



August 2019

Heartbeat

Message from the LMC Chair

The government has devised new proposals for England and Wales to end the impasse with doctors over pensions. Just weeks after ruling out reviewing the rules, Ministers now say they will. A consultation launched by Theresa May's government offering to introduce more pension flexibility is also being replaced by more radical solutions. The previous consultation was only published on 22 July.

The issue tends to affect those earning more than £110,000, around 30% of senior doctors and GPs.

Previously the government had said it favoured a 50:50 option whereby public sector staff could forsake half the amount paid into their pension.

The government states it will now be putting forward a plan to allow doctors complete flexibility when it comes to scaling down their pension contributions to avoid breaching the annual tax-free allowance. The allowance has been serially reduced from £255,000 a year in 2010-11 to £40,000 currently - and drops still further for the highest earners.

Proposals will allow doctors to keep the difference in employer contributions generated by scaling down. Meanwhile, the Treasury has agreed to look at how all public sector workers are taxed on their pensions to see if the rules can be relaxed. This will not involve reviewing the £40,000 threshold, but instead will focus on how that reduces to as little as £10,000 as more is earned (over £150,000). Currently some colleagues have reported being landed with huge unexpected tax bills

The plans will be set out in a consultation published during the summer with a view to introducing them from April. In the short term, to help relieve the problems immediately, the government is also promising to allow doctors to opt out from the pension scheme for this financial year. Again, guidance will be published in the coming weeks.

Stephen Kaye
LMC Chair

50:50 option does not solve the Pension crisis



The Government is consulting on proposals to make the NHS pension scheme more flexible and transparent for senior clinicians. GPC, through the BMA as a whole, will be responding and will strongly suggest that the 50:50 option does not resolve the pension crisis GPs are facing. **Read more about our position**

We would encourage individuals, practices and LMCs to also respond. **Access the consultation**

Last week we set out our position on this issue. We **wrote to the new prime minister during the Conservative leadership campaign**. While we welcome his commitment to find a solution to the pension crisis, we have subsequently highlighted the crucial importance that removing the annual allowance and tapering arrangements have in improving GP retention.

CCG Proposals to form a single Commissioning body for Cheshire

We have written to the four CCGs via the Accountable Officer (Clare Watson) in response to the proposal to disestablish Eastern Cheshire, South Cheshire, Vale Royal and West Cheshire CCGs and replace them with a single new CCG covering the same area. This response was on behalf of Cheshire Local Medical Committee which represents some 700 GP partners, sessional GPs and GP registrars across Cheshire. In producing our response we have previously engaged with and sought your views as our members. The matter has been debated at LMC meetings for several months and Clare Watson was invited to speak to our County Board meeting.

CCGs were set up to ensure a local voice for general practice in the commissioning arena, and we have listened to the concerns about the loss of that local voice, particularly as the challenges facing practices are different in each of the current CCG areas. Inevitably, there has not been a consistent approach across Cheshire in respect of the commissioning and funding of general practice. We listened to Clare's explanation of the proposed solution to this issue via the 'Place' and 'Locality' based agenda and through the development of two Integrated Care Partnerships and 18 Primary Care Networks (within 17 Care Communities).

We recognised that a crucial step in the development of the local arrangements is to support the merged strategic CCG. However, the devolvement of functions and staff from the CCG to the ICPs and the Care Communities is still not fully defined. As such, we are not completely clear as to the separation of roles between the CCG and the ICPs in respect of the development of general practice and other local services and the deployment of resources. We acknowledged Clare's stated wish to work closely with the LMC, and others, on these issues as we move forward.

The short-term sustainability of general practice is a national issue. In order to bring about transformational system change, we believe it is vital that any standardisation at either strategic CCG or at ICP level builds on the current financial position in 'old' CCG areas and rounds up funding to ensure we develop our new ways of working based on locally agreed best practice.

We therefore support the view that all parties (CCG and ICPs) agreeing to rounding up rather than rounding down current resourcing. We appreciate the difficulties of this and the need for an agreed 'pace of change' approach.

Place Based ICPs reflect the Local Authority footprints, but don't reflect the way the NHS operates locally (patient pathways and natural community allegiances). We placed on record that we would like to see commitments from the CCG and ICPs that enough time and support will be offered to enable practices/PCNs to adapt to the changes and that standardisation is not sought without both a clear benefit to patients and practice engagement.

Overall we were minded to support the proposal.

The LMC has been asked to oversee the four CCGs membership ballots on the proposal (ballot papers were issued on 5 August) and we would encourage all practices to make their practice view known by completing and returning the ballot papers by the final date.

Firearms update

The BMA has agreed a Memorandum of Understanding ([attached](#)) with the Home Office and the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) on the licensing of firearms, which addresses and clarifies the long-held concerns of GPs around liability, making it clear that the legal responsibility for judging whether someone is suitable to possess a firearm or shotgun certificate rests solely with the police. The [blog](#) by Mark Sanford-Wood, GPC England Deputy Chair, outlines how the BMA are engaging with the Home Office, police chiefs, the RCGP and others to agree a consistent, funded and transparent approach to firearms licensing across the country. Our priorities continue to be public safety, professional autonomy and sufficient resourcing.

You can also find this guidance on the [LMC Website](#).

Practice Manager Development Programme 2019/20



Tuesday 10 September (session 4)

Cheshire LMC in association with
Primary Care Commissioning

Operational Management/finance and business case presentation

Venue: Nunsmere Hall Hotel

9:30am Registration and refreshments

10:00am - 4:00pm

Lunch and refreshments provided.

TO RESERVE A PLACE ON THIS WORKSHOP EMAIL jhughes@cheshirelmc.org.uk

LMC Pastoral Care Support

We relaunched our pastoral care scheme in April 2018. It is available to any GP working in a Cheshire practice. As the pressures within practices ever increase, there is a growing need for this.

Our Pastoral Network has been in existence for a number of years. It is made up of experienced advisors, who are current or recently retired GPs, available and trained to provide personal and confidential support to any local GP undergoing any kind of personal difficulty or crisis.

Nature of help provided

Our pastoral advisors may offer telephone advice, but will also be happy to meet with the doctor needing help, and where appropriate, others concerned about their welfare. Their objective is to help the doctor in question get through the crisis. They will provide confidential advice, interceding where appropriate, with other agencies on the doctor's behalf, or signposting them to other sources of help and advice.

We welcome all practical measures to support GPs. Please also remember that the LMC is always available to provide GPs with a listening ear, to provide pastoral support and to support GPs in relation to performance matters.

Contact via the LMC office: Tel: 01244 313483

Calling All Cheshire GPs

We still have a small number of vacancies on the Committee for representatives from Eastern Cheshire, South Cheshire and Vale Royal (and one for Ellesmere Port). Having completed the election process we can co-opt any additional members if we feel they have knowledge or a special interest area which is of particular value to the LMC. Contact William Greenwood wgreenwood@cheshirelmc.org.uk LMC Chief Executive if you would like an informal discussion as to what is involved.

Sessional GP Subcommittee's Newsletters

'Whats New For Sessional GPs'

Read the latest Sessional GP Newsletter [here](#)



TRUSTED TO SAVE GP PRACTICES TIME & MONEY

Update!

The LMC Buying Groups Federation turned 10 in June and we marked the anniversary with an interactive Twitter quiz, some prize draw giveaways and special offers courtesy of our suppliers.

We have also been busy attending both local and national events and engaging with new and existing members to find out how best we can support them with our services. We will be attending Management in Practice London and Birmingham this autumn plus the Best Practice show at the NEC in October. We will also be exhibiting at Cheshire LMC's conference on 17 September, Surrey & Sussex LMC's conference in October and Cornwall LMC's annual event in November. If you have any events you want us to attend, do let us know and we will try our best to support it.

Scan House

It has been brought to our attention that some member practices are not aware of recent changes to the list of LMC Buying Group approved suppliers. Scan House, who specialise in the scanning of paper documentation to electronic format and provide dedicated document archiving and records management solutions, have been a Buying Group supplier since 1 April. They also offer back scanning services for practices wanting to digitise all paper records. We would appreciate your

support in spreading this message and distributing our new approved supplier list to practices in your area.

Baywater Healthcare

There was a very small increase in the cost of the Buying Group's recovery oxygen package from 1 April however, Baywater Healthcare still offer the most competitive rate in the marketplace at £92 + VAT for the annual cylinder rental. This price is fixed on a three year contract with no maintenance required throughout the contract life. Members can place an order with Baywater Healthcare by completing this quote form.

Recruitment

Our recruitment advertising platform has hosted 160 GP practice vacancies since launching last year and has provided greater exposure for adverts. We would love to reach out to more practices to help them when they are next recruiting clinical and non-clinical roles. We would appreciate your help in reminding practices about this free service if they would like to increase the reach of their advert. To upload a form, practices must login to our website, and upload their advert on our recruitment page.

Primary Care Networks

Following the launch of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) on 1 July, we understand that some practices may still be grappling with their next steps but if you hear that a PCN is looking at combining their practices' procurement and purchasing efforts, then please let them know that the Buying Group can help them through a bespoke service for PCNs whereby we loan out our procurement consultant to help them analyse their current spend across the practices, identify savings and streamline ordering. Practices can get in touch with us on this matter by phone on: 0115 9796910 or by email from Monday to Friday between 9 and 5pm.

Welcome to a Cheshire LMC Event, hosted by Primary Care Direct

Tuesday 17 September 2019

**Primary Care Networks – Just What the Doctor Ordered? Working
with your Integrated Care System**

Venue: Crewe Hall – Weston Road – Haslington – Crewe – CW1 6UZ

0930 – 1600 lunch and refreshments provided

Join us for this free full day event where we will be exploring the next stage for PCNs. You can also register for the morning or afternoon session only. Lunch and refreshments provided. There is plenty of on-site parking at the venue and Crewe station is 5 minutes in a taxi.

- This workshop is aimed at PCN Clinical Leads, all GPs, Practice Managers and other practice or PCN staff (and invited other parties as guests). We are inviting senior colleagues from NHSE, CCGs Local Authorities, ICPs, Secondary Care, LPC and third sector

**Making links with wider system development, the NHS Long Term Plan and planning ahead for
2020 and beyond!**

PCNs in a Changing Landscape: What you need to know about future CCG and ICP Plans

Opportunity for networking

Local PCNs sharing their recent work and knowledge

What is your PCN starting to develop in terms of your 'plans' and your future going forward

**The day will be packed with a selection of speakers 'hosted conversation' and a panel Q&A with
facilitated break-out sessions linked in with what your PCNs are starting to develop**

A number of exhibitors will also be in attendance during the day



**If you would like to join us for this essential not to be missed event,
please register via this link only <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/16610296831>**

To view the Agenda [click here](#)

www.cheshirelmcs.org.uk

Important Footnote:

There have been a number of GP and practice manager's changes recently. Thank you to all those practices that have kept us informed of these.

If there have been any GP/Locum/Salaried GP/Practice Manager staff changes within your practice could you please email Julie Hughes @ jhughes@cheshirelmc.org.uk with an update.

It's particularly important the LMC has the most up to date practice contact and email information for your practice as the fast paced changes brought about by the new contract mean we are issuing up to date guidance and advice. You risk missing this if we do not have your up to date contact details on our register.

Please do share the LMC newsletter as widely as possible through email and social media. We also value your suggestions about the format, future articles or what you might like the LMC to provide for its members.

This is notification of the date of the LMC Annual General Meeting Wednesday 20 November 2019, further details to be confirmed. If you are interested in attending this meeting please contact jhughes@cheshirelmc.org.uk