

Introduction

Welcome to the ninth edition of the GP Bulletin, aiming to keep you up to date with useful information for your daily work.

Thanks to those who have offered comments and suggestions – positive or otherwise.

We intend to improve the format continuously to ensure that it continues to offer useful and practical information.

Please note that in last month's edition the contact details to obtain a copy of the latest version of the Performance Analysis Toolkit was incorrect. The correct address is Tamara.newman@doh.gsi.gov.uk. Apologies.

Please send feedback or views on the GP Bulletin to me at sonny.dutta@doh.gsi.gov.uk

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Supplementary lists of non-principals – extension to deadline for applicants

Last months GP Bulletin contained advice that with effect from 1st April 2002 all GMS Non-Principals must be on a Supplementary List if

they are to continue to assist GP Principals in the provision of GMS.

Transitional provisions allowed those who applied to their HA by 28 February 2002 to continue to provide GMS until the 31 May 2002 or until their application is decided (whichever is the sooner).

However, it has been decided that to avoid any possible disadvantage to non-principals who, for whatever reason, have been unable to complete their applications by the 28th February, to extend this transitional deadline to 31 March 2002.

GP Principals can help to ensure that their non-principal colleagues are not disadvantaged by reminding locums and other non-principals of the need to return supplementary list applications to health authorities as quickly as possible. Any non-principal who has not had an application form should contact the local health authority.

GMS non-principals who have not applied to join the supplementary list by 31 March 2002 will not be able to continue to assist in GMS provision after 1 April until they have applied and been accepted onto the GMS Supplementary List.

Further details from Jenny Smith by email at jenny.smith@doh.gsi.gov.uk or by phone on 0113 254 5828.

Golden Hello application form – update

The NHS GP Golden Hello scheme was launched on 2 November 2001. The scheme gives up to £5,000 to new NHS GPs and those returning to general practice from the GP Retainer scheme, with an extra payment of up to £5,000 if

they work in an under-doctored area.

The practice/PMS provider declaration in part four of the golden hello application form has been amended. The form has been re-issued with supplementary guidance on the recovery of golden hello payments. The guidance and the revised form are available at www.doh.gov.uk/pricare/goldenhello. GPs who have already submitted an application are **not** required to reapply.

Any queries to Katie Cusick on 0113 2545850 or email at katie.cusick@doh.gsi.gov.uk.

Teaching PCTs

Eight teaching PCTs will be established from April. They are in:

- Blackburn and Darwen PCT
- Bristol North and Bristol South & West PCT
- Haringey PCT
- Heart of Birmingham PCT
- North Tees PCT
- Slough PCT
- Luton PCT
- Lincolnshire South West PCT

Together with three teaching PCTs launched as test sites last year in Sunderland West, Salford and Bradford City, these bring the current total to 11. It is anticipated that around 15 to 20 teaching PCTs be established by April 2003.

The aim of establishing teaching PCTs in disadvantaged areas is to attract extra high-quality staff and overcome the recruitment problems often faced in these areas.

Teaching PCTs will be able to create new, attractive posts, offering wider career development

opportunities linked to a part-time clinical role and part-time teaching/learning role. Through education and research, teaching PCTs are expected to be able to provide an alternative portfolio career option for GPs and other health care professionals.

Teaching PCTs will go beyond traditional teaching activities such as post-graduate clinical training and continuing professional development – to encompass the ethos of learning, development, research, dissemination and delivery of good practice. All of these activities will be undertaken both within their own organisation and with appropriate partners.

A copy of the booklet "teaching PCTs" can be obtained from: Department of Health, PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH. Email doh@prologistics.co.uk. It is also available on the website at: www.doh.gov.uk/pricare

For further information, please email Helen Hamilton at: helen.hamilton@doh.gsi.gov.uk

MMR and the target payment scheme

In the wake of the public debate about MMR vaccine, there have been calls for a moratorium on the childhood vaccination target payment scheme.

Ministers and the Chief Medical Officer know that GPs and other professionals are experiencing a very difficult time in persuading some parents to accept MMR immunisation. They do not underestimate how hard many GPs have had to work only to have parents refuse MMR. However, they consider it would be inappropriate and counter-productive to change the target

payment system at this time.

Since its introduction, the childhood immunisation GP target payment scheme has been one of the most effective public health policies and has resulted in exceptionally high coverage. To help ensure this continues, the Department of Health is supporting a package of local programmes to get information to those parents who are still undecided, to help them in their decision making, and to ensure that immunisation is readily available for those who have slipped through the net. Supporting will also be offered to ensure that local GP and health authority databases are correct and up-to-date.

While it is not legal for PCTs to suspend the target payment scheme, they have been advised to consider using the flexibilities offered by GMS s36 Local Development Schemes. They can also vary PMS contracts to further incentivise GPs working in areas of low take-up and where patients would benefit from specially tailored approaches to immunisation. Useful websites are www.doh.gov.uk/lmmr.htm and the Health Promotion(England) website www.immunisation.org.uk

For further details, please contact Liz Kidd on 0113 254 5844 or email at liz.kidd@doh.gsi.gov.uk

Diabetes National Standards Framework

The Diabetes National Service Framework: *Standards* was published last December. The Diabetes NSF Implementation Group is now developing the delivery strategy and is seeking views on what the strategy should contain.

The group would value feedback on the NSF: Standards and what its vision of a patient-centred diabetes service should look like in reality. It would also appreciate views on how we can best use the opportunities provided by the shifting balance of power in the NHS to create and use levers for real change.

The Implementation Group is specifically interested in views on service models, performance indicators and practice-based registers. Drafts of these were published with the Diabetes NSF: Standards, together with a range of supporting information on the Diabetes NSF website <http://www.doh.gov.uk/nsf/diabetes>

An electronic form for comments is included on the website.

Information strategy for older people

On 6 March the Department of Health published an information strategy to support the Older People's National Service Framework and the NHS Plan.

Building on the wider Information for Health and Information for Social Care, the strategy identifies the information infrastructure, systems and services required to deliver the Older People programme.

It contains various initiatives specific to primary care, including:

- the development of practice-based registers for people at risk of, or who have had, a stroke;
- the development of a National Electronic Library for Health Older People 'branch library', linked to the electronic library for social care;
- PRODIGY, which provides up-to-

date evidence-based recommendations for the management of a condition, including support for older people.

Each National Service Framework will be supported by its own information strategy. A primary care summary will be developed to cover the general practice issues of all the NSF information strategies.

Further details of the older people's strategy can be found at www.doh.gov.uk/lipulstrategy/nsf.4.htm

Any queries, please contact Simon Pearson on 0113 254 6621 or email simon.pearson@doh.gov.uk

Appraisal for GPs

Annual appraisal of GPs is being introduced from 1 April 2002. It will become a contractual requirement for all GP principals and PMS equivalents, and a mandatory PCT function.

The need for a comprehensive annual appraisal scheme for GPs was underlined by the development of clinical governance in the NHS, and the GMC's proposals for revalidation of doctors. The launch follows full and detailed consultation with the General Practitioners' Committee of the BMA.

Appraisal for GPs is intended to be a professionally led process of constructive dialogue, in which the doctor being appraised has a formal and structured opportunity to reflect on his or her work and to consider how his or her effectiveness might be improved. It should be a positive process to give GPs feedback on their past performance, to chart their continuing progress and to identify the developmental and educational needs of individuals.

The primary aim of appraisal is to help GPs consolidate and improve on good performance, aiming towards excellence. In doing so, it will identify areas where further development may be necessary or useful; the purpose is to improve performance right across the spectrum, from the best to the worst.

The content of appraisal will be based on the core headings set out in the GMC's 'Good Medical Practice' document, together with consideration of the GP's contribution to meeting local patient needs. The GMC's core headings are: good clinical care; maintaining good medical practice; relationships with patients; working with colleagues; teaching and training; probity and health.

The appraisal should conclude by setting down, as an action plan, the agreements that have been reached about what each party is committed to doing. This should include the essentials of the personal development plan (PDP). The appraisal should identify the individual needs that will be addressed through the PDP. The plan will also provide the basis for assessment of resource needs and clinical governance issues within a practice.

Details of the national appraisal framework and standardised documentation are available at www.doh.gov.uk/gpappraisal

■ GP appraiser training

The initial training for GP appraisers will take the form of a one-day session, delivered at local centres around the country. The National Clinical Governance Support Team is writing to PCT nominees with details.

The Department of Health is funding the educational package,

including the venue, teaching, lunch and refreshments. The primary care organisation is responsible for travel and subsistence and, where agreed, locum backfill for the GPs taking part.

For further information on the training programme, contact Selena Laye at the NCGST on 0116 295 2026.

■ GP appraisal workshops

A national series of workshops on the appraisal process will be held over the next few months for GPs, managers and other interested parties. The Department of Health is working with the NHS Alliance to organise these. Further details will be included in the next bulletin.

New arrangements for workforce planning

From 1 April 2002 new arrangements will be in place to oversee the geographical distribution of GPs in England.

The Medical Practices Committee will be abolished on 31 March, to be replaced with a single funding formula covering all NHS spending. The aim is to improve the equitable distribution of all primary care services. The MPC's function for declaring GP vacancies acceptable for recruitment will fall ultimately to Primary Care Trusts.

For further information please contact Liz Kidd on 0113 254 5844.

Recording details of carers on electronic patient records

Since October 1999 GP computer systems have been required to include a field where the details of

carers could be entered in patient records. GPs are prompted to ask for carer details as part of the registration details of patients.

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and meet the fair processing requirements, permission must be sought from the carer to keep and use that person's details.

For further information, please contact Liz Kidd on 0113 254 5844 or Katie Cusick on 0113 2545850 email at katie.cusick@doh.gsi.gov.uk

Achieving and Sustaining Improved Access to Primary Care

The Department of Health, with key stakeholders, has produced an information document to help PCTs achieve the access targets in the NHS Plan, increase capacity and extend services in primary care, and develop demand management in primary and secondary care.

The document includes essential information for PCTs including:

- Definitions of the Primary care access targets
- Information on the Primary Care Access Fund, including the Access Incentive Scheme
- The new 90% target milestone which has been set for March 2003
- Monitoring arrangements
- How PCTs can access the National Primary Care Development Team Collaborative

'Achieving and Sustaining Improved Access to Primary Care' is available on the Department of Health website at: www.doh.gov.uk/pricare

For further information, please contact Catherine Davies on 0113 254 6602 or by email at catherine.davies@doh.gsi.gov.uk

Out-of-hours accreditation – update

To ensure high quality care and access to all patients, the Out-of-Hours review (www.doh.gov.uk/pdfs/looh.pdf) recommended quality standards to be met by all accredited providers of out-of-hours services. PCTs will be responsible for accreditation.

From 1st October 2002, subject to Parliamentary approval, all out-of-hours service providers will be required to submit a quarterly report to their PCT on how they have delivered their service measured against the benchmark of the quality standards. The review does, however, recognise that not all these standards can be achieved from day one, and so full implementation is not planned until 2004.

The Department of Health is working closely with the GPC and key stakeholders to develop supporting documentation (Quality Standards, Accreditation Guide and Reporting Framework), which will be published shortly. The recent decision to delay regulatory changes until October 2002 will allow for central training and support to be given to PCTs and providers in preparation for their new roles and responsibilities.

For further information, please contact Carole Griffiths on 0113 2546334 or by email at carole.griffiths@doh.gsi.gov.uk

PMS and Shifting the Balance Power

Many of the structural changes set out in Shifting the Balance of Power are about to take effect. These will lead to changes in the handling of PMS applications.

Each of the four new Directors of Health and Social Care are currently making plans for transitional arrangements for handling applications for wave 4B of PMS. In the meantime, please contact the PMS lead in your Regional Office to find out what local arrangements are in place. Details of Regional PMS leads can be found at www.doh.gov.uk/pricare/index.htm

■ PMS website and helpline

The National PMS Development Team has launched a new helpline – 0845 9000008 – for information on all aspects of PMS. All calls and responses will be recorded and used to influence the direction of future guidance and training programmes.

The website, www.doh.gov.uk/pmsdevelopment, has:

- contact details for the team and the nationwide network of facilitators
- over 50 commonly-asked questions and answers about PMS
- links to legislation, press releases, guidance, and more
- a discussion board which allows users to share views, concerns and questions about PMS.

Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, Westminster 10.00 – 16.00

The high profile conference is part of a work programme that is focusing on Improving Lives for Doctors. It will follow up the debate and demonstrate progress following the Improving Working Lives for Doctors summit on the 30 January 2002. It will also provide an opportunity to hear from the new Doctors Forum and hear how the £1 million for Improving Working Lives for Doctors is being spent.

Delegates will have the chance to share in open discussion and participate in workshops. This conference is an opportunity to meet with colleagues, share good practice and develop new ideas.

The day will cover the following themes:

- Managing the changing relationship between doctors and patients
- Planning a flexible career
- More creative roles to flexible retirement
- Flexible working in primary care
- Managing flexible working for junior doctors
- Changing roles
- Working as a healthcare team
- International recruitment

To book your place, call the conference hotline on 0208334 4525. Further information on Improving Working Lives can be found at www.doh.gov.uk/iwl

Date for your Diary – 18 April 2002

Improving Working Lives for Doctors Conference

Postgraduate programme in palliative care

Sheffield Palliative Care Studies Group invites applications for its postgraduate programme in

palliative care, (M.Med.Sci.).

This two-year flexible, part-time course starts in September. The modular programme is designed for a multi-disciplinary student group.

Further details on www.sheffield-palliative.org.uk or from De Jane Seymour or Professor David Clark – tel 0114 262 0174, fax 0114 236 2916, email j.e.seymour@sheffield.ac.uk or d.clark@sheffield.ac.uk

MSc in Allergy

The School of Medicine at the University of Southampton is offering a full MSc course in Allergy, which is suitable for GPs and specialist nurses. The course consists of six taught modules and a dissertation module, and can be studied on a part-time basis.

The full MSc is made up of 180 credits at HE4. The course is run by distance learning (with the exception of the Research Methods module), with set teaching days at Southampton General Hospital. Modules can be taken individually.

Modules offered include:

- Mechanisms and Management of Allergic Disease (I) (40 credits) PGEA approval for 44 hours
- Mechanisms and Management of Allergic Disease (II) (40 credits) PGEA approval for 44 hours
- Research Methods in Health (40 credits)
- Skin Disease and its Management (20 credits)
- Nasal Disease and its Management (20 credits)
- Introduction to Respiratory (20 credits)
- Research Dissertation (60 credits)

For further information see www.som.soton.ac.uk/about.course/s/allergy or contact Dr Jill Warner, 02380 796941 (email jaw4@soton.ac.uk) or Mrs Brenda Colwell, 02380 796379 (email b.colwell@soton.ac.uk).

Essential safety information

The Medical Devices Agency helps to protect public health and safeguard the interests of patients and users by ensuring that medical devices and equipment meet the appropriate standards of safety, quality and performance.

One of the most important tasks is to identify actions to minimise any risks associated with medical devices and alert users by issuing Safety Warnings. Health Authorities receive these notices for onward distribution to you. Those relevant to General Practice are listed below.

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| SN2002(01) | Medical Devices – reporting adverse incidents and disseminating safety warnings. |
| SN2002(02) | Dry heat (hot air) sterilizers. |
| SN2002(03) | Nebulisation therapy: risk of incorrect connections |
| SN2002(04) | Zoll M Series Advisory Defibrillator & AED Defibrillator. |

If you have not seen any of these publications please contact your Health Authority for copies. In the event of difficulty fax MDA on 020 7972 8124.

Bringing welfare advice into Primary Care settings

Advance notice of a free conference for all those working to challenge health inequalities and reduce poverty – 20th May 2002 – 10.30am – 3.30pm - Bradford, West Yorkshire, National Museum of Photography, Film and Television

Bradford's Health Plus scheme brings together seven local advice agencies to provide welfare advice in GP practices – covering benefits, debt, housing, employment and immigration. The project is funded by the national Health Action Zone Innovations fund, and run by Bradford City Primary Care Trust.

Conference Agenda:

- Why the scheme has been set up
- How they got GPs on board
- What service users get out of it

All delegates will receive a full information pack/toolkit.

The conference will be of interest to:

- Those setting up such a scheme
- Those in existing schemes, to share good practice
- Those in other primary care or advice settings

To register your interest, please contact Nick Hodgkinson, Bradford City PCT, Joseph Brennan House, Sunbridge Road, Bradford, BD1 2SY, or email: nhodgkinson@bradford-ha.nhs.uk or Tel: 01274 424780 or Fax: 01274 424781.