

Friday 17 March 2017

Issue 5

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GPC UK meeting

GPC UK held its meeting on Thursday 16 March.

At that meeting GPC UK received: important updates from each of the national GPC chairs on the important work which their committees are undertaking in their nations; an update on the progress of the GPC reform process; an update on the important changes to intermediaries legislation affecting GP locums and practices (IR35); the updated BMA firearms guidance; and considered the future of QOF, associated funding, and future quality assessment in general practice across the UK.

The next meeting of GPC UK will take place on Thursday 14 September 2017 (please note this is an amendment to the usual date).

The UK LMC conference will take place on 18-19 May 2017.

The England LMC conference – which is a new event following the GPC reforms - will take place on 10 November 2017. Please hold this date in your diaries.

Important changes to intermediaries legislation affecting GP locums and practices (IR35)

The BMA has produced [guidance](#) on the impact on GP locums and practices of the important changes to intermediaries legislation (IR35) affecting GP locums and practices.

IR35 is an anti-tax avoidance measure introduced by the Government in April 2000. It is also known as the 'intermediaries legislation'. It targets individuals who attempt to avoid paying employee income tax and national



insurance contributions (NIC) by supplying their services through an intermediary (usually a 'personal service company') and paying themselves dividends.

The IR35 regime investigates the nature of the relationship between the worker and the end-user to determine whether, were it not for using a PSC, that individual would be considered as an employee or office holder (for example, a director) of the client, and has important implications for both GP locums and practices.

Please note that this guidance has been prepared by BMA Law for the BMA, and is intended as a general overview of the law. It is recommended that specific legal advice is sought in individual cases.

[BMA Law](#) offers legal advice at discounted rates for BMA members.

GPC Firearms guidance launched- UK

After several months of very detailed and hard work which has necessitated garnering input and expertise from several different stakeholders, and taking QC opinion, we are pleased to be able to share the BMA's new [guidance on firearms licensing](#).

In drawing up this guidance we have carefully considered all aspects of licensing exhaustively and we are happy that our advice falls within all ethical and legal opinion we have received. The GPC Task and Finish group responsible for this guidance was at all times cognisant of the importance of producing safe, ethical and legal guidance relating to the current system and at publication we will have discharged that responsibility. However, both GPC and the Professional Fees Committee (PFC) will continue to engage with the Home Office to press for improvements to a system which continues to grave anxieties for many of us.

For further information on the rationale and reasoning behind this guidance, please see this [blog](#) written by GPC England Executive team member, Mark Sanford-Wood, who led the work of the Task and Finish Group.

Survey of Sessional GPs- UK

The Sessional GPs subcommittee is currently in the middle of its biggest ever survey of sessional GPs. The survey is open to all locum, salaried, Out of Hours, prison GP, CCG role GP, portfolio GP locum and salaried GPs, including GP partners who locum, irrespective of whether they are a BMA member or not, or where they live in the U.K.

We know that one in three GPs are now working in some form of salaried, locum, freelance or portfolio role. Important decisions are being made about the future of general practice, often with very little information about what sessional GPs think. That is why the Sessional subcommittee of the BMA GPC has launched this survey.

We need clear data to understand sessional GPs and to gather information about workload and pressures, so that we can make sure that the discussions we have with government and the Department of Health about sessional GP issues truly reflect what you want.

You can take the survey of sessional GPs [here](#) and read more about the survey, the key areas which it covers, and its aims, on our webpages [here](#).

The survey should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete. Please share it as widely as you can - the more responses we get, the louder your voice will be heard.

GPC regional elections

Please find below a list of candidates successfully elected unopposed in the GPC regional elections for a three year term:

- Dr Dean Eggitt representing Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield.
- Dr John Rawlinson representing Berkshire and Hampshire.
- Dr Matt Mayer representing Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire.
- Dr Peter Horvath-Howard representing Dyfed Powys and North Wales.
- Dr John Ip representing Greater Glasgow.
- Dr Michelle Drage representing Hillingdon, Brent, Harrow, Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow.
- Dr Pamela Martin representing Lewisham, Southwark, Lambeth, Bexley, Greenwich, and Bromley.
- Dr Douglas Moederle-Lumb representing North Yorkshire, Bradford and Airedale.
- Dr Uzma Ahmad representing Sandwell, Walsall, Wolverhampton and Dudley.

Conference on Implementing the GPFV to manage and support GP workload - England

Please save the 26th April 2017 for the conference on implementing the GPFV to manage and support GP workload. Further details regarding the full agenda, registration and timings for the conference will follow shortly from the GPC secretariat

Sessional GPs e-newsletter - UK

Please find a [link](#) to this month's edition of the Sessionals newsletter, which this month focuses on, amongst other things, an important reminder to fill in the [Sessionals survey](#), and an explanation of the impact on Sessional GPs of changes to IR35 regulations.

NHS GP Health Service - England

The NHS GP Health Service is a new confidential NHS service for GPs and GP trainees in England. It has been launched as part of the of the GP Forward View programme of commitments. It will run in parallel to primary care performer occupational health services commissioned by CCG (clinical commissioning groups) under NHS England's national service specification.

Launched on 31 January 2017, The NHS GP Health Service can help with issues relating to a mental health concern, including stress or depression, or an addiction problem, where these might affect a GP's work. Operating on a self-referral basis, it is provided by health professionals specialising in mental health support to doctors and is available in various locations across England.

Access the service by emailing gp.health@nhs.net or by calling 0300 0303 300. Availability is from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and 8am – 2pm Saturday.

Please note the service is not for emergency or crisis issues. These should be directed to mainstream NHS services.

For further information about the service, visit the dedicated web page <http://www.gphealth.nhs.uk/>

GP Career Plus Scheme - England

As part of the GP Forward View commitment to retain the considerable experience already in general practice, the GP Career Plus will be piloted in 11 areas in England from summer 2017.

NHS England data shows that the number of GPs leaving in most age groups, particularly those aged 55–59 and 60–64, has risen over the last 10 years. Commissioned research suggests that experienced GPs may remain in practise if they had the opportunities to work more flexibly.

The pilot areas are expected to test a range of ways to offer greater flexibility and support for approximately 80 GPs. The intention is to keep hold of the vital skills and experience of GPs on the verge of leaving general practice altogether. The GPs will be recruited into a general practice pool in each area that works across that health system.

The BMA GP Committee has worked with NHS England, Health Education England and the Royal College of General Practitioners to agree the principles behind this pilot.

You can find out more about the scheme and the pilot sites via NHS England's dedicated web page <https://www.england.nhs.uk/gp/gpfv/workforce/gp-career-plus/>

Return to practice - England

NHS England have launched [a new website](#) and [brochure](#) to help promote the return to practice programme. The site provides information about the Induction & Refresher scheme for those looking at the possibility of returning to work in the NHS as a GP.

The BMA has been working with NHS England and Health Education England to improve the Induction & Refresher Scheme to make the process less onerous and to increase the number of doctors signing up. Alongside the new website and promotional resources, NHS England will be running a series of adverts to help raise awareness.

Further information on the scheme can be accessed via the [HEE website](#) and the [BMA website](#). Please pass this information on to anyone you think may be interested in looking into the scheme.

Principles for releasing electronic medical information for insurance under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1998 - UK

In January 2017, the Association of British Insurers published a set of high level principles on requesting and obtaining medical information electronically from GPs. The principles were developed with input from the BMA and the ICO. Compliance with these principles will ensure that the release of electronic medical information for insurance purposes will be in line, or be a higher data protection standard, than the current paper-based system.

[The new guiding principles can be found on the ABI's website.](#)

New General Practice Nursing plan published - Recognise, Rethink, Reform - England

The Health Education England (HEE) general practice nursing workforce [development plan 'Recognise, Rethink, Reform,'](#) has been launched. It puts forward a range of recommendations to support and develop the workforce for the future and to help nurses make effective career choices.

Members representing HEE, NHS England, the Queen's Nursing Institute, the Royal College of Nursing and the Royal College of General Practitioners formed a task and finish group chaired by GP, Dr Peter Lane, to look at four key areas:

- entry into general practice – raising the profile as a first career choice and increasing the availability of training placements for students
- establishing the role of the GP nurse – ensuring appropriate training and support is available for new GPNs
- enhancing the role with professional development and career progression
- expanding the healthcare support workforce with standardised training and career paths.

A [press release](#) and the [development plan](#) can be found on the [Health Education England website](#).

Please forward this information to your nursing networks and colleagues who may be interested.

Private practice conference – UK

The private practice conference will take place on 5 April 2017 at BMA House. This event will look at the 'ins and outs' of private practice from the logistics of setting up a private practice for the first time, to making sure established practitioners are reaching their maximum potential. For new entrants to the private sector, the conference will offer a chance to network with colleagues who have already established and run successful practices. There is also a drinks reception straight after the conference that delegates can attend. If you are interested in attending the event, [please register online at the BMA website](#).

LMC access to the BMA website - UK

It has been drawn to our attention that some LMCs may be having difficulty accessing the BMA website. All LMCs do have access, but need to use the login details registered for submitting conference motions. This may, however, be an individual's email address, registered to input conference motions only.

If you wish to create an office account, using the office email address as part of your login and a password that everyone can use, or if you are unsure of your current login details and password, please email Karen Day at kday@bma.org.uk and she will email you your relevant information.

LMC observers at GPC meetings - UK

LMC observers are welcome to attend GPC UK meetings. If your LMC would be interested in sending an observer, please contact Kathryn Reece (kreece@bma.org.uk). A maximum of three LMC observers may attend any one meeting.

The dates for the 2017/18 session for GPC UK meetings are below. Meetings will commence at 10:00am and will usually finish at 5:00pm (never later than 6:00pm). Meetings are held at BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP.

Thursday 14 September 2017	GPC UK
Thursday 15 March 2018	GPC UK

Please note that all travel and other expenses for LMC observers should be met by the relevant LMC.

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LMCs – change of details - UK

If there are any changes to LMC personnel, addresses and other contact details, please can you email Karen Day with the changes at kday@bma.org.uk.

GPC England next meets on 15 June 2017. LMCs are invited to submit items for discussion. You may like to review these, beforehand, with the representatives in your area who serve on the GPC. The closing date for items for the GPC England meeting is 6 June 2017. It would be helpful if items could be emailed to Kathryn Reece at kreece@bma.org.uk. You may also like to use the GPC's listservers to exchange views and ideas.

GPC News

LMCs are reminded that their regional representatives can provide more detailed information about the issues covered in GPC News, and other matters. Other members of the GPC would also be pleased to accept invitations to LMC meetings wherever possible. The secretariat can also provide a written background brief if required, but it would be helpful to have such requests well in advance of your meetings.

Finally, if LMCs require assistance on local issues, they can also contact the BMA's local offices. Their details are available on the BMA website.

This newsletter has been sent to:

Secretaries of LMCs and LMC offices
Members of the GPC
Members of the GP trainees subcommittee
Members of the sessional GPs subcommittee