

West Pennine Local Medical Committee

Supporting and representing GPs in Glossop, Oldham, & Tameside

August 2024 UPDATE FROM YOUR LMC



Dr Amir Hannan, Chair



Dr Alan Dow, Secretary/
GM GPC Representative



Dr Andrew Vance, Vice Chair



Jane Hill, LMC Liaison Officer/
GP Practice Data Protection Officer



An overwhelming [98.3% of members who voted in our ballot said YES](#) to taking part in one or more suggested actions from the menu within the BMA GPCE's [toolkit](#). This result clearly shows the united voice of a beleaguered GP profession willing to say – enough is enough.

Now is the time to demonstrate to local health systems and NHS England that we are ready to take a stand and fight for the future of our practices, our profession, and the GP service our patients deserve to receive.

Practices in England can now begin to take action from the following menu of 10 possible actions:

1. Limit daily patient contacts per clinician to the [UEMO recommended safe maximum of 25](#). Divert patients to local urgent care settings once daily maximum capacity has been reached. We strongly advise consultations are offered face-to-face. This is better for patients and clinicians
2. Stop engaging with the e-Referral Advice & Guidance pathway - unless for you it is a timely and clinically helpful process in your professional role.
3. Serve notice on any voluntary services currently undertaken that plug local commissioning gaps and stop supporting the system at the expense of your business and staff.
4. Stop rationing referrals, investigations, and admissions
 - Refer, investigate or admit your patient for specialist care when it is clinically appropriate to do so.
 - Refer via eRS for two-week wait (2WW) appointments, but outside of that write a professional referral letter in place of any locally imposed proformas or referral forms where this is preferable. It is not contractual to use a local referral form/proforma – quote [our guidance and sample wording](#)
5. Switch off GPConnect Update Record functionality that permits the entry of coding into the GP clinical record by third-party providers.
6. Withdraw permission for data sharing agreements that exclusively use data for secondary purposes (i.e. not direct care). Read our guidance on [GP data sharing and GP data controllership](#).
7. Freeze sign-up to any new data sharing agreements or local system data sharing platforms. Read our guidance on [GP data sharing and GP data controllership](#).
8. Switch off Medicines Optimisation Software embedded by the local ICB for the purposes of system financial savings and/or rationing (rather than the clinical benefit of your patients).
9. Defer signing declarations of completion for “better digital telephony” and “simpler online requests” until further GPC England guidance is available. In the meantime:
 - Defer signing off “Better digital telephony” until after October 2024: do not agree to share your call volume data metrics with NHS England.
 - Defer signing off “Simpler online requests” until Spring 2025: do not agree to keep your online triage tools on throughout core practice opening hours, even when you have reached your maximum safe capacity.
10. Defer making any decisions to accept local or national NHSE Pilot programmes whilst we explore opportunities with the new Government.

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Taking action at individual practice level

We know many practices have already taken the first steps while others are still planning the actions you wish to take. Others may still be considering their options. This must work for your individual practice – do what is right for your individual needs and as works best with your patient population. Each of the actions are safe, effective, sustainable and clear. Many of these measures are already best practice.

You can choose to do one or many, and they are each described and detailed on the [BMA website](#). It's up to each practice to choose which actions to take, and when but we know some practices and areas would like to take steps and prioritise certain actions together which is also fine. In some ICBs there are some actions likely to be taken across the whole system.

A recent article in The Guardian states that already “46% of GP Practices are taking work to rule action with more than a quarter (26%) limiting the number of patients a doctor sees each day to 25... a further 20% will be taking collective action in the future. Another 22% are considering it. Only 7% ruled out taking any industrial action.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/article/2024/aug/13/nearly-half-of-englands-gp-surgeries-taking-industrial-action-survey-finds>

Short weekly survey

It would be very useful if you could complete the following very short survey. This will arm the BMA's GP Committee with crucial information to help inform discussions and negotiations with NHS England, encouraging them to do the right thing for patients in protecting general practice, as well as support the new Government in delivering on the commitments in their election manifesto.

The local action weekly tracker survey for Monday, 12th to Sunday, 18th August can be found here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BMA_GP_Action_Tracking_12-18Aug

Please do take 2 minutes to complete the survey- this week's one before Sunday 18th August.

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BMA public facing information campaign for patients to support Industrial action.

To support the Industrial action, the BMA's GP committee have developed A4 posters and A5 leaflets to be shared with patients. Please visit this webpage for more information and to order materials: www.bma.org.uk/GPsOnYourSide



Save The Date!

The West Pennine LMC AGM is set to take place on **Thursday 7th November 2024 at 7pm** at the Village Hotel, Ashton -Under-Lyne. It would be great if you could join us then.

CQC support

The West Pennine LMC are very aware of how stressful the CQC inspection process can be for Practice staff, both before and after an inspection. We can offer support by coming out to your practice building and reviewing your policies, and protocols with you. If you feel this would be of benefit to your practice team, please do not hesitate to contact us at westpennine.lmc@nhs.net

Retirement

If any GPs are retiring from your practice are due to retire, please do let us know so we can acknowledge their service to General Practice. westpennine.lmc@nhs.net

Recruitment adverts

The West Pennine LMC is happy to share any GP practice recruitment adverts via the LMC's website. Please contact Jane at westpennine.lmc@nhs.net if you wish to advertise a position at your practice.

Data Protection Office Update

CHIS Data Sharing Agreement

You will recently have received a Data Sharing Agreement from South, Central & West CSU for the sharing of data to support the children's Immunisation service. This initiative supports direct healthcare and is in the best interest of the patients, and having scrutinised the DPIA and associated documents, I am satisfied that it meets all relevant Data Protection requirements. As this agreement hasn't been shared via the Information Sharing Gateway, please do ensure your R.O.P.A. (register of Processing Activities) is updated accordingly. As I've flagged previously, all GP Practices should maintain an up-to-date ROPA, as dictated by Article 30 of the GDPR. If you require any support with this, please do not hesitate to contact me: Jane.hilldpo@nhs.net

Crowdstrike outage

Following the events of Friday 19th July that saw critical digital services, including in general practice, across the country impacted by the outage, the ICO have confirmed that practices are not required to report the availability breach created by the outage on an individual basis. Instead – NHSE is providing a bulk report to the ICO, allowing them to satisfy their obligations under Article 33 (1) UK GDPR. The ICO confirmed that for those practices that have already reported, they may consider the matter closed with no further action to follow.

UK Caldicott Guardian Council training

The UK Caldicott Guardian Council have several training events for Caldicott Guardians in 2024. Please see the following link for further information:

[Events – UKCGC](#)

Data Protection training

In 2024, I continue to deliver Data Protection training sessions for GP practice teams. If you think your team would benefit from a short F2F session, I am very happy to come out to your practice to support you with this. Jane.hilldpo@nhs.net