



ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF LMCs 2012

INTRODUCTION

General Practitioner Committee (GPC) and LMC representatives meet at the Annual Conference of LMCs. Proposals from individual LMCs across the country are debated, alongside those from the GPC. LMCs who have submitted motions on various topics are expected to debate these motions from the platform, according to Conference rules. The outcome of the debate determines the framework for the profession's negotiations. National negotiations take place continually between the Secretary of State and his/her team of negotiators and the GPC negotiating team.

The 2012 Conference was held on Tuesday 22 and Wednesday 23 May. We were able to send 3 representatives (Mark Durling, Tim Moorhead and David Savage) and 2 observers (Margaret Wicks and Amy Farrow). For the first time in many years the Conference was not held in London. Liverpool provided us with a brand new Conference facility situated next to The Albert Dock, as well as new hotels. We were also blessed with very good weather. The Liverpool auditions for X Factor were in the arena immediately next door but, to our knowledge, none of the delegates went through to the final.

We understand that Conference will be back in London next year. The Conference Agenda Committee has undertaken to look at the cost of taking the Conference to Liverpool. There seemed to be some suggestion that it was more expensive to be outside of London than in London, but Sheffield LMC would support the Conference moving around the country a lot more.

SPEECHES

After initial business, Laurence Buckman, GPC Chair, gave a State of the Nation style address. The text of the speech is available on the GPC website at:

http://www.bma.org.uk/images/lmconfchairsspeechmay2012_tcm41-212880.pdf

We had a long session on revalidation and appraisal, presented by Professor Malcolm Lewis, Sub-Dean and Director for General Practice. Undoubtedly, Conference was seeking a lot of reassurance about this new process and whilst not particularly concerned about the principles involved, we were much more concerned about how the new regime would be implemented.

SHEFFIELD LMC'S MOTIONS

Sheffield LMC Submitted 6 Motions as follows:

1. *That conference deplores the political arrogance towards the medical profession illustrated by the Prime Minister and his Secretary of State for Health.*

This motion formed part of a bracket, but we were not given the opportunity to speak. One speaker suggested that this was like wetting yourself wearing dark trousers, in that it gave you a warm feeling but nobody actually noticed. The motion was lost.

2. *That conference supports disengagement from commissioning by GPs until a better pension offer is negotiated. This action would not adversely affect patient care but would highlight the fact that GPs are being asked to take on more work, for less pay and a worse pension.*

We were not called to speak to this motion. The motion was passed.

3. *That conference calls for negotiation about a true activity based GMS contract to defend the profession from increasing unresourced work and to illustrate the immense value for money of GP services.*

Tim Moorhead spoke to this motion, which was voted on in parts. The concerns raised were noted but Conference did not vote for a new national contract.

4. *That conference highlights that when a car's performance is improving it is best not to take the engine out.*

Mark Durling closed the Conference by singing "Three Wheels on my Wagon":

<http://www.bma.public-i.tv/core/portal/lmclive-day2>

5. *That conference demands a public enquiry with the servants of our democracy, the Members of Parliament, to depoliticise the NHS forever and ensure that health reforms are evidence-led changes, independently scrutinised and recommended, and have the support of the medical profession.*

This motion was not prioritised for debate.

6. *That conference reminds the Secretary of State for Health that the 'N' in NHS stands for National.*

This motion was not prioritised for debate.

OTHER MOTIONS AND DEBATES

A motion proposed by Northumberland LMC which caused much debate read as follows:

That conference believes that the time has come now to define core general practice services; and that without this:

- (i) there will be no basis to resist constant unresourced shift of work into primary care*
- (ii) uncertainty of who is delivering a service creates risk where accountability is unclear*
- (iii) primary care is rendered vulnerable to removal of services to any qualified provider.*

Neil Thorman (Rotherham LMC) spoke very eloquently against this motion as defining the GMS contract too rigidly would suit nobody. This motion was overwhelmingly lost.

Many of the other leading debates were the ones you would expect:

- The Health and Social Care Act
- Commissioning (discussed at length)
- Pensions
- Industrial Action
- Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- GP Education and Training
- Medical Certificates and Reports
- Changes to premises arrangements that we would like to see
- The future of IM&T arrangements
- The administration of QOF.

CONFERENCE DINNER

This was held in the splendid surroundings of St George's Hall and the speeches, including one from TV Doctor, Phil Hammond, were very entertaining.

CONCLUSION

Conference seemed a little subdued compared with other years and a lack of passion in many of the speeches. However, Conference got through a great deal of business and most people who wanted to have their voices heard had the opportunity.

Details of all of this year's resolutions can be found at:

http://www.bma.org.uk/images/gpcnews9may2012_tcm41-213043.pdf

As ever, the LMC Executive and Secretariat would be happy to answer questions from GPs or Practice Managers regarding this year's conference resolutions and the formation of GPC policy via email to manager@sheffieldlmc.org.uk.