

WORCESTERSHIRE LMC LTD

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2007 EDITION

WORCESTERSHIRE PCT

A major part of the last LMC meeting was taken up with discussion with Andrew Hughes regarding developments at the PCT. This is a brief summary of the issues.

The PCT has now agreed to update PMS contracts and thankfully after a lot of discussion going back two years the PCT has agreed to adopt the Lockharts contract. Work is currently going on looking at this and some variations which the PCT wish to include. It is hoped that the final document will be ready to be issued towards the end of the year and be signed off before the end of March 2008.

As we have already indicated to you the PCT has agreed that they were incorrect at their interpretation of the regulations regarding maternity payments for salaried doctors. The PCT have been discriminating between principals and non-principals and this is not allowed under the regulations. The PCT have agreed to cover payments for locums and will honour payments that are outstanding. It is estimated the cost of this is £185,000.

Apparently there have been some incorrect seniority payments made to a number of overseas doctors. These particular doctors have been notified and corrections are being made to this issue.

The PCT has indicated that they are looking at rationalising the enhanced services schemes across the county and we have had discussion about this. There are a significant number of anomalies between the three old PCT areas. However the idea of having a standardised scheme across the county is slightly at odds with the policy of including enhanced services funding in PBC budgets. If that is the case why can't PBC clusters organise their own enhanced services? This is obviously going to be an area that will need a lot of discussion and thought in the coming months. Practices should by now have the document from the PCT about the Choose and Book DES or the Choose and Book Worcestershire LES.

The PCT has had meetings and discussion about how QOF visits will take place and all appointments have been booked and they should be completed by the end of January. Any practices that have not already sent in the appropriate paperwork a reminder that this needs to be in now.

The PCT has been looking at a strategy to deal with premises development post 2011. Apparently there is unlikely to be any funding available until then. They will basically

be doing a building survey and incorporate into some sort of scoring system additional factors such as local population changes; health needs and deprivation. This will then give a priority list of premises that need improvement. Obviously what needs to be included in this is the desire of local practitioners for such developments. The LMC believes this is likely to mean a continued dearth of new development after the current schemes are completed. Whether the Department of Health will re-look at the premises issue is not clear. Presumably the answer will be the private sector!

The PCT will be advertising for two IM&T Facilitators who will work across practices on data development and should be in post by 2008. Rosemary Williams is leaving to take up a new job as Commissioning Manager for PBC clusters in the south of the county and her post will be advertised. Heather McDonald who covers Wyre Forest is due back from maternity leave any time.

The LMC has had discussion about Practice Based Commissioning and the Secretary attended the last PBC Forum meeting. The roll out of PBC has been disappointingly slow for a wide range of reasons and a long discussion was had on how to take things forward. The LMC is very supportive of PBC and feels that large, well organised clusters will both enhance services; support and develop practices and perhaps most importantly resist the encroachment of private sector. We believe that the Assura Vertis LLP in Redditch and Bromsgrove, although involving the private sector is effectively a GP led scheme and could well be the way forward. Discussion is currently taking place in Wyre Forest whether they wish to move to the same type of scheme. Unfortunately the development proposals by the provider arm have also been painfully slow and there is a great deal of resistance in the system to getting things off the ground. Nevertheless everybody does seem committed in the long run to the development of PBC. The LMC has strongly suggested that if this is the case the only way to make it work is to get schemes on the ground and that will build up confidence in the system and encourage people to get involved and take things forward. We do hope the PCT and perhaps more importantly the Acute Trust take this message on board.

OUT OF HOURS TENDERING PROCESS

The LMC has been watching the proposals by the PCT to put the Out of Hours service out to tender with great interest. At an early stage Paul Bates indicated to us that we will be able to have some sort of involvement in the discussion. We nominated a local GP to take on this role and this was rejected. Apparently the auditors stated that no GP's from Worcestershire should be involved in the process. We think that's bizarre and seems contrary to the whole idea of having GP involvement and discussion making it PCTs! Presumably this means none of the PEC can be involved either! It was suggested that we should nominate a retired GP. We have now done this and are dismayed to find that the PCT has already chosen a GP from Rugby to be involved. We have no knowledge of this person and presumably he has no knowledge of us and the issues relating to our county. The LMC has formally complained to the PCT at their decision. It does seem totally ludicrous that there is no local GP involvement in

this process. If the service is to be put out to tender then local GPs should be feeding in their knowledge and concerns to this process. So much for practice based or locality based commissioning!

GP SYSTEMS OF CHOICE

The Secretary recently attended a West Midlands presentation about GPSoC. John Thornbury, our local IT Manager was also present and the LMC has been in discussion with John who is going to come to the next LMC meeting to brief us. We hope to send out some more detailed information from him shortly. Additional funding has been received in the county for IT development and it is anticipated that this will be used to support the roll out of Docman across the county and some significant upgrades, particularly to a number of practices whose file servers are 'at risk'. A Local Implementation Group has an LMC representative on board who is Dr Richard Kinsman from Droitwich. There is a strong desire from the IT leads at the Strategic Health Authority for GPs to feed back through their Local Implementation Group their concerns and needs regarding their individual IT providers. It is felt that in the past providers have given us the systems they wanted and that there has not been enough "consumer" led development. There will be eight systems of choice available initially. Practices will be given the opportunity to indicate whether they wish to retain their existing system if it is one of the eight or move to one of the approved schemes. How many practices will be given the opportunity to move within the eight is not clear. Final details should become clear shortly and we will pass these onto you. NHS Connecting for Health has launched a new website giving useful information and guidance on GPSoC at www.connectingforhealth.co.uk/gpsoc.

IMMUNISATION MATTERS

The LMC has agreed with the PCT that the flu vaccination that has been offered to poultry workers will be performed by GP practices who will receive the £7.51 payment for this. We understand there are approximately 700 patients involved.

There has been discussion with the LMC from a number of practices about HPV vaccine. We have asked the PCT for a definitive response about this. The message from the centre is that once the national programme is rolled out specific guidance will be issued to explain the prescribing administration of the HPV vaccine. In the meantime, general practitioners will need to satisfy themselves that they have taken into account any local guidance from the PCT before deciding exceptionally whether to prescribe the vaccine. Rebecca Blessing, Senior Business Manager for general prescribing issues at the Department of Health is quoted as saying:

"Prior to implementation of the National Programme in September 2008 and in groups that fall outside the recommended ages for the routine programme, GPs may exceptionally prescribe the vaccine if the clinical circumstances of a patient warrant such action".

We feel we have to advise practices that they are unable to do this as a private service to their own patients. We have pressed the PCT to firm up its guidance and we hope this will be available shortly.

PERSONAL IMPORT/EXPORT LICENCES FOR CONTROLLED DRUGS

The Home Office have advised us that regulations for persons who wish to travel with their controlled drugs medication will change with effect from 1st January 2008. Broadly a personal licence will not now be required for periods of travel of three months or less regardless of the amount of drug(s) being carried. Any personal travelling for longer than three months will, in normal circumstances, be expected to make arrangements to have their medication prescribed by a practitioner in the country they are visiting. Guidance can be found at:
www.drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/drugs-laws/licensing.

MENTAL HEALTH ACT - CODE OF PRACTICE

The revised Mental Health Act comes into force in November 2008 and has significant implications for the way GPs work. We have already asked the PCT about the possibility of putting up training for GPs and in the meantime a document from the BMA will be included on our website and emailed to Practice Managers for distribution. The link to the document on our website can be found at:
http://www.worcslmc.co.uk/upload/Mental_Health_Act_-_Code_of_Practice_-_Nov_2007.pdf

NHS CHOICES

We hope by now that each practice will have received a pack which will give them information of how they can edit their own practice information directly without having to request changes from their PCT webmaster. This should include such things as details of the availability of individual GPs; surgery opening times; staff profiles including even pictures. Each practice should have an individual log in and password as well as full details on how to input text and information. Practices will get a few weeks notice of the go live date and should have ample opportunity to change their space as they choose. This is a helpful initiative for which practices may wish to take advantage. (Much of the data on NHS Choices is incorrect - so check your own listings!)

GPC SURVEY OF GP OPINION 2007

A full copy of the report can be found on the BMA website at www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/gpopinionsurvey1007. The LMC put out a press release on this and did actually get some coverage locally. We are certainly trying to do our bit to promote General Practice and counter a lot of the anti GP spin in the media.

BMA WILLS SERVICE

The BMA has launched a Wills Service for BMA members which may be of interest due to the recent changes governing inheritance tax. The service is straightforward

and can be accessed online or by phone and is provided at a discounted price from £80 plus VAT. There are four types of will available to suit differing needs:

- Basic single will - for single people
- Basic mirror wills - for spouses, civil partners, or co-habitees
- Property Trust wills - to protect assets from the effects of long term care or re-marriage
- Discretionary Trust wills - where you want to protect assets or the interests of beneficiaries themselves (i.e. if one of your children has learning difficulties or is having matrimonial or financial problems). Discretionary Trust Wills are also appropriate where there are business interests, to maximise the availability of Inheritance Tax relief without compromising your long term plans for your family.

For further information or to make a will online visit <http://www.bmawills.co.uk>. If you prefer not to make a will online, you can also download the necessary paperwork from the website and return by post, full contact details can be found on the BMA website, or you can call them on 0800 294 6549.

WORCESTERSHIRE LMC WEBSITE

The following guidance has been added to the LMC website during the last month:

BMA/GPC Guidance:

Choose and Book Guidance

http://www.worcslmc.co.uk/upload/Choose_Book_Guidance_07.pdf

LMC Guidance:

Overseas Visitors - Eligibility to free primary care (flowchart)

http://www.worcslmc.co.uk/upload/Overseas_Visitors_Flow_Chart_to_Free_Primary_Care_rev_1.doc

WORCESTERSHIRE LMC LTD

Email: info@worcslmc.co.uk

Website: www.worcslmc.co.uk

Regional LMC: www.wmrlmc.co.uk

Registered office: St Stephens Surgery, Adelaide Street, Redditch, Worcs. B97 4AL

Tel: 01527 65082

Fax: 01527 61211

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN:

Dr Bob Ingles

St Johns House Surgery, 28 Bromyard Road, St Johns,
Worcs. WR2 5BU

Tel: 01905 423612; Fax: 01905 420641

SECRETARY:

Dr Simon Parkinson

St Stephens Surgery, (address and contact details as above)

Email: sparkinson@worcslmc.co.uk

Executive Officer:

Michelle Hallahan, St Stephens Surgery (address as above)

Email: mhallahan@worcslmc.co.uk

Representatives:

BROMSGROVE:

Dr D Pryke

Dr K Hollier

REDDITCH:

Dr S Parkinson

Dr S Pike

WYRE FOREST:

Dr R Horton

Dr V Schrieber

Dr K O'Connor

WYCHAVON:

Dr C Ounsted

Dr J Rankin

Dr R Kinsman

MALVERN:

Dr D Radley

Dr G Wilson

WORCESTER:

Dr R Ingles

Dr D Lewis

Dr J O'Driscoll

Non-Principals:

Dr F Martin

Out of Hours:

Dr R Kelsey

Dispensing:

Dr C Ounsted

Registrars Rep:

Dr A Walder

Practice Manager Representatives:

David Jago, Representative SW PM

Pam Ford, Representative Wychavon PM

Lisa Luke, Representative R&B PM

Don Beckett, Representative WF PM

Local GPC Representative: Dr Grant Ingrams, gji@nhs.net

**THIS NEWLETTER IS PRODUCED FROM THE LMC OFFICE AT
ST STEPHENS SURGERY**

The next LMC meeting will be 13 December 2007