



22nd May 2020

Dear Colleague

Please see below for your information our latest updates during the Covid-19 pandemic:

PCN deadline 31 May 2020

The first of several key dates for the Network DES 2020/21 is approaching fast!

We are aware that there are PCNs that have not yet confirmed their arrangements for the coming year. By the 31st May all PCNs are expected to have informed the CCG whether they will continue with or make changes to their PCN. Individual practices are also expected to advise the CCG whether they are joining a PCN for the first time, or whether they wish to opt-out of the DES.

There are also practices that have been unable to find a PCN to join as a core network practice. Practices are advised to inform the CCG of this by the 31st May and the CCG will have until 30 June 2020 to arrange to assign them as a core member of a PCN.

We are also aware that there are PCNs and individual practices that are wary of signing up this year. If you have any concerns please contact the LMC office to discuss these. We can explore the options available to you and we will support you with whatever decision you take.

CQC Emergency Support Framework

During the pandemic the CQC has paused routine inspections of general practice. However, in order to continue to deliver against their purpose they have developed a new tool, the Emergency Support Framework. According to the CQC, this will provide a structured framework for regular conversations between inspectors and practices covering the following areas:

- Safe care and treatment
- Staffing arrangements
- Protection from abuse
- Assurance process, monitoring, and risk management

The idea is that the conversation will serve two ends. Firstly, it will help the CQC to understand the challenges you are facing and how they may support you. Secondly, it will give the CQC intelligence to help it monitor risk, identify where providers may need extra support, and ensure that safe care is being delivered.

We would strongly recommend that you take the opportunity to acquaint yourselves with the questions that will form the basis of the discussion. You will almost certainly also find it helpful to discuss these with your neighbouring practices with whom you have been working closely with during the pandemic. The LMC is also on hand to answer any questions.

https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/20200521_esf_asc_questions_prompts_indicators.pdf

MH Support for NHS Colleagues

There is an online structured online programme for all NHS healthcare professionals now available.

The level of fear and uncertainty we are currently facing is unprecedented - and Manage Your Mind offers individuals an opportunity to invest in themselves, to rest, to re-centre, to re-focus and to re-energise.

People will learn new skills, breathing techniques, guided meditations and processes that help calm the mind. Studies have shown that when practiced regularly, they help improve sleep, reduce stress, depression and anxiety and improve the quality of life. Its fun! Innovative and Powerful!

Have a look at this [5 minute video](https://www.manageyourmind.org.uk) for more information and visit <http://www.manageyourmind.org.uk> to register.

Supporting patients with dental problems during Covid-19

We met with our colleagues from the Local Dental Committee. During the COVID crisis there have been 7 centres operating across Kent with just 3 seeing 'hot patients'. The need to thoroughly clean surgeries between procedures restricts these to 14 patients a day. Dentists have been working with a AAA triage system. This stands for Advice, Antibiotics and Analgesia. They have produced an advice document for their members which can be seen here [*Management of Acute Dental Pain in adults within the AAA triaging necessary with COVID-19*](#) . It contains information familiar to most of us.

We all know that dental problems are not our responsibility although we often act outside our contractual and area of expertise out of sympathy. In this case one message is that dental pain is inflammatory in origin and that a combination of paracetamol and ibuprofen at maximum doses is effective and available OTC.

Antibiotics are used to prevent the spread of infection in dentistry and not to relieve pain. Up to 80% of dental antibiotic prescriptions may be inappropriate. There are very few occasions where GPs should consider antibiotics for dental issues.

Recovering Statutory Sick Pay Payments

A new online service will be launched on 26 May for small and medium-sized employers to recover Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) payments they have made to their employees. The Coronavirus Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme was announced at Budget as part of a package of support measures for businesses affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Kind regards
The Kent Local Medical Committee