



7<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Dear Colleague

Welcome to this week's edition of the LMC Express. The local updates for this week include:

- Covid-19 Vaccination Enhanced Service
- DDRB Report 2023/24: Implications for General Practice
- GP Appointments in Kent & Medway June 2023
- Workforce and Wellbeing Programmes
- Kent LMC Annual Conference: 5th October 2023
- General Practice Alert State (GPAS)
- A message from the East Kent Medical Examiner Service
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### **Covid-19 Vaccination Enhanced Service**

The Covid-19 Vaccination Enhanced Service has been released and can be found at [NHS England » GP COVID-19 enhanced service specification](#)

The specification is valid from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. Practices and PCNs are asked to note that the item of service fee has been further reduced by 25% to £7.54. There is an additional payment of £10.00 for the vaccination of housebound patients but the care home supplement has been removed.

There would appear to be no justification for the reduction in the vaccine administration payment, and this decision will undoubtedly put the service at risk. The BMA has issued the following press statement [‘Short-sighted’ cuts to Covid vaccine programme will leave patients and GPs in despair, says BMA - BMA media centre - BMA](#)

We would advise that practices and PCNs give careful consideration as to whether it is now financially viable to deliver this service.

### **DDRB Report 2023/24: Implications for General Practice**

We have received several enquiries regarding the recently announce DDRB Report recommendations. The Government announced they have accepted the DDRB report recommendations of a 6% increase for doctors within the scope of the report, this includes salaried General Practitioners. We are aware GP practices sometimes use the DDRB as a guide to benchmark salary reviews of clinical and non-clinical practice staff who are employed by practices. GP partners can set the salaries of all staff within their practice according to their own arrangements and any terms and conditions included in their employee's contract.

The issue GP partners face is that they are out of the scope of the DDRB recommendation. GP contractors are in the final year of a 5 year deal which means that the 2023/24 2.59% uplift to Global Sum, raising this to £102.28 per weighted patient, is unchanged, this uplift included a nominal 2.1% for expenses. The gap is palpable and the LMC have raised repeatedly to the ICB and via the GPC to NHSE that the negotiated uplift is inadequate in the current climate. Practices are being severely financially challenged by inflation and increased running costs, which could not have been forecast at the time the deal was negotiated.

In relation to salaried GPs employed by practices, the BMA and LMC provide the following guidance:

1. Pay arrangements with Salaried GPs are based on their individual contracts with their practices, the DDRB Award does not automatically apply to Salaried GPs in employment, but it is applied to the Salaried GP pay scale published by the BMA as defined in the DDRB report [Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration – 51st Report 2025 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
2. Since 2004, and 2015 in terms of standard PMS Contract Agreements following the PMS Review, the GMS Contract requires GP practices to employ Salaried GPs on "terms no less favourable than the Model Contract [which is the BMA Model Contract for Salaried GPs]"
3. This does not mean Salaried GPs must be employed on terms which exactly replicate the Model Contract since by mutual negotiation and acceptance of different terms Salaried GPs may have their contract terms modified to reflect different responsibilities or patterns of working within a practice, which may be more advantageous to both parties
4. The Standard Model Contract includes the phrase "annual increments on [incremental date] each year and in accordance with the Governments decision on the pay of General Practitioners following the recommendation of the Doctors' and Dentists' Review Body". If this clause is within the contract of employment, then the full DDRB uplift should be made. If it is not, and a different calculation/review is provided for, the latter should be applied.

In previous years there has been no in-year supplementary uplift to GP contract payments to bridge the gap between the nominal expenses % uplift within the Global Sum, and the DDRB recommendation. This year, the Government has stated:

1. *The GP Contract will be uplifted to provide funding for salaried General Practice staff. This funding will be backdated to April 2023, and it is our expectation this funding is passed on promptly to all salaried General Practice staff. As self-employed contractors to the NHS, it is for GP partners to determine uplifts in pay to their employees.*

In terms of how a supplementary uplift will be applied in year, this is complicated by the fact that payments under the contract are capitated, and GP practices vary in terms of salaried GP staffing arrangements. Currently, there is no confirmation that a supplementary uplift will cover other GP practice staff aside from salaried GP colleagues.

In regard to other NHS staff pay reviews and settlements applied this year:

Nurses employed by the NHS under Agenda for Change (AfC) contracts, have been awarded a 5% pay increase together with a non-consolidated (non-pensionable and not added to future years pay scales) one-off uplift dependent on their pay band ; AfC does not apply to General Practice staff unless a practice has chosen to adopt AfC terms and conditions in staff contracts.

ARRS roles are reimbursed under Agenda for Change rules in terms of the reimbursable allocation for their roles which PCNs can claim but ARRS staff do not have to be employed on AfC terms and conditions. Plans for the PCN DES have not yet been fully confirmed

beyond March 2024 although NHS England has stated that “*staff employed through the Scheme will be considered part of the core General Practice cost base beyond 2023/24.*”

The LMC will communicate further information to practices as soon as we know more.

## GP Appointments in Kent & Medway June 2023

The LMC has updated the ' [GP Appointments in Kent & Medway](#) ' poster to help practices evidence to patients the amount of work being carried out, and the pressures faced, by general practice, and the steps patients can take to help themselves manage their care. Practices may wish to display this in their waiting rooms or add to their websites and social media sites. The data is sourced from NHS digital. The next update will be published soon after the next release of GP appointments data.

## Workforce and Wellbeing Programmes

We would like to outline 2 separate offers the LMC working with the training hub have released this week for practices. The intention is that the offers enable practices to achieve the 'Workforce and Wellbeing Points Thresholds' in QOF: The contractor can demonstrate continuous quality improvement activity focused upon workforce and wellbeing as specified in the QOF guidance. The overarching aim of this QI module is to evidence support for improvements in wellbeing, resilience, and minimising the risk of workforce burnout.

The 2 programmes we are offering to practices are:

**Manage Your Mind programme:** these are in person, 1 day events, on the dates and locations found below. These are available to **GPs and all practice and PCN staff**. Sessions will focus on improving mental and emotional health using powerful breathing exercises and mindfulness techniques. The cost of attendance is £80 but the LMC will share the costs with practices, reducing the **cost per participant to £40**, this includes a delicious lunch at the venue and refreshments throughout the day.

Manage Your Mind offers individuals an opportunity to invest in themselves, to rest, to re-centre, to re-focus and to re-energise. Participants are likely to benefit from learning 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. This is a great opportunity to connect with colleagues. There are no limits to numbers of staff registering per practice, but please be aware each event has a limit of 45 participants, and you can register to attend at the most convenient location to you.

Click on the required date to take you to the booking page:

[Friday 22 September. Commissioners House, The Historic Dockyard, Chatham](#)

[Friday 20 October. Riverside Church, Thanet Way, Whitstable](#)

[Friday 10 November. Eastgate, 141 Springhead Parkway, Northfleet](#)

[Friday 17 November. Aylesford Priory, The Friars, Aylesford](#)

Please note you can attend an event in area and not restricted to the event in your HCP area. If you have any questions about the programme then please email:

[Manage.yourmind@nhs.net](mailto:Manage.yourmind@nhs.net)

If you would like to know more about the programme before booking a place we are holding free virtual introductory sessions 1-2pm on [Thursday 7 September](#) and [Thursday 14 September](#). To book a place on the introductory session please click on your preferred date.

**Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)** – is a national training programme, which teaches people how to identify, understand and help someone who may be experiencing a mental health issue. MHFA won't teach you to be a therapist, but it will teach you to listen, reassure and respond, even in a crisis – and even potentially stop a crisis from happening.

You'll learn to recognise warning signs of mental ill health and develop the skills and confidence to approach and support someone while keeping yourself safe. You'll also learn how to empower someone to access the support they might need for recovery or successful management of symptoms. This could include self-help books or websites, accessing therapy services through routes such as their school or place of work, online self-referral, support groups, and more. By becoming an MHFAider® you'll have access to continuous support – well beyond your initial certification – so you are confident, empowered and motivated to carry out your role. You will get three years' access to MHFAider® support and benefits which includes 24/7 digital support through the MHFAider Support App®. From there, you will find exclusive resources, ongoing learning opportunities and the benefit of joining England's largest community of trained MHFAiders®. The qualification is endorsed by the Royal Society For Public Health.

Our ambition is to have one Mental Health First Aider per practice, ideally this would not be a GP or staff member who has a HR role, but an approachable member of the team (clinical or non clinical) who is interested. We can then form a local peer network to share learning.

**This offer is fully funded.** To book a free place please follow the link:

<https://invictahealth.learningpool.com/course/view.php?id=1074>

**Course dates for first cohort – 25<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2 whole days 9-5pm, virtually delivered.** A course manual will be sent to participants prior. Each cohort has 8-16 participants, further dates will be rolled out as we fill up the course.

As you can see the courses offer separate benefits and we hope that you find them useful.

### **Kent LMC Annual Conference: 5th October 2023**

We would like to invite you to join us in the afternoon of Thursday 5th October for our Annual Conference, which is FREE to attend and open to all GPs and Practice Managers across Kent & Medway. We are delighted to announce Dr Rachel Morris, Executive and Team Coach, Specialist in Resilience at Work, GP, and Host of the You Are Not A Frog podcast will be joining us as a Keynote speaker, and we will also be covering topics on Digital Innovation, Next Generation GP & Mid Career GP Opportunities, KMMS Medical Students, Wellbeing and Primary to Secondary Care interface.

For more information and to book a place click [HERE](#)

### **General Practice Alert State (GPAS) National Reporting Dashboard**

The national GPAS reporting dashboard has been published and shows the pressure general practice is under. Kent & Medway practices are reporting the highest alert level, Opel 4, consistent with the county having the lowest level of GPs per head of population in England.

Currently, 40 LMCs are collecting GPAS data from their practices and 20 more are rolling out the system. 60% are reporting red or black alerts indicating unsustainable pressure and 80% are reporting levels of patient contacts roughly double or more the level general practice is funded to deliver.

Practices are paid via the GMS contract to deliver appointments to around 1.4% of their patient population per day but of 15 LMCs that submitted data for the first national data collection, 12 reported clinical contacts in excess of 2.5% of their population and the average level reported is over 2.8%. Kent & Medway practices reported clinical contacts in over 3.3% of the population for week commencing 24th July.

Thank you to practices that continue to provide input into GPAS on a weekly basis. The information you provide is invaluable in evidencing the pressure general practice is operating under. The GPAS information from the national dashboard will be used by the BMA and feed into contract negotiations.

Submissions continue to be completely anonymised. The LMC is not able to identify individual practices from the submissions. The only data that is shared with either the ICB or other stakeholders is aggregated at HCP or Kent and Medway level. The more practices that take part in GPAS, the more robust the evidence will be. **Collecting this data is assisting the LMC in illustrating operational pressures in general practice. The report takes less than 5 minutes to complete each week.**

We would encourage every practice to submit a report on weekly basis and to also provide comments and feedback.

The LMC is able to assist with getting practices started on reporting. Information can be found on our website at [Kent LMC - General Practice Alert State \(GPAS\)](#) or please email the LMC at [info@kentlmc.org](mailto:info@kentlmc.org)

Furthermore, if you are experiencing acute operational pressures please do get in touch. **If your GPAS contact person changes or leaves the practice, please update us with the new contact person at [info@kentlmc.org](mailto:info@kentlmc.org)**

[To view the latest GPAS SitRep please click here](#)

### **A message from the East Kent Medical Examiner Service**

The Medical Examiners are an independent team of Doctors who review every death in East Kent to ensure greater accuracy of death certification. A practising medical practitioner who has been on the general medical council register for a minimum of five years post registration can apply to be a medical examiner. For more information on this exciting opportunity to join a team of 14 other Medical Examiners within one of the leading services in the Region please click on the link below:

<https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate/jobadvert/C9344-23-0771?keyword=medical%20examiner&language=en>

### **A message from NHS Kent & Medway: Primary Care listening events**

NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) is hosting a series of listening events in August to discuss plans for recovering access to primary care.

Clinical directors, GPs and practice staff across Kent and Medway are being invited to join the sessions and share their views about the primary care strategy.

Food and drink will be provided at each event. Register for your local session below:

[Village Hotel, Maidstone](#) – Thursday, 10 August  
[Brands Hatch, Longfield](#) – Wednesday, 16 August

[Ashford International Hotel](#) - Thursday, 17 August  
[Hempstead House, Sittingbourne](#) – Wednesday, 23 August

Dr Ash Peshen, Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Kent and Medway ICB, said: "We want to hear from general practice colleagues around what we can do in Kent and Medway to support you and our patients. It will also be helpful to discuss how best we continue our engagement and dialogue in the future. I hope this can be a really useful session where we can come together and have open and productive conversations. Please do come to give us your thoughts, comments, input and knowledge."

### **GPN conference: 8<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

The Training Hub, supported by Invicta Staff Training Team and the LMC, is running a conference for General Practice Nurses on 8<sup>th</sup> September at the Mercure Hotel, Maidstone. Spaces are open to Nurse, Nursing Associate and Health Care Support Worker teams in Kent and Medway and bookings can be made at [Register your place for the Kent & Medway GPN Conference 2023 | Kent & Medway Primary Care Training Hub \(kmpctraininghub.nhs.uk\)](#).

To celebrate the hard work and dedication of General Practice Nurses (GPNs) you are invited to nominate either yourself or a colleague who you feel has demonstrated above and beyond in one of the following categories:

- Leadership and Innovation
- Making a Difference
- Education and Development

Download the nomination form at [GPN-Conference-Award-Nominations-Form.docx \(live.com\)](#) and send to: [kmpcth@nhs.net](mailto:kmpcth@nhs.net)

### **Useful Links**

[Subscribe to Kent & Medway ICB General Practice Updates](#)  
[Previous issues of the General Practice Update available online](#)  
[Subscribe to NHSE Primary Care Bulletin](#)  
[Email Newsletters from CQC](#)

### **Upcoming LMC Interface Meetings**

The following meetings are taking place over the next couple of weeks. If you have any issues that you would like us to raise please email [info@kentlmc.org](mailto:info@kentlmc.org) with the title of the meeting and details of your request.

### **East Kent GP Board – Thursday 10 August**

Kind regards  
Kent Local Medical Committee