

LMC ViewPoint

The newsletter of Leeds Local Medical Committee Limited

December 2021

COVID-19 vaccination programme and support for General Practice

With the rapid increase in the COVID-19 omicron variant circulating and the need to provide booster vaccinations as quickly as possible, NHSE/I published a [letter](#) announcing changes to QOF and IIF and changes to the COVID vaccination DES. Following this they published guidance to [prepare for the potential impact of the Omicron variant and other winter pressures](#), and the [next steps for the vaccine deployment](#) to support the rapid ramp up of the COVID-19 vaccine programme.

General practice teams (not only LVS sites) have been asked to:

- Clinically prioritise services to free up clinical capacity that is delivering services which can safely be deferred into the new year, alongside delivering urgent or emergency care.
- Any patient with an urgent presenting complaint, or potentially serious underlying and unmet clinical need, should be assessed, managed, and referred onwards as appropriate.
- Increase capacity to the same level or above best day in phases 1 and 2 and consider extending opening hours.
- GP practices signed-up to the Phase 3 ES should prioritise visits to care homes that have not yet received a visit

In addition a [temporary suspension of the 15 minute wait for the mRNA vaccine](#) will allow for an increased amount of vaccinations to be carried out.

To support acceleration of the booster programme, [the CQC are postponing](#) all on-site inspection activity for the next three weeks with immediate effect - except in cases where there is evidence of risk to life, or the immediate risk of serious harm to people.

In the NHSEI [7 December operational note](#), they highlighted the increase to the Item of Service fee to £15 per COVID-19 vaccination (administered on weekdays and Saturdays from 1 December 2021 to 31 January 2022), and an increase to £20 per COVID-19 vaccination (administered on a Sunday or Bank Holidays) over the same period. This has now been extended to £20 per COVID-19 vaccination administered between 25 December 2021 to 3 January 2022 inclusive. The IoS fee will continue to be £20 per COVID-19 vaccination administered on Sundays in December 2021 and Sundays in January 2022 as previously announced. The ES and LES will shortly be updated to reflect this.

The government has updated its [COVID-19: management of staff and exposed patients or residents in health and social care guidance](#) to reflect self-isolation changes when in contact with a confirmed or suspected Omicron variant case. [This letter provides an update to reflect the latest guidelines and applies to all staff](#) in organisations delivering NHS care and volunteers working in settings with patients.

Other COVID-19 guidance documents have been updated, including:

- [Patient group direction for Comirnaty® COVID-19 mRNA vaccine](#)
- [Patient group direction for Spikevax \(formerly COVID-19 Vaccine Moderna\)](#)

- [National protocol for Spikevax](#)
- [National protocol for Comirnaty® COVID-19 mRNA vaccine](#)
- [UKHSA's Green Book, chapter 14a](#) – updates on 15 minute wait after mRNA vaccines and advice on heterologous primary courses.
- [Guidance from UKHSA about COVID-19 vaccinations received overseas](#)
- [Second phase for children and young people aged 12 to 15: next steps for COVID-19 vaccine deployment](#)

Self-isolation period reduced to 7 days following negative LFD tests

From Wednesday 22 December, new [guidance](#) will enable the 10-day self-isolation period for people who have tested positive for COVID-19 to be reduced to 7 days in most cases. People who receive negative LFD results on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period – with tests taken 24 hours apart – will no longer have to self-isolate for the full 10 days. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period.

Those who leave self-isolation on or after day 7 are strongly advised to limit close contact with other people in crowded or poorly ventilated spaces, work from home and minimise contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19.

There is no change to the guidance for unvaccinated contacts of positive COVID-19 cases, who are still required to self-isolate for 10 full days after their date of exposure to the virus. Analysis by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) suggests that a 7-day isolation period alongside 2 negative lateral flow test results has nearly the same protective effect as a 10-day isolation period without LFD testing for people with COVID-19.

COVID-19 Pass

It is now mandatory for adults to demonstrate their COVID-19 status before entering certain venues and events. This means demonstrating that they have received a full course of an approved vaccine, have completed a negative PCR or lateral flow test within the past 48 hours, or are exempt from both testing and vaccination. The [NHS COVID Pass](#) can be used to demonstrate COVID-19 status at these venues. Children aged 12-15 year old who have had a full course of COVID-19 vaccination are eligible for an NHS COVID Pass letter for travel, which includes an internationally recognised 2D barcode. The letter service can be accessed by calling 119 or via www.NHS.uk.

COVID-19 medical exemptions

The medical exemptions service will continue to run, and individuals will still be able to request an application form by calling the NHS COVID Pass Service on 119 and then sending this onto a clinician for review. However DHSC have now agreed that the timeframe for processing a medical exemption request will now be at the professional discretion of the practice.

Fit Note extension period

The Department of Work and Pensions are making legislative changes so that from Friday 17 December 2021 self-certification for sickness will be extended from 7 to 28 days for people accessing Statutory Sick Pay, and there will be no requirement for a fit note to access other benefits. This time limited change will end on 26 January 2022. [Further guidance on this is available](#). Whilst this is expected to cover the vast majority of fit note requests, GPs may continue to receive some for access to occupational sick pay depending on individual contractual arrangements.

Prescription charge medical exemption certification

DHSC will temporarily suspend the re-certification requirement for existing prescription charge medical exemptions but retain this requirement for newly diagnosed patients. NHS

Business Services Authority (BSA) will contact patients with existing medical exemptions that are due to expire between 16 December and 26 January and supply a new certificate extending their exemption for a further six months. Some people requiring renewals may have already received a reminder and have arranged with their GP surgery for this form to be signed. If this has not yet been done, no action needs to be taken.

COVID-19 medicine delivery units (CMDU) - important information for GPs

Last week sees the first COVID-19 Medicines Distribution Unit (CMDU) offering antiviral medicines and neutralising monoclonal antibodies (nMABs) to clinically eligible, non-hospitalised patients with COVID-19 aged 18 or over in West Yorkshire open. These high-risk patients include those with Down's Syndrome.

The first CMDU site will be at St James Hospital in Leeds. There will be two clinics each week, on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, beginning Tuesday 21 December. Further sites across West Yorkshire will be brought online from January 2022.

GPs may start to see letters come through from patients or via specialists, although it is important to note that the majority of patients will be booked into hubs centrally with no input needed from GP.

GPs will have the ability to refer to hubs via eRS in case they identify patients through routine practice who may be suitable and not assessed by CMDU within 24 hours of their positive PCR test, but all assessments will be done centrally. Further information is in the letter attached.

The criteria are not the same as those people who were previously considered clinically extremely vulnerable and advised to shield. Please see list of conditions on the triage form attached.

DVLA checks

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) has suspended requests for medical information for the provision of drivers licences until the 12 January (excluding essential workers e.g. bus and lorry drivers).

Prescription charge waiver for COVID-19 antivirals and therapeutic clinical trials

The Government has [announced](#) that, from 10 December 2021 until 31 March 2022, arrangements have been made under the NHS Regulations for antiviral medicines to be supplied to patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 and who are in the eligible cohorts of patients. Where the patients are not already eligible for free prescriptions, the antiviral medicines will be supplied free of charge.

The waiver will also apply to therapeutic treatments that are being made available through the NIHR funded HEAL-COVID clinical trial platform treating patients who have been hospitalised for COVID-19.

Supportive messages about the role of general practice

There have been numerous messages of support about general practice this month: [Statement by the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson](#) (12 December) commending *"the extraordinary efforts of our NHS, including thousands of GPs and volunteer vaccinators"*

"And I know the pressures on everyone in our NHS – from our GPs, doctors and nurses to our porters – all of whom have worked incredibly hard and we thank them for the amazing job they have done."

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care Sajid Javid appeared on [Radio 4's Today Programme](#) talking about the role general practice would play in the Booster rollout. Discussing the need for workload prioritisation, he said: "When it comes to primary care for the next couple of weeks, our GPs will only be focusing on urgent needs and vaccinations, and it also means that non-urgent appointments in elective surgery may be postponed. For the next two-to-three weeks this is the new national mission. For the face to face appointments, the most important one you can have with any GP, is when you're getting jabbed."

[Statement by Secretary of State for health and social care](#), Sajid Javid (13 December): *"My hon. Friend is right to talk about how hard GPs have worked throughout the pandemic, and about the need to provide greater support. We expect and need them to help with this big new vaccination effort. There are already signs of many people showing that they understand the need for GPs to reprioritise over the next couple of weeks, which is important too."*

In a joint letter with RCGP, the UK CMO reiterated his appreciation and support, and acknowledged pressures: "We don't underestimate the massive effort required nor the challenge of prioritising clinical care in an environment in which general practice's contribution during the pandemic has not been appropriately recognised by some people. This will however be a time-limited effort- and one which is highly time sensitive. Only GPs can do this."

Climate Change event

Following the success of the Climate Change 'The General Practice Impact' event hosted by Leeds LMC we have attached the PowerPoint slides presented by each of our speakers.

With a special thanks to Dr Honey Smith, Chair of Greener Practice National. Dr Nicola Hambridge, Chair of Leeds LMC and Chair of Leeds TIDAL. Kirsty Turner, Head of Primary Care Transformation Leeds CCG. Dr Sally Franks and Dr Natasha Gordon, Leeds Greener Practice Group and Lucia Dey, Leeds GP Confed Property Company Programme Manager, for their fantastic influential talks.

The urgency and importance to do whatever we can to tackle the causes of climate change was evident at the meeting. Should anyone be interested in joining the Leeds Greener Practice Group please do get in touch with the LMC at mail@leedslmc.org

Apply for the 2019/20 Pension Annual Allowance Charge Compensation Policy

The second window for GP applications for the 2019/20 Pensions Annual Allowance Charge Compensation Policy opened on the PCSE portal on 13 December 2021. This window will remain open until 11 February 2022. Further details can be found on [PCSE's website](#). To qualify for the policy you must first submit a scheme pays election ([SPE2 form for 2019/20](#)) to NHSBSA.

Firearms licenses

The Home Office has written to the main shooting organisations to request where possible, that firearms certificate applicants who are about to submit a request wait until January before requesting the relevant medical information from their GP or from an independent doctor. The vast majority of applicants (for example new applications for non-work purposes) should be able to wait.

Firearms licensing guidance

BMA have [published guidance on the firearms licensing process](#), setting out their position on firearms licensing and providing information to GPs on what to do when someone applies for a firearms licence, including responding to the police and conscientious objection.

The BMA has had significant involvement in the development of [Home Office guidance for chief officers of police on firearms licensing](#) that came into effect on 1 November 2021.

They strongly support the Government's overall message, that gun ownership is a privilege and not a right, and that firearms must be in the hands of only those who are deemed safe and responsible.

GMC State of Medical Education and Practice in the UK report

The GMC has published their [State of Medical Education and Practice in the UK 2021](#) report, which shows that GPs are once again reporting much greater pressure than any other group, and that:

On average, GPs described the workload on 76% of their days as 'high intensity', a significantly higher proportion than specialists (55% of days) and other doctors.

The proportion of GPs struggling with their workload doubled in 2021, with more than half of GPs (54%) now falling into this group.

GPs were the most likely to be at a high risk of burnout (32%), compared with specialists and other doctors, and fewer GPs took a leave of absence suggesting that some groups feel less able to take this action.

New to Partnership Scheme

The [New to Partnership Scheme](#) will be extended into the 2022/23 financial year and NHSE/I have now removed the requirement to apply within six months of commencing a partnership role. Following a review of the timeframe to apply for the scheme, and in acknowledgement of the challenges the deadline presented to busy new partners as well as the additional pressures created by the COVID-19 pandemic, NHSE/I has removed the six-month deadline, including for submitted applications that meet all other eligibility criteria. When the scheme comes to an end, there will be a cut-off deadline after the scheme closure date by which applications from eligible individuals must be submitted, and NHSE/I will give advance notice of this.

We would encourage all individuals who have commenced in an equity share partnership on or after 1 April 2020 to submit their application as soon as they can after they become eligible.

Joint statement on Inclisiran

BMA and RCGP have published a [joint statement](#) regarding the implementation of [Inclisiran](#) prescribing in primary care. Although the BMA is supportive of innovation of new drugs, they have serious concerns about how this particularly drug is being introduced. In particular they have raised issues about where the long-term responsibility lies when prescribing this drugs, and the lack of clarity about where doctors and patients can turn if there are concerns or problems. There is also an issue of capacity the lack of clear resources to support the additional work required and how the impact that introducing new treatment plans will have on teams that are already stretched to their limits.

Full Rollout Approval for GP Connect: Send Document

EMIS and TPP have been given approval to roll-out send and receive elements of the [GP Connect Send Document](#). Enabled users will be able to create and send a PDF consultation summary of care encounters held outside the registered GP practice.

NHS Improvement Looking After You national coaching service

Please see attached communications toolkit, supporting promotion of the NHS England and NHS Improvement Looking After You national coaching service:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1aS8-sTH1W9qv49d9Tq3hhwg9jJZZ5MFs>

Within the toolkit you will find social media images, banners, bulletin copy, website copy and quotes from those who have used our free services. Please can we ask that you share the materials on your websites, social media channels and in your networks and communications to primary care staff.

There has been some excellent feedback from those who have accessed coaching, but we are aware there are still many colleagues who are not aware of this available support. It remains a difficult time for the workforce, so we would appreciate any help you are able to give to share these offers.

Please also let us know if you have any engagement opportunities. A member of our team would be happy to come to meetings or events within regions and systems to talk about the offers: england.lookingafteryou@nhs.net

What is the coaching?

A landing page hosts all three offers: www.england.nhs.uk/lookingafteryou

We recognise that our frontline primary care colleagues involved in the delivery of primary care services, both clinical and non-clinical, continue to face many challenges. We have developed three coaching offers for the workforce:

- 1) Looking After You Too – coaching about you and your wellbeing
- 2) Looking After Your Team – coaching about you and your team
- 3) Looking After Your Career - coaching about you and your career

The coaches are highly skilled and experienced, and all coaching is free and confidential. The sessions are delivered virtually, preferably via a video platform, but telephone appointments are also available. Thousands of people have booked sessions and given positive feedback on their experience.

NHSEI VCOD letter and guidance

On 10 November 2021, NHS England and NHS Improvement issued a [letter](#) to the service acknowledging the announcement made by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) that individuals undertaking CQC regulated activities in England must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 no later than 1 April 2022 to protect patients, regardless of their employer, including secondary and primary care. The regulations will apply equally across the public (NHS) and independent health sector.

On the 6th December NHS England and NHS Improvement have issued a further [letter](#) to the service with an update re vaccination as a condition of employment for all healthcare workers.

NHS England and NHS Improvement has worked with DHSC, NHS Employers, the Social Partnership Forum and wider stakeholders to develop [guidance](#) for HRDs and organisations. NHS England and NHS Improvement has also published [resources](#) which are available for engaging and communicating with staff to increase vaccination uptake.

If you have any questions please contact nhs.stakeholderengagement@nhs.net

COMINGS AND GOINGS

- Dr Upadhyay is leaving Colton Mill Medical Centre at the end of December, he has been with the practice for 18mths after an 18months GP retainer placement. Dr Sandhu is returning from Maternity leave in the new year.
- North Leeds Medical Practice welcomed a new Practice Manager Karen Smith, Karen started on the 16th November.
- Fond farewell to Charlotte Eastwood, Practice Manager leaving Lincoln Green Medical Practice on the 10th December.
- Dr Simon Hogan, Senior Partner at Leeds City Medical Practice is retiring at the end of December after 32 years as a GP. We will all miss him very much and wish him all the very best!

PRACTICE VACCANCIES

HYDE PARK SURGERY – LEEDS SALARIED GP (4 sessions per week)

- Friendly six GP practice close to University, serving a diverse population of over 10,000 patients
- A new post, adding to our team given our growing patient population
- Enthusiastic & committed practice team
- Highly skilled nursing team
- Teaching practice for medical students and student nurses
- Consistently high QOF achievement
- Supportive induction for a newly qualified GP if appropriate
- Starting date: ASAP, but willing to wait for the right candidate
- £10,200 per session (4 sessions) plus professional indemnity costs

CLOSING DATE: Sunday 9th January 2022

PLEASE CONTACT: Deborah Hollings, Practice Manager

or Helen Craggs, Asst Practice Manager, Hyde Park Surgery,

Woodsley Road, Leeds LS6 1SG (preferably by email)

Email: Deborah.hollings@nhs.net Telephone 0113 2001090

Informal visits welcome www.hydeparksurgery.co.uk

**4 Salaried GP / Nurse Practitioner required for 4 sessions per week
Whitehall Surgery, Leeds LS12 5SG.**

- Salaried GP / or Nurse Practitioner required for 4 sessions per week , working Thursday & Friday . To join 3 GP partners and 4 salaried GP's. Our clinical team also consists of a highly qualified Nurse Practitioner, 3 Practice Nurses and 2 Health Care Assistants.
- Partnership opportunities for the right candidate.
- Friendly and welcoming team. Good working environment and collaborative staff.
- Pharmacists within the practice who work on tasks, repeat medication requests etc.
- 9000 patients in mixed urban/rural setting.
- Modern purpose built premises.
- Routinely high QOF achiever, 100% attained this year.
- Special interests welcome.
- Start date early December 2021.
- Informal visits and enquiries welcome.
- For further information regarding the practice please see our website, www.gpnhs.net

Applications to be made with CV to Mrs Joanne Woods, Whitehall Surgery, Wortley Beck Health Centre, Ring Road, Lower Wortley, Leeds LS12 5SG. Tel: 0113 3058150. E mail: joanne.woods@nhs.net

Foundry Lane Surgery

(Dr Sarah Frost, Dr Simon Hall, Dr Bruno Rushforth, Dr Cathryn Cooper) are looking to recruit a 4-session salaried GP to join our friendly training practice team.

We are keen to recruit a colleague who shares our desire to deliver high quality patient-centred care and education. Experienced candidates or those embarking on their GP career post-CCT would be equally welcome to apply. We would support the successful candidate with training to allow them to develop their clinical educator skills to support our GPSTs at the practice.

We are a low-visit practice and you will receive excellent support from our management and administrative team.

Start date is flexible for the right candidate.

Initial enquiries, or to arrange an informal discussion, please contact the Practice Manager. Interested candidates please forward CV to: michaela.harvey@nhs.net

Closing date – 6pm 20th December 2021.

Practice Manager

Kay Harvey - michaela.harvey@nhs.net

Gibson Lane Practice - Salaried GP

Kippax LEEDS, LS257JN - West Yorkshire Practice - List size approx 11,500

The practice are looking for a 4-6 session Salaried GP

(Can be flexible with sessions)

We are a PMS practice looking for a committed and enthusiastic person to join our friendly, innovative, well organised team.

- List size approximately 11500
- Large leased modern purpose built premises and two branch sites
- Part dispensing
- Full nursing team
- Enhanced services including extended hours
- Research
- High QOF achievers
- TPP SystmOne
- Teaching and training practice

Start date: 01/04/2022

Please send CV with covering letter to: (we welcome informal enquiries and practice visits)

Gill Collins, Practice Manager

Gibson lane Practice

276 Gibson Lane, Kippax

LEEDS, LS25 7JN

Email gill.collins@nhs.net

Fax: 0113 2320746

Tel: 0113 2870870

Dr Freeman & Swillington Health Practice (Leeds 26) - Oulton Medical Centre, Marsh Street Surgery

- Salaried GP
- 4 Sessions (no weekend or OOH currently)
- Salary negotiable

Due to retirement, we are looking for an enthusiastic and highly motivated GP to join our well established, friendly Practice in the suburbs of Leeds.

The successful candidate will positively contribute to our provision of high quality, patient-centred care and have a good strong work ethic.

- We are a 9 Partner training practice
- Training practice for GP, FY2, medical students, and nurses
- Operating across 3 sites, (Oulton, Rothwell & Swillington)
- A well-structured, forward thinking practice, enthusiastically engaging in innovation
- High achievers in QoF and local quality improvement scheme
- SystmOne Practice
- List size of approximately 15,600
- We have an experienced nursing team, including an ANP who co-ordinates and leads our delivery of long term condition management and care home services
- A full complement of administration and support staff.
- Strong commitment and working partnerships with our Primary Care Network.
- Robust links with the community and allied service providers
- Attached services; midwife, physiotherapist, practice pharmacist, mental health nurse, Palliative Care Doctor and Counsellors.
- Weekly Practice Meetings and regular MDT meetings for Frailty and cancer

Informal visits recommended – please telephone Hilary Farrar on 0113 2059683

To apply please forward your CV, with a covering letter to Hilary Farrar, Practice Manager

By Post Oulton Medical Centre, Quarry Hill, Oulton, Leeds, LS26 8SZ

By Email hilary.farrar@nhs.net

Closing Date: February 2022