

LMC Update Email
20 May 2022

Dear colleagues

GPC England meeting update

GPC England met on 19 May 2022 in their first face-to-face meeting since before the pandemic. Zoe Greaves, GPC England speaker, opened the meeting by welcoming back Farah Jameel, GPC England Chair, from her period of absence and thanked Kieran Sharrock (Deputy Chair), for his leadership and Richard Van Mellaerts (Executive Officer) for his support during this time.

In the morning, the committee received updates from the GPC England chair and Gareth Parry-Jones, BMA Head of Strategic Communications, regarding the ongoing Rebuilding General Practice campaign and the impact that it is having.

A brief presentation was given to help inspire thoughts and discussion on the committee's future vision of General Practice. To feed in to this ongoing debate, in the afternoon, there were roundtable discussions where members got to share their different perspectives and experiences on behalf of constituents, and discuss ways to ensure GPCE can effectively secure better outcomes for the profession and patients.

The committee also debated and voted on a motion regarding the working conditions of independent contractor GPs. This motion was passed by the committee and reaffirmed GPC England's commitment to defending the independent contractor model, whilst highlighting the committee's concerns about the pressures that the model is currently under, and its undervalued nature by the government. The motion also contained a proposal for a separate committee for independent contractor GPs to be established. After a considered and rich debate, this part of the motion was not passed. The committee believed the interests of independent contractors, and defence of the model, were best served through representation by one united committee for all GPs in England.

Commenting on the motion GPC England chair, Dr Farah Jameel, said:

"General practice has evolved over many years, changing to meet the needs of communities, but with the independent contractor model sustaining as the core on which it is built. We know that patients appear to benefit from continuity of care, with the quality, strength and consistency of their relationship with their family doctor having a significant impact on their health outcomes. All of this and more is possible through the independent contractor model.

The outcome of this motion reaffirms the committee's wholehearted support and commitment to this model that allows for high-quality, cost effective and timely care, despite it being poorly valued by policymakers. And it further demonstrates how important it is that the profession stands together with strong representation for all GPs, regardless of career path, at a time when general practice and the whole of the NHS and care system are facing unprecedented challenges.

With the NHS undergoing significant reorganisation, it is vital that a strong, high quality general practice is able to thrive as part of the wider system and meet the needs of patients."



LMC UK conference 2022

The [2022 UK LMC Conference](#) took place 10-11 May - the first in-person UK LMC conference since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and it ran very smoothly. The conference was adeptly chaired by Katie Bramall-Stainer and her deputy Matt Mayer. Our thanks go to them, the rest of the conference agenda committee, the GPC secretariat, including Dominic Norcliffe-Brown, Kathryn Reece and Karen Day, Caroline Eason from the BMA conference unit, as well as the numerous other members of BMA staff who provided support during the conference.

The conference was opened by Dr Phil White, chair of GPC UK, who congratulated the profession for all its hard work during the pandemic, including rolling out remote consultations and the vaccination programmes in record times. Dr White admonished the media and Westminster government for their unfounded attacks on general practice, particularly the false claim that GP practices had been closed during the pandemic. Furthermore, he congratulated the BMA and GPDF on the success rollout of the [Rebuild GP media campaign](#), intended to combat these false narratives and promote an urgent workforce strategy and safe workloads for GPs. Read the [GPC UK Chair's speech](#)

Of particular note, the conference voted through a motion calling on the national GPCs renegotiating the GMS contracts to include workload limits in order to protect patients and staff. With a dwindling, overstretched workforce, this motion gives our national committees the mandate to demand an end to endless unsafe demands on our GP services. Read our [safe working in general practice guidance](#).

The conference also urged the GPCs to negotiate a GP contract that incentivises continuity of care. In response, Dr Farah Jameel, GPC England Chair, said that "If continuity of care is to be rewarded and preserved, it will need to be measured and monitored and it will need new payment mechanisms. So we'll need to spend some time thinking about these matters. We must reward continuity of care and it is right that we ask for it. We'll need courage – from policymakers, from us and from parliamentarians."

The resolutions will be published shortly on this page: [Local medical committees](#)

Rebuild General Practice: support the campaign

The [Rebuild general practice campaign](#) continues to tackle the crisis facing general practice. The campaign has been building awareness of the key issues in the media, with the public and with politicians. We need your support to amplify the message and make the campaign a success.

For more information on how to get involved and to access campaign materials, contact your [LMC](#).

You can also follow and share content, news, and updates on the campaign [Twitter page](#)

Delayed contractual changes for deceased patient records

NHSE/I have confirmed that the contractual changes for the management of deceased patient records have yet to take effect. This is due to required legislative and system changes remaining outstanding and means that practices should continue printing and sending the full records to PCSE until NHSE/I notifies the profession otherwise. PCSE will also retain the obligation to process AHRA requests it receives directly until that time.

Medical exemption service

As of 12 May 2022 the domestic NHS COVID Pass is no longer available, and the medical exemptions service (119) will no longer accept new applications from people who want to use the domestic NHS COVID Pass to prove they cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons.

The 119 service will continue running at a minimal level until 11 July, only accepting queries to the call centre and processing outstanding applications via GP assessments into the Summary Care Record application (SCRa). GPs will be required to continue processing applications until 11 July to comply with the amendments to GP regulations. Previously granted exemptions will continue to show throughout in the NHS Covid Pass under “view my records” except where they have expired due to time-limited grounds.

The NHS COVID Pass for international travel will continue to be available as normal. More information about medical exemptions can be found on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

Navigating the GP sponsorship process webinar

The BMA has partnered with legal firm Magrath Sheldrick, who oversee our [immigration advice service](#), to develop a [webinar](#) on navigating the GP sponsorship process. The webinar is aimed at GP employers and offers practical tips on how to navigate the current sponsorship process to recruit non-UK nationals and addresses frequently asked questions on the process itself.

If you have any questions, or would like to share your experiences of navigating the sponsorship process, please contact Caroline Strickland, Senior Policy Advisor, International Affairs (cstrickland@bma.org.uk). More information about certificate of sponsorship is available on [here](#)

GP training needs reform: the status quo isn't working for anyone

A recent BMA survey has shown a shocking level of unacceptable behaviour towards trainees. Read more in this [blog](#) by Euan Strachan-Orr, chair of the BMA's GP Trainees Committee.

Improvements to benefit eligibility at the end of life

On Monday 4 April 2022, eligibility for the Special Rules changed. This means that individuals can make a fast-tracked claim to two working age benefits if they have an estimated 12 months or less to live. To support people accessing these benefits and to find out more about the **new** process and medical evidence form, [DWP have published this guidance](#).

GPC ARM elections

We are seeking nominations for 10 seats on [GPC UK](#) for a one-session term. At least one seat will have their principal place of work in England, one in Northern Ireland, one in Scotland and one in Wales, and be elected by the RB as a whole. [Find out what you can expect as a committee member](#)

To stand in this election, you must be a BMA member and have a BMA online account.

Nominations will close at 10am on Monday, 27 June. [Nominate yourself at elections.bma.org.uk](https://www.bma.org.uk/nominate-yourself-at-elections)

Voting will take place during the [ARM](#) on 27–29 June. Voting is open to delegates of the ARM only.

Read the latest GP bulletin (England) [here](#)

We would encourage LMCs to share this GPC update with GPs and practices.

Richard Van Mellaerts
Executive Officer, GPC England