

19 May 2020

For general practice in Kent and Medway

COVID-19 Update 19

This update is provided by Kent and Medway CCG to provide information to help practices deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you have any feedback or ideas to make the updates more useful to you please email kmccg.gpscovid19@nhs.net

Highlight:

It's Mental Health Awareness Week and we are publicising links to the [Kent and Medway CCG website](#) where a list of Mental Health Support available during the COVID-19 pandemic is available.

Primary care weekly sit-rep survey

Here is the link to this week's survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/62MD2B7>

Thank you to all who completed the survey last week. A summary is attached for your information. You will see there was a 93% response rate – thank you. This meant that the primary care teams were able to gain an accurate reflection of the situation in practices and escalate a number of issues to the relevant teams. A separate IT escalation process has been put into place to ensure that all IT issues raised in the sit-rep are escalated to and reported on directly by support teams and, as a result of this, a number of issues have now been resolved.

We have also seen a reduction in the number of practices reporting a Crisis Management 'red' status over the past weeks, which we believe may, in part, be due to the ability to provide direct support to any practices reporting specific issues through the sit-rep.

If you could please complete the sitrep by **11:00am on Thursday 21st May** your response can then be reflected in our weekly summary and workforce questions escalated to NHS England. Thank you.

Clinical Advice & Support

Symptoms

The UK Chief Medical Officers has issued a letter about coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, which now include Anosmia (the loss of or a change in your normal sense of smell). The letter can be found [here](#).

Screening

We have had reports that some women are being contacted by a text message that claims to be from the screening call and recall service and advising them that they are overdue for screening. The message asks them to call a mobile number and provide personal details. These messages are not from the NHS Cervical Screening Programme

If practices are contacted by women about these texts please ask them to report it to the Action Fraud Line on 0300 123 2040 or they can use Action Fraud's online reporting tool <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/reporting-fraud-and-cyber-crime> . If you become aware of instances of this scam it would be appreciated if you can also inform the Screening and Immunisation Team via phst@nhs.net

Support for care homes

The government has published an updated COVID-19: [care home support package](#) that sets out the steps that will be taken to keep people in care homes safe. The next regular [GP Webinar](#) on **Thursday 21 May, 5-6pm** with Dr Nikki Kanani, **Medical Director for Primary Care (NHSE&I)** and Ed Waller, **Director for Primary Care Strategy (NHSE&I)** will focus on care homes ([submit your questions](#) in advance).

Mental Health Awareness Week

It is Mental Health Awareness Week (18-24 May) and in Kent and Medway health partners and providers, local authorities, emergency services and community groups are working together to highlight the support services available to help people's mental wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There is a list of available services on the [Kent and Medway CCG website](#). For the public, information is also available at www.kent.gov.uk/wellbeing. There is support

for those who might already have pre-existing mental health conditions, are victims of domestic abuse, for people experiencing bereavement and loss, debt and families looking for help with young children or teenagers.

All NHS staff are encouraged to access the mental health and wellbeing support offers available to them. More than 108,000 downloads of the free mental health self help apps have been made so far, showing just how important this type of support is to our NHS staff. Please visit the following page for more information or to download the apps: <https://people.nhs.uk/help/>. You can also find out how to access the free staff support line and the confidential bereavement line.

Referral Advice

Radiology and routine referrals to EKHUFT

In the special GP Bulletin of 1 May we explained the work that was underway with EKHUFT regarding the radiology waiting lists and routine referrals that had been returned to GPs for clinical review, the majority of which were for non-obstetric ultrasound and MRI for MSK.

It has now been agreed that all of the patients that had been referred out for clinical review will be re-instated onto the active EKHUFT waiting list and that the CCG will work with the Trust to support the transfer of routine requests back into community providers for triage and imaging as appropriate. For modalities where there is no community capacity patients will be managed on the Trust waiting list in the normal way.

This ensures a managed process that will maximise radiology capacity and support wherever possible a reduction of what will be long waiting times for routine imaging.

Therefore, no further action is required by general practice. There is no need to return the referrals to EKHUFT as the referral and patient details have remained on the Trust's patient tracker list (PTL).

Electronic Referral Services (e-RS) and EKHUFT

In the special referral update of 1 May we clarified that because of issues with the e-RS system many practices in east Kent have received e-RS notifications stating that routine elective referrals have been cancelled or rejected. This is not the case and the patients are still being held on the EKHUFT waiting list.

GPs may receive the following notifications via e-RS work lists:

- 1) **Appointment cancellation for manual booking** - the cancellation reason will state; Patient booked outside NHS e-Referral Service. This means the Trust will hold the patient on their manual waiting list, contact the patient and reallocate an appointment when able to do so.
- 2) **Appointment rejected/discharged back to GP or refer after COVID** - The Trust will reinstate onto the waiting list in the correct chronological order from original date of referral acceptance.

In both cases there is no action required from GP practices and there is no need to send another referral.

IT

General Practice Extraction Service (GPES) data for COVID-19 pandemic

We have been notified that GPES Data for Pandemic Planning & Research (COVID-19) has been centrally offered to GP Practices in the Calculating Quality Reporting Service (CQRS) and is available for practices to accept.

This information has already been cascaded through other routes. We are repeating it here to make sure you have seen it. Accepting will help you respond to the intense demand for General Practice data to be shared in support of vital planning and research for COVID-19 purposes.

Once this data collection has been established, all organisations, including CCGs and Integrated Care Services, are to be re-directed when requesting data from your GP practice for any COVID-19 non-direct care purposes, into the NHSX Single Point Of Contact for COVID-19 requests.

All practices will have received a Data Processing Notice explaining why this data is required to be collected and all should comply by 6pm on Wednesday 27 May. Should you have any queries regarding this offer, please email cqrsfeedback@nhs.net

A Privacy notice and a Data protection Impact assessment for this process is available from the DPO support service at kmccg.northkentdataprotection@nhs.net

Infection Protection & Control

Personal protective equipment (PPE) training

The Kent and Medway CCG Nursing and Quality team would like to thank all staff within primary care who volunteered to support the PPE training within care homes. We had such a good response that we are now able to provide training in PPE to care homes across the county as well as having a number of staff trained up on how to train others in the proper use of PPE.

Communications

Stay Alert to Stay Safe– new materials

Additional materials have been added to the [COVID-19 campaign resources](#), reminding people to stay alert to stay safe in different settings including at home, travelling to work, exercising, and shopping. These include posters, social media resources, digital screens, digital out of hours, web banners and email signatures that you may wish to display in your surgeries, on your websites or social media platforms.

Administration

Flu vaccine

On Monday we were asked to collate the total number of QlVe vaccine doses that GP practices in the CCG have ordered for the under 65 at-risk adult population for the 2020/21 flu season, as of week ending 15 May 2020. As we were given a short period to respond to this, we decided it was more appropriate to contact surgeries locally, so practices have already been asked for this information. Thank you for your assistance.