

Committee News

Dr Georgina Brown, Medical Secretary since September 2012 has resigned from the Committee. Dr Brown has been on the LMC/GP Subcommittee for the last ten years. We thank Dr Brown for the significant contributions she has made to the Committee and wish her all the best in the future.

We also have two new co-opted members, Dr Mike McDonagh from the West and Dr Chris McHugh from the East. Both doctors have been previous members and we welcome them back.

Scottish GMS Contract Negotiations and Consultative Meeting with GPs; Celtic Park, Monday 26th January; 7pm

This is a BMA led meeting which is open to all GPs, both principal and sessional. The aim of this meeting is to give the Scottish General Practitioner Committee negotiators, Scottish Government reps and RCGP the opportunity to hear from and exchange ideas and views with ordinary GPs on the Scottish GMS Contract for 2017 and beyond. We would kindly suggest that at least one GP from each GG&C practice attend this very important event which will shape the future GP Contract.

The LMC will also be undertaking consultations of our own and are happy to receive your thoughts or suggestions on developing a new GMS contract, which can be emailed to mary.fingland@glasgow-lmc.co.uk.

GP X-rays and Reporting Times

We have been assured that reporting times for GP X-rays have now improved across the patch. Drs Alastair Taylor, Vice-Chairman and John Ip, Medical Secretary are meeting regularly with the service in a short-life working group as part of the Primary/Secondary Care Interface. The service had faced some significant pressures but hopefully these have now been resolved. Both Alastair and John are happy to share any difficulties and, indeed, praise with the service. Please email mary.fingland@glasgow-lmc.co.uk or contact the office via the webpage or by phone.

Direct Access ECG and Waiting Times at the GRI

We had raised concerns about reported delays of up to seven weeks for Direct Access ECGs at the GRI and have been advised that difficulties have been resolved and GP waiting times should have greatly improved. The service is also monitoring the situation and we have requested an update on current waiting times. Please let us know if this is not the case.

Monitoring Requests from Secondary Care

Just a reminder that practices should look to the NPT specification for the up-to-date list of drugs to be monitored. We have also updated our template letter

which practices can send when asked to undertake monitoring over and above this list. Clozapine and Denosumab are two drugs that generate many enquiries and can we confirm that prescribing and monitoring for these drugs should be carried out in secondary care.

GPs can check the Glasgow Formulary on-line if they have a doubt about a monitoring request for a drug which is not on the NPT Enhanced Services specification. As a guide on the formulary where a drug has an 'S' within a dark background against it all prescribing and monitoring is the responsibility of secondary care. For those drugs with an 'S' within a grey background GPs may take on the prescribing if they are happy to do so but the responsibility for monitoring remains with secondary care.

Sessional GPs

As part of the work we have been doing aimed at supporting Sessional GPs locally, and reducing any professional isolation they may feel, we have been exploring the possibility of having one of the board Clinical Directors identified as taking a particular interest in Sessional GPs and acting as a link in the advisory and directorate structure. We are very pleased to say that Dr Paul Ryan has agreed to take on this role and look forward to working with him in this capacity.

To assist effective communication between practices and Sessional GPs we have developed a locum agreement template which practices or Sessional GPs can adapt or amend to suit their needs. We are aware that some difficult situations have developed recently due to misunderstandings between practices and Sessional GPs undertaking locum work regarding bookings, agreed duties and payment of fees. Completion of a locum agreement whilst it may seem time consuming initially reduces the risk of misunderstanding and prompts practices to consider what work it is appropriate and reasonable to require of a GP undertaking a locum session - as well as what work the practice will find of most benefit to have covered. It also allows the Sessional GP to agree what is expected of them and to agree an appropriate fee for the work.

The template can be found in our home page at www.glasgowlmc.co.uk under 'Recently Uploaded' guidance and we suggest that its use can be instigated either by Sessional GPs or practices. It is constructed to be easily modifiable and only those fields need be completed that the practice and Sessional GP feel are relevant. We would be happy to receive your feedback on the use of this template and will undertake modifications of the document in the light of experience.

Fitness Certificates

We have had a number of queries recently and would bring to your attention BMA guidance (see below) on this subject.

BMA - Medico-legal certificates

Fitness certificates fall outside a GP's NHS Terms and Conditions which means doctors can charge their own rate for undertaking the work.

When it comes to issuing fitness certificates for travel insurance or for health club membership, there are medico-legal reasons why you need to be careful. Read our guidance to make sure you cover yourself.

Even if a thorough history, examination and any necessary investigations are carried out, doctors are still not in a position to guarantee that a patient is fit for a particular activity.

We discourage doctors from signing certificates which indicate that the patient will, for example, be fit for the duration of the holiday, as current fitness is not a guide to future fitness. Doctors can only report on what is written in the patient notes, and reporting on future fitness could have medico-legal consequences for you.

Therefore we advise that if certificates are provided, they should include words to the effect that:

"based on information available in the medical notes, the patient appears to be fit to travel"

<https://bma.org.uk/practical-support-at-work/pay-fees-allowances/fees/fee-finder> ©BMA

Medical Charities Christmas Appeals

The Cameron Fund

Its principal activity is "*the relief of poverty, hardship and distress of General Medical Practitioners and their dependants*". The fund aims to meet needs in the fullest and most practical ways possible, conscious that the circumstances in which help is needed vary enormously, from the elderly in nursing homes to young, chronically sick doctors and their families. If you wish to donate details can be found on <http://www.cameronfund.org.uk/making-a-donation.shtml>

The Royal Medical Benevolent Society

The fund is designed to help any member of the medical profession registered with the GMC in the UK or their dependents (usually a widow, widower, spouse or child who has not married or remarried outside the medical profession). Details

on how donate to the society can be found on <http://www.rmbf.org/pages/donate.html>

Ebola, Returning Workers and Business Continuity Planning

A few points to consider/note:-

- Volunteer healthcare workers, aid workers or oil and gas employees returning from Liberia, Sierra Leone or Guinea will be assessed before their return and monitored by their employers if required.
- Infection control – practices face being closed for 7 days if a deep clean is deemed necessary following attendance by a patient with suspected Ebola. Have you got your business continuity plan up-to-date? If you haven't - http://www.glasgowlmc.co.uk/wpfb-file/general-practice-emergency-business-continuity-plan-template-glmc_v2-pdf/
- Have you thought about adding a message to your automated options menu for patients contacting the surgery by telephone i.e. if you are feeling unwell and have travelled recently in West Africa please don't make an appointment to come to the surgery but advise the receptionist who will transfer you to a doctor for advice.

We have written to the Board re: clarification on the provision of masks and visors, colour posters for your surgeries and what support may be available in the event of practices being closed for deep cleaning.

Validium Counselling Services

This is a completely confidential service for all GPs in Greater Glasgow & Clyde, including Sessional GPs on the GG&C Performer's List. Validium employ a group of experienced accredited counsellors who can be contacted 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This confidential service can be accessed by telephone on **0800 358 4858**.

From all the Team at the LMC

Dr Michael Haughney, Chairman
Dr Alastair Taylor, Vice-Chairman
Dr John Ip, Medical Secretary
Dr Patricia Moultrie, Medical Secretary
Mary Fingland, Office Secretary
Ian Mackie, P.C. Training & Development Mgr.
Elaine McLaren, Admin Assistant