

Newsletter

October 2021

Sheffield
LMC



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TACKLING ABUSE

In recent weeks, GPs and their practice teams have been subjected to a systematic smear campaign by sections of the media, resulting in rising incidences of abuse and aggression being experienced by general practice. This has left many in the profession feeling totally demoralised and under siege.

Following [a horrific act of aggression against a practice](#), the General Practitioners Committee (GPC) [wrote to Sajid Javid](#) demanding an urgent meeting and summit to discuss the unacceptable level of abuse being levelled against GPs and their staff, as well as calling for a comprehensive national violence reduction strategy. They also recently highlighted the current pressures in general practice, and the media and government pressure to increase face-to-face consultations (despite current government guidance).

Following the meeting the GPC issued a [statement](#) and a [message to the profession](#), including resources and guidance for the removal of violent patients from practice lists.

The GPC has also developed guidance [Dealing with abuse of practice staff on social media from patients](#).

Following increasing instances of GPs being scapegoated by the media a [template letter](#) has been produced for practices to write to their local MP to outline the current pressures being faced by GPs across the country.

The GPC has been made aware of some journalists approaching local practices directly for comment, and have noted that there is no obligation to respond to the media. If practices would like guidance about a specific situation they can reach the BMA Media Team at MediaOffice@bma.org.uk.

Concerns have also been raised that some publications will send photographers to practices looking for photos designed to support their narrative of primary care being hard to access. The Editor's Code of Conduct which guides the practice of press organisations in the UK says that journalists should identify themselves when asked to do so and *that no journalists should operate on healthcare property without permission*, this applies to photographers as well. So if practice staff see a possible photographer who is not welcome, then the best advice is to ask them to identify themselves and then ask them to leave.

Survey on General Practice Response to the Current Crisis

The GPC awaits a firm proposal from the government regarding a package of support and, in the meantime, they want some feedback on actions if the package is not adequate. They sent an [email](#) to GPs asking for completion of a [survey](#) on what GPs may do next and what they are prepared to do if there is no satisfactory response. The survey includes a range of possible actions, and asks for any further actions GPs might consider that are not specifically asked.

It is important that the GPC knows the strength of feeling within the profession and the measures that GPs might be prepared to take. Therefore, if you have not already completed the survey, please do so and encourage colleagues to do so as well. ***The survey will close at 9 am on Wednesday 13 October.***

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GP PAY TRANSPARENCY

The statutory instrument to amend the [GMS and PMS Regulations](#) affecting pay transparency has been laid before Parliament and came into force on 1 October 2021. NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) has published [guidance](#) on how the regulation will work in practice.

The General Practitioners Committee (GPC) has made clear their significant concerns about the change compelling GPs to publicly declare NHS earnings above £150k, especially in the current climate of threat, aggression and violence towards GPs. It will have been imposed on the profession in breach of the original agreement and the GPC has not agreed to the introduction in the absence of similar requirements across all providers of various primary care services. Pay transparency was agreed as part of the five-year contract deal on the clear understanding that GPs were not being singled out, but that the government would also require other professions, such as pharmacists and dentists to publish NHS earnings above a certain figure.

We await further guidance from the GPC.

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SHEFFIELD GP-S MENTORING SCHEME

Update from Dr Mark Durling, Sheffield GP-S Mentor Lead

Sheffield LMC hosts a free mentoring service available to all GPs who are represented by Sheffield LMC.

We have recently recruited 6 new Mentors to expand and diversify our offer to GPs. Mentoring through our service is a structured process over 4 flexible sessions, enabling practitioners to explore and navigate professional and personal dilemmas and challenges. It is confidential and feedback about the process is anonymous and encouraged. A choice of Mentors is offered subject to availability - all are experienced in current challenges in the workplace and most are practising GPs.

A poster containing further information about GP-S and how to access the service can be found [here](#). We would encourage any practices that have not already done so to download and display a copy in their staff room. A limited number of hard copy posters, leaflets and business cards are available by contacting the LMC office via adminassistant@sheffieldlmc.org.uk.

We would encourage our constituents to consider this offer.

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VACCINE DATA RESOLUTION SERVICE (VDRS)

The VDRS, established by NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) and NHS Digital, aims to resolve missing or incorrect vaccination records for people vaccinated in England who have a current NHS number and are registered with a GP practice in England.

A pilot of outbound calls was launched on 3 August to patients identified as having a second dose, but where no first dose was showing on the national immunisation database. This service continues to operate. An inbound service accessed via 119 has also been launched, and referrals to the VDRS can be made via any of the services accessed via 119.

119 and VDRS call agents will not provide clinical advice and cannot assist with queries related to vaccinations received overseas. If the query relates to personal information that is incorrect on the patient record (eg name, address), these will still need to be resolved by their GP practice.

If a member of the public believes they have missing or incorrect COVID-19 vaccination data, they should be advised to call 119.

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MEDICINES DELIVERY SERVICE EXTENSION

An extension of the medicines delivery service has been announced by NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I). The [announcement letter](#) explains that to help provide support to people who have been notified of the need to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, the Community Pharmacy Home Delivery Service and the Dispensing Doctor Home Delivery Service will be commissioned from 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022 (inclusive) for anyone living in England who has been notified by NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate.

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VETERAN FRIENDLY GP PRACTICES

Article submitted by Dr Veronica Grant, GP & Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) Veterans Champion

The recent events in Afghanistan and the commemorations in the lead up to Remembrance Day are of particular importance for our veteran community. There are over 1000 GP practices in England now accredited as veteran-friendly, with more practices signing up each week. The feedback from practices already accredited is overwhelmingly positive, with high levels of satisfaction reported. It would be great to have more GP practices accredited veteran-friendly within the region. Becoming a veteran friendly accredited practice is a simple on-line process and helps to raise awareness, improve understanding, and better equip and facilitate GPs in their duty of care to veterans.

Key to improving healthcare for our veteran population is asking the question “*Have you ever served in the military.*” There are an estimated 2.4 million veterans in the UK (accounting for 5% of the UK population over the age of 18), some of whom have complex needs. There are veteran-specific services tailored towards this potentially vulnerable patient group. Specifically, mental health support for veterans is available under the new NHS Operation Courage, with contact information available at www.nhs.uk/opcourage. Veterans may also be entitled to priority treatment for conditions related to military service.

Further information can be found [here](#).

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GP RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN 2021

Health Education England (HEE) has just begun campaign activity to raise awareness of Round 1 GP specialty training applications, scheduled to open Thursday 4 November to Wednesday 1 December, for an August 2022 start. Whilst continuing to signpost doctors who might be thinking about a career as a GP to the [General Practice National Recruitment Office \(GPNRO\) website](#), HEE is keen not to rely solely on social media or online content, and would like to hear innovative ideas and thoughts about how to reach more doctors via gprecruitment@hee.nhs.uk.

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CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC) MYTHBUSTERS

Professor Nigel Sparrow, Senior National GP Advisor at the CQC issues [guidance](#) to clear up some common myths about CQC inspections, as well as sharing guidance on best practice, which practices may wish to be aware of.

The following Mythbusters have been added or updated recently:

- [GP mythbuster 99: Infection prevention and control in General Practice](#)
- [GP mythbuster 84: Managing high risk medicines in general practice](#)
- [GP mythbuster 90: Population groups](#)

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SESSIONAL GPs E-NEWSLETTER: OCTOBER 2021

The latest edition of the Sessional GPs e-newsletter can be found on the British Medical Association (BMA) website [here](#). The main articles include:

- Specialists in Primary Care: a fulfilling and respected role for employed GPs.
- Know your rights about your working conditions.
- Meet the new Exec.
- ARM 2021.
- Support our call for climate action.
- Member query of month – helping a GP to return to work in the UK.
- ‘Wrong bill at the wrong time’.
- Sessional GPs committee – contracts explainer webinar.
- Starting out as a locum – where to sign up?

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Please forward any articles for inclusion in the LMC newsletter to manager@sheffieldlmc.org.uk

Submission deadlines can be found [here](#).

Contact details for Sheffield LMC Executive can be found [here](#).

Contact details for Sheffield LMC Secretariat can be found [here](#).