

## Update from Dr Richard Vautrey, Chair, General Practitioners' Committee February 2018

Following a consistent focus on the pressures that GP practices are under and the wider NHS crisis the impact was visible in Commons this week, with Monday's Parliamentary questions<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2C-1/c.aspx>>, referring to the BMA and our campaign several times in relation to primary care.

Labour MP for Portsmouth South Stephen Morgan commented: 'GP services are in crisis, practice after practice is closing, more GPs leave the service every day. When will the health secretary finally listen to the BMA GPs committee chair who says GP funding is nowhere near enough?'

In a response to questions, it was good to hear that health secretary Jeremy Hunt announced that there will be a joint review on the partnership model, which we called for in our Saving General Practice<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2D-1/c.aspx>> report.

Steve Brine, Parliamentary under-secretary for health and social care, went on to say: 'We back the partnership model very much Mr Speaker and, as the health secretary said last month at the [RCGP] Royal College of GPs, we believe it has many benefits as the cornerstone of primary care which is why we are embarking on a new piece of work exploring other models with the BMA and the RCGP, who have very kindly agreed to work with us on this, to look at the partnership model within the context of primary care at scale.'

This is an important acknowledgement of the continued importance of the partnership model for general practice and we look forward to working together with the Department of Health, NHS England and RCGPs in conducting this review.

Dr Richard Vautrey, GPC Chair debated the issue of retaining independent contractor status in an article for the British Journal of General Practice<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2E-1/c.aspx>>. The GPC's 2015 survey<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2F-1/c.aspx>> also showed that 82% of GPs support maintaining the option of independent contractor status for GPs.

<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2G-1/c.aspx>>

<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2H-1/c.aspx>>

<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2I-1/c.aspx>>

### **Vaccine ordering for 2018-19 influenza season**

NHS England has published advice on vaccine ordering for the 2018-19 influenza season. It recommends the use of the aTIV (adjuvanted trivalent vaccine) for over 65s, and the QIV (quadrivalent vaccine) for over 18s to under 65s at risk. The deadline for ordering has been extended until 29 March 2018.

If necessary, practices should act now to switch to the more effective vaccine, and suppliers have agreed to keep the same prices as previously agreed. If any practices have difficulties changing their orders in the extended time period, they should inform NHS England and GPC so we can take it up nationally. Contact GPC on [info.gpc@bma.org.uk](mailto:info.gpc@bma.org.uk)<<mailto:info.gpc@bma.org.uk>>

To contact NHS England if a practice has problems changing their order please email [england.primarycareops@nhs.net](mailto:england.primarycareops@nhs.net) putting 'Flu vaccine order' in the subject line.

Further advice and FAQs are available on this link to the NHS England website here <<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2J-1/c.aspx>>

This has also been added to the vaccinations and immunisation pages <<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2K-1/c.aspx>> of the BMA website.

### **Joint BMA-RCGP updated position on GPs as specialists**

In a revised statement published 7.2.18, the BMA and RCGP have called on the four UK health departments, working with the GMC, to bring forward legislative proposals to the UK Parliament to update the Medical Act to recognise general practitioners as specialists, and grant them parity of esteem with senior doctors in other branches of medical practice.

The full statement is available here <<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2L-1/c.aspx>>

This was also covered in GP online <<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2M-1/c.aspx>>

### **GP retention and workload pressures**

Research by the University of Exeter Medical School found that GPs are leaving the profession at an increasing rate because they feel undervalued. Dr Richard Vautrey, GPC Chair commented that the BMA was regularly contacted by GPs from across the country who were concerned about the impact of workload pressures and noted that 'this is a crisis which we've been pointing out for a number of years'.

Read the full story in BBC News online <<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2W-1/c.aspx>>

<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2V-1/c.aspx>>

<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2M-1/c.aspx>>

### **Increased training time for GPs included in revised Gold Guide**

In 2017, HEE (Health Education England) proposed an increase in the period of additional training time for GPs <<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2N-1/c.aspx>> to reflect the unique challenges of the GP training programme.

The proposal has now been accepted <<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2N-1/c.aspx>> <<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2N-1/c.aspx>> and is included in the revised edition of A Reference Guide for Postgraduate Specialty Training in the UK/The Gold Guide 7th Edition – January 2018 <<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2O-1/c.aspx>> ('the Gold Guide'), which was published on 31 January 2018. This means trainees who need support to complete their GP training programme will now have up to 12 months of extra time, with a further six months in exceptional circumstances.

Professor Simon Gregory, HEE senior responsible officer for primary care, regional director and dean of education and quality, said: 'We are pleased that our recommendations have been approved. This will help doctors who are progressing in training but need a little longer to achieve the curriculum

requirements. It will also support our Targeted GP Training proposals, which we are working closely with the RCGPs to deliver.<sup>1</sup>

<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2M-1/c.aspx>

### **Online consultation systems**

GPC England has produced and published guidance on the BMA website regarding online consultation systems and the NHS England funding launched for these systems.

The guidance explains what online consultation systems are and potential concerns with these systems. It also provides a checklist that should be adhered to if you are involved in procuring online consultation tools. Finally, it links to further resources and advice for GPs.

Read the BMA guidance <https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2P-1/c.aspx>  
<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2M-1/c.aspx>

### **Referrals to specialist – patient leaflet**

The patient leaflet, What happens when you are referred by your GP to see a specialist <https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2Q-1/c.aspx>, which was produced jointly by NHS England, the BMA and the National Association for Patient Participation, will be printed and sent to all GP practices in England.

It explains what patients can expect to happen if they are referred by their GP to see a specialist or consultant in a hospital or community setting. A hundred copies will be sent to each practice in early March.

In response to further feedback from practices that they would like a version they can easily print themselves, an A4, black-and-white version of the leaflet <https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2R-1/c.aspx>, has also been published.

Both versions of the leaflet are available on the NHS England <https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2S-1/c.aspx> and NHS choices <https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2T-1/c.aspx> websites.

<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2M-1/c.aspx>

### **NHS England shared planning guidance**

NHS England and NHS Improvement published joint guidance last week, setting out the expectations for commissioners and providers in updating their operational plans for 2018/19.

It is important for GPs to be aware of the expectations placed on CCGs (clinical commissioning groups) with respect to general practice. Section three in the document's appendix covers primary care and in particular the focus on CCGs delivering on their proportion of the GP Forward View funding, the earlier roll-out of the extended GP access coverage before next winter and an instruction to actively encourage every practice to be part of a local primary care network, with the aim of ensuring there is complete geographically contiguous population coverage of primary care networks as far as possible by the end of 2018/19.

This is an important step and means every practice will be expected to be in a locality. As with previous initiatives, it is going to be important to ensure there is recurrent funding to support this locality working and it is something we are regularly raising with NHS England.

The NHS England guidance is available here<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2U-1/c.aspx>>

BMA guidance on this will be published shortly.

<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2M-1/c.aspx>>

### **Nuffield Trust report – Divided we fall: getting the best out of general practice**

The Nuffield Trust has published a report looking at the tension between new models of general practice which split out different services for different groups, and the traditional medical generalist GP way of working.

They argue that there is a risk of losing some of the value that managing patients in the round delivers to them and to the NHS, and lay out a vision for GPs providing easier access alongside more general services. The report is available via the following link<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2V-1/c.aspx>>

<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2M-1/c.aspx>>

Read<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2X-1/c.aspx>> last week's GPC UK bulletin

<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2W-1/c.aspx>>

<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2V-1/c.aspx>>

<<https://bma-mail.org.uk/JVX-5G278-3O9DQJ-2ZTP2M-1/c.aspx>>