

SHEFFIELD LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2008

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ELECTION OF LMC EXECUTIVE 2008-12

On Monday 8 December 2008 a new LMC Executive was elected for a four year term of office as follows:

Dr Mark Durling, Chair
Dr Tim Moorhead, Vice Chair
Dr David Savage, Secretary

Contact details can be found on the LMC's website at:

http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/lmc_executive.htm

Historically, the Executive has had four members. The full committee are having continued discussions about recruitment to the Executive Officer role.

INTRODUCTION OF THE LMC NEWSFLASH

Sheffield GP Practice Managers and all represented GPs for whom we hold an up-to-date email address,

should have received one LMC Newsflash since the last newsletter.

The LMC Newsflash does not replace the LMC's monthly Newsletter. However, it will enable us to make you aware of important information 'Hot off the Press', when this is more appropriate and timely than waiting for the next newsletter.

Newsflashes will be distributed by email and will be added to the LMC website at:

<http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/newsflash.htm>

If you did not receive the Newsflash, it could be that we do not hold an up-to-date email address for you, or that you have opted not to receive emailed communications from the LMC. If you would like your preferred email address adding to our distribution list, please forward details to Tina Smith, LMC Administrative Assistant, via:

adminassistant@sheffieldlmc.org.uk.

Please be assured that emailed communications will be sent using the blind copy function, thus ensuring that your email address is not revealed to other recipients.

NEW CREMATION REGULATIONS

Further to the article in the November 2008 edition of the LMC newsletter - <http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/Newsletters08/Nov08.pdf> please note that the Cremation Regulations (2008) will come into effect on **1 January 2009**.

Of particular relevance to doctors are:

- Cremation Regulations 2008: Guidance for Doctors - <http://www.justice.gov.uk/docs/cremation-doctors-guidance.pdf>
- Form CR4 Medical Certificate (replacing Form B) - <http://www.justice.gov.uk/docs/cr4.pdf>

- Form CR5 Confirmatory Medical Certificate (replacing Form C) - <http://www.justice.gov.uk/docs/cr5.pdf>

The LMC would advise all GPs to familiarise themselves with the guidance and new forms in advance.

We hope to bring you further updates about specific issues relating to the new regulations in future editions of the newsletter. In the meantime, if you have any queries or concerns relating to these changes, please do not hesitate to contact the LMC via email to:

administrator@sheffieldlmc.org.uk

PHLEBOTOMY IN NURSING HOMES

Further to the article in the September 2008 edition of the LMC newsletter, a system has been set up whereby homes can directly request phlebotomy equipment (bottles, needles etc) via the same route as GPs. The equipment has to be delivered to GP practices via the van service. Homes can then arrange to collect equipment from the practice as soon as possible.

As previously stated it would be prudent for practices to give homes a small supply of their blood investigation forms to ensure that blood tests go with the correct forms to the laboratories in order to avoid communication difficulties.

This arrangement has been put in place for tests ordered by GPs on their own patients who are resident in Nursing Homes.

PREVALENCE PAYMENTS FOR QOF

As reported in the October 2008 LMC newsletter, the GPC has agreed with NHS Employers (NHSE) that current prevalence arrangements used in determining QOF payments will move to true prevalence.

This change will take place over the next two financial years:

- On 1 April 2009, the square rooting component of the current

arrangements will be discontinued.

- On 1 April 2010, the current cut off arrangements will be discontinued, and true prevalence will be used to determine QOF payments.

The move to true prevalence is regarded as a fairer system than the square rooting mechanism. These changes are cash-neutral and will redistribute funding between GP practices.

The GPC's expectation is that the vast majority of GP practices will find that their QOF payments will not change significantly. However, there will be a small number of practices who will see a significant loss to their current QOF income as a result of these changes. The GPC agreed with NHSE that affected practices would be dealt with locally and sympathetically by PCTs. In addition, the GPC has stressed to the NHSE that the Department of Health should urge PCTs to begin the process of identifying and contacting practices that are adversely affected and to advise the practices themselves to contact LMCs if they need assistance.

A spreadsheet has been developed to enable practices to calculate the impact of the changes on their QOF income. The spreadsheet can be downloaded from the BMA website at:

www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/QOFPrevalence.

In order for work to be undertaken to look at assisting practices in the months prior to the 5% cut-off disappearing, the LMC would urge badly affected practices, whether GMS or PMS, to inform the LMC of their potential loss of income via email to:

administrator@sheffieldlmc.org.uk.

EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE (ESA) CLAIMS – VERBAL CONSENT

The GPC has recently confirmed that assurances have been sought from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) regarding the introduction of verbal consent for the release of medical information from

GPs for Employment and Support Allowance claims.

The DWP responded with information about the safeguards that will be in place to protect patients and GPs when verbal consent is given. The GPC has written confirmation from the Information Commissioner and the GMC that they find the proposals and safeguards acceptable. Therefore, GPs should continue to accept the assurances from the DWP officer that consent has been given.

The introduction of the Employment and Support Allowance will mean:

- GPs will still be asked to provide **statements of incapacity for work** (usually on form Med 3) until the Work Capability Assessment is carried out, which is usually within the first 13 weeks of a patient's claim.
- GPs may also be asked to complete form **ESA113**. This is similar to form IB113. Form ESA113 can be completed from the medical records and GPs are not required to carry out a separate examination of their patient.
- GPs may also be asked to complete form **DS1500** to provide information about patients who are terminally ill or who are not expected to live longer than 6 months. This is a factual report in which GPs provide details of their condition and any current, planned or future treatment. GPs are not expected to give an opinion on prognosis or life expectancy. Doctors may claim a fee of £17 for completion of a DS1500 (VAT registered practices should also charge VAT).

At present there has been no change to the arrangements whereby the DWP obtain information for Disability Living and Attendance Allowances on DBD series forms for which the DWP pay £13.50 and, where appropriate, VAT.

As reported in the October 2008 LMC newsletter, further information about Employment and Support Allowance can be found at:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/esa/healthcare-professionals-esa.asp>

A REVIEW OF THE NHS NEXT STAGE REVIEW FINAL REPORTS

The GPC has recently issued this guidance document which briefs GPs on the proposals relevant to general practice and primary care that can be found in *High Quality Care for All* and *Our Vision for Primary and Community Care*.

The guidance offers an accessible distillation of the proposals contained within these reports, so that GPs can appreciate how the Department of Health intends to shape primary care and the NHS.

A copy of the guidance can be downloaded from:

- The GPC website at:
[http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/PDFreviewnextstageNov08/\\$FILE/reviewnextstageNov08.pdf](http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/PDFreviewnextstageNov08/$FILE/reviewnextstageNov08.pdf)
- The LMC website (see *Review of the Next Stage Review final reports*) at:
<http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/guidance.htm>

AVAILABILITY OF SHARED CARE PROTOCOLS/TRAFFIC LIGHT DRUGS LIST

The LMC regularly receives queries regarding the availability of shared care protocols (SCPs) approved by Sheffield Area Prescribing Committee (APC) and the latest version of the Traffic Light Drugs List.

These documents can be downloaded from Sheffield PCT's website as follows:

- SCPs approved by the APC:
<http://www.sheffieldpct.nhs.uk/professionals/8-2.php>
- Traffic Light Drugs List:
<http://www.sheffieldpct.nhs.uk/professionals/8-3.php>

These links have also been added to the *Useful Links* section of the LMC website at:

http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/useful_links.htm

GP PATIENT SURVEY

The GP Patient Survey for the first part of 2009 has now been finalised and will be available to patients soon.

As in previous years, practices will be sent posters to advertise the survey.

The GPC has been represented on the stakeholder group set up to advise on the content of the survey. However, not all of their concerns have been addressed. Different versions of the survey will be used in the four nations, with those in England and Northern Ireland being considerably longer than those that will be used in Scotland and Wales. The length of the English/NI survey is one of the key issues on which the GPC has expressed concerns.

FOCUS ON THE DYNAMISING FACTOR

As reported in the November 2008 LMC newsletter, revised dynamising factors have been agreed for 2004 – 2008.

The GPC and the BMA's Pensions Department has produced *Focus on the Dynamising Factor* guidance to help GPs understand the arrangements for the dynamising factor, which is applied to GP's pensions.

A copy of the guidance can be downloaded from:

- The GPC website at:
[http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/PDFfocusdynamfactor0305/\\$FILE/focusdynamfactor1108.pdf](http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/PDFfocusdynamfactor0305/$FILE/focusdynamfactor1108.pdf)
 - The LMC website (see *Dynamising Factor*) at:
<http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/guidance.htm>
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DDRB EVIDENCE

The BMA has published the evidence it has submitted to the Doctors' and Dentists' Review Body (DDRB) requesting a pay rise for doctors of at least 4% in 2009 to protect the value

of existing contracts relative to inflation.

It highlighted that most GPs had a significant pay cut for the second year running as practice expenses rose considerably.

The BMA's evidence is available at:
www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/content/ddrb2009.

This is separate to the joint GPC-NHSE letter requesting that the DDRB make a recommendation on the level of overall uplift to be applied to GMS contract payments for 2009-10 and outlining the agreed ratio mechanism for how this uplift would be differentially applied across the contract.

LICENSING AND REVALIDATION

In 2009 the General Medical Council (GMC) will introduce the licence to practise and, from that point forwards, the medical register will show whether a doctor is a licensed medical practitioner or holds registration only.

The first step, in the autumn of 2009, will lead to the introduction of revalidation. Following its introduction, it will be the licence, rather than registration, that signifies to patients that a doctor has the legal authority to, for example, write prescriptions and sign death certificates.

Revalidation will require doctors to demonstrate to the GMC (normally every five years) that they continue to practise in accordance with the standards set by the GMC and, for those on the Specialist or GP Register, by the relevant Royal College or Faculty. This demonstration will take place mainly through an enhanced form of annual appraisal.

Further information about licensing and revalidation can be found on the GMC website at:

<http://www.gmc-uk.org/about/reform/index.asp>

In addition, the RCGP is seeking GPs' views on revalidation. All UK GP practices should have received a letter from the RCGP inviting

comments on their proposals. The closing date for responses is 9 January 2009. A copy of the letter can be viewed at:

<http://www.rcgp.org.uk/pdf/Revalidation%20Consultation%20Letter%20Dec%2008.pdf>

LMC OFFICE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR OPENING TIMES

Please note the following changes to the LMC's normal office opening times:

Wed 24 Dec: 9 am - 1 pm
Thur 25 Dec: Closed
Fri 26 Dec: Closed
Mon 29 Dec: 9 am - 5 pm
Tues 30 Dec: 9 am - 5 pm
Wed 31 Dec: 9 am - 1 pm
Thur 1 Jan: Closed
Fri 2 Jan: 9 am - 5 pm

THE CAMERON FUND CHRISTMAS APPEAL

The LMC has recently received The Cameron Fund's Annual Christmas Appeal Letter from Vice-Chairman, Dr J Rocyn-Jones. The Fund is appealing for donations, to allow them to continue much needed relief to disadvantaged colleagues and their families.

Since its creation in 1970, the Fund has assisted over 1,000 GPs, former GPs and their families, many of whom have been referred to the Fund by LMC Officers.

During 2007, new applications were received from 82 individuals. The Trustees have authorised grants of £164,831 and loans of £41,621 to 106 beneficiaries.

For more information on the different ways that you can make a donation, please contact:

Jane Cope, Services Manager
Tel: 020 7388 0796
email: janecope@cameronfund.org.uk

In addition, The Cameron Fund wishes to be informed of any constituent, colleague or family who should be considered for assistance. Applications can be made by contacting Jane Cope.

Further details about the work of The Cameron Fund can be found at:
www.cameronfund.org.uk.

GP TRAINEES SUBCOMMITTEE E-BULLETIN DECEMBER 2008

A copy of the December 2008 edition of the GP Trainees Sub-Committee newsletter can be downloaded from the GPC website at:

[http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/PDFgptraîneessubbulletinDec08/\\$FILE/gptraîneessubbulletinDec08.pdf](http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/PDFgptraîneessubbulletinDec08/$FILE/gptraîneessubbulletinDec08.pdf)

The main topics covered include:

- New Chairman & Deputy Chairman
- GP Specialty Registrar Pay & Supplement
- Review of GP Specialty Training
- Expenses / Motor Vehicle Allowance
- North West Single Employer Pilot
- Extensions to GP Training

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF NCAS ASSESSORS IN GENERAL PRACTICE

*Article submitted by Vicky Voller,
Head of Education and Support
Services, NCAS*

We are seeking to recruit 8-10 General Practitioners who have qualified as doctors outside the UK to be part of the NCAS assessor panel. Assessors are required to be available for up to 15 days a year to ensure we provide a service throughout the UK.

You will work as part of a small assessment team to conduct clinical assessments. The purpose of an NCAS assessment is to: provide an independent view on the performance of the practitioner, within the wider context of their practice; identify satisfactory practice and any areas of concern; identify factors that may be contributing to these concerns; make recommendations for addressing any difficulties identified.

It is essential that you are in good standing with the GMC and with

your specialty and have a minimum of 5 years' experience as a General Practitioner. You will be familiar with the principles of assessment, audit and review with at least 2 years' experience as an assessor as well as having proven report writing skills.

You will currently be working in an NHS environment and intend to continue for the next 2 years.

To enhance our assessor panel, we are particularly seeking to recruit General Practitioners who have qualified as doctors outside the UK.

£350 per day plus expenses.

For an application pack and further information please visit:
www.ncas.npsa.nhs.uk/jobs.

Closing date:

Noon, Wednesday 21 January 2009

If you have any queries, please contact:

Harpreet Diocee
Programme Coordinator (Assessor
Training and Development)
Tel: 020 7084 3963 or Email:
ncas.education@ncas.npsa.nhs.uk.

Please forward any articles, comments etc for inclusion in the LMC newsletter to the LMC office via:

Email:
administrator@sheffieldlmc.org.uk

Fax:
(0114) 258 9060

Post:
Sheffield LMC
Media House
63 Wostenholm Road
Sheffield
S7 1LE

Articles for the January 2009 edition of the LMC newsletter to be received **by Monday 12 January 2009**.