

Heartbeat

Not only does the weather outside feel like it's starting to work against us, with darker nights, and wetter, windier days, but the political environment that we work within, is constantly throwing new challenges, twists and turns at us. Does that resonate with your current experience?

Dorothy, LMC Chair

GP contract changes are you plugged in?

On 4th October, David Cameron announced that the Government would be publishing a 'new' GP contract. A contract that aimed at getting rid of box-ticking and form filling and instead, would focus on "making sure people can get access to a GP on a seven day a week basis between 8:00 am and 8:00 pm".

The Department of Health have suggested that the contract would be 'voluntary' and offered to practices or federations of practices covering at least 30,000 patients - to enable practices to work in bigger groupings, for example, the Vanguard projects that are providing a range of secondary and community services.

However, the initial BMA response was that the contract and the announcement had not been discussed with them.

The LMC discussed the proposed new contract at their October meeting. As you might image the conversation was lively and encouraged much debate and challenge. The CEO, William Greenwood, revealed that he'd had several enlightening discussions with CCG colleagues in recent weeks around the proposed contract. He suggested that there were clearly gaps in the discussion/negotiation loops between the centre and local CCGs, as well as between local GPs.

He highlighted his intention to keep pushing for platforms to aid any local contract negotiations on behalf of Cheshire GPs, and promised to update colleagues on future conversations over the coming months.

Read the CEO's thoughts on the new proposals in his first CEO's blog. [Click here](#)

Implications of devolution and NHS budgets

The Conservative Government has made devolution one of its central policy reforms for this Parliament.

The Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill (as it is officially titled) is moving quickly through Parliament, but its implications for the NHS could be enormous and remain largely unclear. There are a lot of the important issues and unanswered questions that need to be considered.

The LMC has been watching the implications of devolution start to be played out locally with 'Devo Manc'. There was discussion around the subject at the last LMC meeting, with colleagues present suggesting that at the moment, it felt as though general practice was exposed and that it was a watching game – seeing what starts to be played out over the coming months across Greater Manchester, as their plans start to be put into place. An unsettling thought, enhanced even further by the realisation that Devo Manc is almost the test bed for future iterations of devolution, and ones which could significantly impact on local colleagues.

It was agreed to invite the Manchester LMC Chief Executive, Dr Tracy Vell, to meet with Cheshire LMC colleagues to learn more about what is happening 'on the ground with Devo Manc.'

Support for emerging GP federations

The LMC has successfully bid to the General Practice Defence Fund (GPDF) for development funding for emergent GP federations and 'new' provider organisations. We have received £10,000 to spend this financial year, to support GP colleagues in developing new models.

The CEO has started to have discussions with leading federation GP colleagues; seeking their views around what help and support they might want/need to help them move forward. If you have not as yet had the opportunity to have such discussions, please contact William: WGreenwood@cheshirelmc.org.uk

The LMC is also exploring additional funding opportunities with local CCG and Public Health colleagues; looking at how we might work with them by sharing resources and experiences, to support local federations to become 'business ready'.

Childhood flu vaccine update

Due to shortages of the childhood flu vaccine Fluenz, Public Health England and MHRA have agreed that practices can instead use the US labelled FluMist® Quadrivalent, which is fully licensed for use in the UK.

Public Health England has published FAQs, which explain about the batch expiry date, including a link to a template PGD, and suggest how to record it on the clinical system (either as 'Influenza vaccine (Live attenuated)' or 'Fluenz Tetra').

Public Health England has also produced separate guidance on cold chain failures.

Further information is available in the special edition of Vaccine Update, Live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) for the UK childhood flu programme

Right name?

'Heartbeat' whether you like the name or not, is your local LMC newsletter. Each month we will aim to bring you up to speed with the local nuances, reflections and views of the LMC around the national agenda.

However, as this is *your* newsletter we want to be sure that it is fit for purpose – even down to its name. Does 'Heartbeat' chime positively with you, or does it grate and make you cringe?

What do you think it should be called if not? Send us your positive suggestions:
JHughes@cheshirelmc.org.uk

Right content?

Hopefully you will have had the opportunity to look at the new LMC website – even if only just for a quick glance. Does it work for you? Do you feel that it provides you with the right level of information and support to enhance your working life?

Do you feel that the site will start to open up opportunities for you that will provide you with strengthened peer support? Is it engaging enough to encourage you to want to freely share information, ideas and engage in topical debate with colleagues and peers?

The website is *your* website, especially the members section (which is currently being developed), so if you feel that we can enhance it in any way to make it better for you to work with/interact through, please let us know. Please send your comments to:
JHughes@cheshirelmc.org.uk

Cheshire Local Medical Committee Ltd