



4<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Dear Colleague

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

- Long-Acting Reversible Contract (LARC) contract update
- LMC Buying Group: Are you making the most of your membership?
- GP Appointments in Kent & Medway July 2023
- Reminder: Workforce and Wellbeing Programmes
- Kent LMC Annual Conference: 5th October 2023
- General Practice Alert State (GPAS) National Reporting Dashboard
- GPN conference: 8<sup>th</sup> September 2023
- Useful Links
- Upcoming LMC Interface Meetings

**This week we have also attached the national update from the BMA, and we particularly draw your attention to the following important announcements therein - please ensure you read and understand these articles:**

- **COVID vaccination programme update**
- **Accelerated Access to Records Programme update**

### **Long-Acting Reversible Contract (LARC) contract update**

The current contract is set to expire on 31st September 2023 and there will be a new sign up process for practices who wish to continue providing this service, with applications made via the Kent Business Portal. A letter will be sent to practices this week from KCC, outlining the procurement process with instructions about how to sign up to the portal.

The LMC has been in discussion with members of the Public Health team from Kent County Council (KCC) who are responsible for commissioning LARC services for General Practices and it was agreed to extend the term of the current contract to 30th November, to give practice time to respond to the procurement process. KCC have also accepted the LMC recommendations to minimise bureaucratic burden of procurement and the sign up process now primarily consists of yes/no questions.

The LMC also presented an evidence-based financial model highlighting the need for a tariff increase. This model demonstrated that many practices incur costs exceeding the funding they receive for delivering the service. Regrettably, KCC indicated they were unable to fund an increase to the tariff, so it will remain the same, but they have agreed to review pricing as part of a Public Health transformation process in the coming year.

We acknowledge the dedication of many GPs and their teams in providing LARC in General Practice, which greatly benefits the health of their communities. However, signing up to LARC contracts is optional and we urge you to consider the viability of participating going forwards.

### **LMC Buying Group: Are you making the most of your membership?**

When was the last time you reviewed how much your practice is spending on the products and services you regularly buy?

The cost of living crisis is really starting to bite and even GP practices will be looking for ways to reduce running costs.

This is where your free membership to the LMC Buying Group can really come in handy as it offers practices access to discounts on a wide range of products and services. They can help you save money on the following areas:

- Medical consumables and equipment
- Stationery, Office equipment and furniture
- Workwear
- Insurance
- Confidential information shredding
- Energy
- Recovery Oxygen
- Trade Waste Management
- Telecoms
- Test and Calibration
- Online Training
- DBS Checks Processing

The Buying Group suppliers won't just offer you a great price one week and then ramp up the price the next so you can be assured that if you order from their suppliers, you'll get a great price every time you shop meaning you don't have to 'shop around' to find the best deal every month anymore.

If you're not sure whether you're a member and/or have access to the Buying Group website (this is where you can view the pricing/discounts and get quotes) then contact the Buying Group team on 0115 979 6910 or [info@lmcbuyinggroups.co.uk](mailto:info@lmcbuyinggroups.co.uk). They can also help you with any questions you might have about your membership or the suppliers.

### **GP Appointments in Kent & Medway July 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.

## Reminder: 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 another 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 – 25<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> September, 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 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 on 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 continue to report 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.

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](#)

### 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](http://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](#)  
[Kent and Medway Primary Care Training Hub](#)  
[Sign up to Primary Care News](#)

### 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.

[West Kent Primary Care Transformation Board](#) – Tuesday 12 September  
[EKHUFT/ICB/LMC Interface Mtg](#) – Thursday 14 September  
[Kent & Medway GP Board](#) – Thursday 14 September  
[Manage Your Mind - Introductory Session \(Virtual\)](#) – Thursday 14 September  
[Full LMC Committee](#) – Thursday 21 September

Kind regards  
Kent Local Medical Committee