotherham.lmc.org

There are currently two vacancies for members.

Please contact us at the above e-mail address if you are interested. We would particularly like to hear from sessional GPs, who are currently under-represented.