

GPC News

Friday 17 October 2008

M3

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GPC meeting

The GPC met on 16 October 2008 and this newsletter provides a summary of the main items discussed.

Report on main negotiating issues

Please find attached (appendix 1) the written report from the GPC negotiators submitted to the committee ahead of the meeting and revised in the light of the updates given at the meeting.

2009/10 Contract negotiations

On Tuesday 14 October announcements were made regarding agreements made with NHS Employers regarding a ratio formula for distribution of the DDRB recommendations for 2009/10, the changes to QOF and prevalence within the QOF. The proposals have now been signed off by all parties, namely the GPC, NHS Employers and the Health Departments.

A joint letter outlining the agreement has been sent to the DDRB and more detailed papers regarding the changes to the contract and QOF have also been agreed. All GPs have been notified of the position via a letter from GPC Chairman, Laurence Buckman:
www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/gmsconletter14Oct2008

It has come to light that there is some inconsistency in terminology in the letter to the profession and within the accompanying letter of agreement regarding the ratio formula. The factor in the formula which has been allocated two-nineteenths should be described

throughout as global sum plus correction factor. The necessary amendments are being made and the versions of all documentation on the website will be corrected.

The joint NHS/GPC letter regarding changes to the contract can be found on the BMA website here:

www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/gmsagreeOct08

The joint GPC-NHSE letter to the DDRB is available at the following link:

www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/PayRecommendsOct08

The QOF agreement is available here:

www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/QoFChangesOct08

Negotiations on changing the mechanism for calculating seniority pay are ongoing but any changes are outwith this package.

2006/07 GP Earnings and Expenses Enquiry

The 2006/07 GP Earnings and Expenses Enquiry was published on Wednesday 15 October, showing the predicted decrease in average net profit for contracted GPs of 2.1% (2.6% decrease for GMS and 1.5% decrease for PMS GPs). Clearly further losses are predicted for 2007/08 and 2008/09, which the BMA estimates will lead to a further cumulative loss at 8.2%. This is in line with what was expected and a reflection of the fact that practices are having to cope with very real cuts in their resources. These figures will be used in supplementary evidence to the Review Body to make a robust case for a fair uplift for GPs for 2009/10.

Although the methodology differs from last year and thus makes a comparison impossible, the average income for salaried GPs had increased and it is hoped that this is a reflection of practices paying salaried GPs in line with the DDRB recommendations.

Pensions

The outstanding dynamising factors (DF) have now been agreed.

The percentage increases are as follows:

2003/04 12.9% (DF of 1.129)

2004/05 20.4% (DF of 1.204)

2005/06 11.6% (DF of 1.116)

2006/07 0% (DF of 1)

2007/08 0% (DF of 1)

The cumulative dynamising increase for this period is therefore 52%; the Secretary of State had attempted to cap the figure at 48%, spread over five years.

The EEQ data show a negative growth in GPs' net profit in the year 2006/07 and it is assumed that this will also be the case for 2007/08. The dynamising factor for this period was based on the percentage annual increase in GPs' profit, with the safeguard that the dynamising factor would never be negative. This is why there is no dynamising increase in these years. The dynamising factor from 2008/09 onwards will be based on RPI +1.5%.

GPs who retired during this period, in particular up to March 2006 in the expectation of the dynamising increases, will therefore be due an increase to their pension and lump sum. The BMA pensions department is working closely with the NHS pensions agencies and it is hoped that the backdated increases will be paid in the first quarter of 2009.

Dispensing doctors consultation in England

The GPC considered its response to the Department of Health's consultation on the future of GP dispensing and is firmly of the view that there should be no change to the existing rules. The deadline for responses is 20 November and a briefing on how practices and LMCs should respond will be issued shortly.

In the meantime, the Department of Health has arranged a series of 'Listening Events' around England, the details of which were circulated on the LMC listserver last month and which are now fully booked.

The GPC and GPDF have arranged a number of roadshows to inform GPs and practice managers about the consultation document and process, led by Dr Russell Walshaw, the GPC's lead for dispensing matters and Secretary of East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire LMCs. The first meeting, held on 14 October, in Cambridge was very well attended and we are grateful to Cambridgeshire LMC for arranging such a successful event.

There will be two further meetings, the details of which are below and we are grateful to YOR LMC Ltd and Worcestershire LMC Ltd for agreeing to arrange these meetings.

Wednesday 29 October 2008

7:30pm (sandwich buffet available from 7:00pm)
Village Hotel & Leisure Club
186 Otley Road, Headingley, Leeds, LS16 5PR

If you wish to book a place, please contact:

Deborah Johnson
YOR Local Medical Committee Limited (YORLMC Ltd)
Email: info@yorlmc.co.uk
Telephone: 01423 879922

Monday, 10 November 2008

7.00 p.m. Bartlett Suite, Pear Tree Inn at Smite, Worcester, WR3 8SY (Just off junction 6 off the M5). The meeting will commence at 7.00 p.m. but refreshments will be available from 6.30 p.m. onwards. The meeting will begin as soon after 7.00 p.m. as possible for approximately 2 hours.

Please contact Michelle Hallahan at Worcestershire LMC, details below, no later than Friday, 31 October 2008.

Michelle Hallahan
Executive Officer
Worcestershire Local Medical Committee Ltd
T: 01527 65082
F: 01527 61211
E: mhallahan@worcsimc.co.uk

Urgent and emergency care

The Healthcare Commission has produced a review of urgent and emergency care service in England, 'Not just a matter of time'. In many respects, this review is an improvement on the document published by the Department of Health in 2006. The Healthcare Commission report makes the proper distinction between urgent and emergency care and also highlights the important role that GPs play in the delivery of this care. The GPC is considering this document in detail.

The review can be found on the Healthcare Commission website, here:

www.healthcarecommission.org.uk/guidanceforhealthcarestaff/nhsstaff/annualhealthcheck/reviewsandstudiesofservices/2007/08/urgent/emergencycare.cfm

Primary care federations

The Royal College of General Practitioners has published a consultation document regarding the development of primary care federations. The BMA supports the RCGP concept of practice federation, providing it is also supported by PCTs. The RCGP is considering a wide range of responses to its consultation. The GPC is in the process of developing guidance to assist federated practices.

The RCGP proposals can be viewed here:

www.rcgp.org.uk/pdf/Primary%20Care%20Federations%20document.pdf

Media coverage report

Please find attached (appendix 2) a GPC media coverage report prepared by the BMA's press office, detailing GPC media activity during the last few weeks.

The GPC next meets on 20 November 2008, and LMCs are invited to submit items for discussion. You may like to review these, beforehand, with the representatives in your area who serve on the GPC. The closing date for items is 11 November. It would be helpful if items could be emailed to Catharina Ohman-Smith at cohman-smith@bma.org.uk. You may also like to use the GPC's listservers to exchange views and ideas.

GPC News

GPC News is available via the Internet, via the BMA's web pages:
www.bma.org.uk

LMCs are reminded that their regional representatives can provide more detailed information about the issues covered in GPC News, and other matters. Other members of the GPC would also be pleased to accept invitations to LMC meetings wherever possible. Their names and addresses are in the GPC Yearbook. The secretariat can also provide a written background brief if required, but it would be helpful to have such requests well in advance of your meetings.

Finally, if LMCs require assistance on local issues, they can also contact the BMA's local offices: addresses are on page 3 of the GPC's yearbook.

This newsletter has been sent to:

- Secretaries of LMCs and LMC offices
- Members of the GPC
- Members of the GP trainees subcommittee
- Members of the sessional GPs subcommittee

NEGOTIATORS' REPORT – October GPC

Focus on Extended Access – GPC guidance

Following publication of the Extended Hours Access Scheme DES Directions and SFE, the GPC guidance has now been updated and reissued. An FAQ section has been added to assist practices under pressure from PCOs to move from a LES to the DES arrangements. The guidance is available at the following link -

www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/Focusextendaccess0408

LMC links with RCGP faculties

The RCGP has written to all RCGP local faculties encouraging them to develop local links with LMCs and encouraging them to invite an LMC representative to their Faculty Board meetings. The RCGP is asking faculties for information on what links they currently have with their LMC and asking them to identify an individual lead to link with their LMC. We believe improved links at local level and regular contact between LMCs and faculties would have many benefits both locally and for the BMA and RCGP, particularly with regard to the current Darzi reviews.

Condition Management Programme (CMP) for people in receipt of Incapacity Benefit

A Condition Management Programme (CMP) has been set up in conjunction with the Department for Work and Pensions and Department of Health. This is aimed at those people with long-term health problems who are in receipt of incapacity benefit, with a view to helping them back to work. It uses techniques such as health education, exercise and vocational support.

The GPC has become aware that in some areas the CMP provider or PCO is asking GPs to complete a questionnaire/health report to confirm that certain patients can participate in the scheme. It is the GPC's view that this is not core GP work and therefore GPs are not obliged to undertake this. If such questionnaires/health reports are necessary then they could be provided by an occupational health physician. Alternatively, if GPs wish to complete the report then they may charge a fee or the LMC may wish to negotiate a LES for this work with the PCO.

Publication of QOF figures

The results of the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) for 2007-08 for England and Scotland have been published. The results demonstrate the high standard of treatment patients are receiving across the UK.

In England, practices achieved 96.8% of all targets set out in the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF), part of the new GP contract - an increase of 1.3% on last year. In Scotland, GPs achieved 98.2%. The results for Northern Ireland were published on 19th September and practices achieved 98.9%. Results for Wales have not yet been published.

The BMA press releases can be found at the following link –

www.bma.org.uk/pressrel.nsf/wfmms?OpenForm&Seq=1

The Public Affairs Division has also prepared a briefing paper highlighting the benefits of the QOF which is available on the website at the following link -

www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/QOFbrief0908

Support Your Surgery campaign - Thanks a Million

By now, all GP Practices in England should have received a campaign pack for phase 2 of the Support Your Surgery campaign.

The 1.3 million signatures collected by GPs and LMCs was a phenomenal achievement, and certainly had a big impact on government. But perhaps the greatest success of the campaign was the way it raised public and patient awareness of the problems facing General Practice today, and the high quality service that GP practices provide.

The second phase of the Support Your Surgery campaign continues the focus on raising public awareness of the threats to General Practice, and on letting people know how they can make their voices heard - for example, by writing to their PCT, local MPs, local media, and local council overview and scrutiny committees.

Please could you, as LMCs, keep reminding practices of the importance of keeping the momentum of the Support Your Surgery campaign going - it is vital that practices keep talking to their patients about this, and prominently display posters in their practice. However it is also important not to give any false impression of the danger to local GPs and practices should consider the local context when displaying posters and leaflets.

Additionally, we have received a number of reports from LMCs around the country who have had positive experiences in contacting local overview & scrutiny committees. If you have had either positive or negative experiences contacting your local OSC, please do let us know.

MP-GP matching scheme

The BMA's Parliamentary Unit has written to all Westminster MPs inviting them to visit a GP practice in their constituency before the end of the year. This initiative is one part of a much wider effort by the Parliamentary Unit to raise MPs' awareness of the issues facing GPs in their individual constituencies. We hope that the MP- GP practice visit scheme will enable MPs to see the 'reality' behind many of the headlines GPs currently receive. A letter was sent to LMCs providing more information on the scheme, including the benefits for LMCs and practices. It is extremely important to try to develop good relationships with MPs. This is part of the next phase of our public activity.

The BMA's Parliamentary Unit would be very grateful for any assistance LMCs could provide in identifying practices willing to host a MP's visit. The Parliamentary Unit also sent LMCs a toolkit to help LMCs and practices get the most out of a MP's visit.

If you have any queries about the scheme, please do feel free to contact Susan Solanki, the BMA's Parliamentary Liaison Officer at either ssolanki@bma.org.uk or 020 7383 6681.

Public Accounts Committee Report - NHS pay modernisation: new contracts for General Practice services in England

The Public Accounts Committee published a report on the GP contract which criticised Government spending on the contract and questioned the benefit to patients. Richard Vautrey spoke against the report on the Today programme, but as expected, there was heavy tabloid coverage.

The BMA challenged suggestions that that GP 'productivity' has decreased, noting in comments to the media the increased in the complexity of consultations and the intensity of the work and highlighting the QOF's long term health benefits. The full press release is available on the website here - www.bma.org.uk/pressrel.nsf/wlu/STRE-7K8GJ8?OpenDocument&vw=wfmmms

HPV vaccine

The Department of Health is yet to provide clarification on a number of important issues surrounding the provision of the HPV vaccine, particularly those relating to the format the vaccine is provided in and patient choice. We understand that that there is concern about the lack of clarity and we are continuing to press the DH for guidance. As soon as any information is available the profession will be informed.

GPC Communications Report: September 2008

September saw the launch of Phase Two of the Support Your Surgery campaign and the publication of the QOF figures. The press office also dealt with media requests following the publication of two polyclinic reports. One which showed where polyclinics should be based according to need, the other which said polyclinics would damage patient trust in GPs because of a decrease in continuity of care.

The press office also developed a communications strategy for the 2008-2009 session based on the committee's political priorities.

Press Releases

19/9/08 BMA urges patients to make sure their voices are heard

30/9/08 General Practice: Improving the way healthcare is delivered in the UK

Letters to Press from GPs include the following:

Date	Signatory	Publication	Subject of letter
26/9/08	Dr Hamish Meldrum	Daily Telegraph	Access routes for patients to urgent care
26/9/08	Dr Hamish Meldrum	Daily Express	Out of hours care

National GP coverage September 2008

Total 14
Print 14
 Broadcast N/A

Print

2/9

- Guardian CHCs held the NHS to account – their abolition has left a huge void” P33 **Jacky Davies quote**

3/9

- Guardian “Cynical surgery” P4 **Kailash Chand quote**

9/9

- Daily Mail “Do you want your medical secrets on a plastic card?” P47 **Paul Cundy quote**

10/9

- Daily Telegraph “Polyclinics to have more nurses than GPs” P2 **Chaand Nagpaul quote**
- London Evening Standard “First super-surgeries in London are named” P6 **BMA mention**

16/9

- BBC Online “Doctors against training shake-up” **BMA mention**

18/9

- Daily Express “GPs face the axe in superclinic shake-up” P11 **Laurence Buckman quote**
- Guardian “Patients get veto on access as NHS database expands across England” P14 **BMA mention**

19/9

- Financial Times “National electronic medical records a step closer” P8 **BMA mention**
- BBC Online “More GP hours could cut strokes” **Laurence Buckman quote**

20/9

- Daily Telegraph “GPs made to report unsafe motorists” **BMA mention**

22/9

- Guardian “Other Lives – Jack Miller” P37 **BMA mention**

23/9

- BBC Online “Polyclinics may damage GP trust” **Laurence Buckman quote**

24/9

- BBC Online “Deal to offer extra GP services” **David Bailey quote**

Regional GP Coverage September 2008

Total **36**

Print **21**
Broadcast **15**
 TV 5
 Radio 10

Top Stories

Extended hours	14
Save our surgeries	6
Prescription charges	3
Politics	3
GP services	2
Pharmacy White Paper	2
Nurse	1
Complaint	1
Supersurgeries	1
Pay	1
Polyclinics	1
NHS admin	1

Spokesman	TV	R	P
David Bailey	2	3	
Phil White	4	1	
Kailash Chand			4
Laurence Buckman		1	2
Tom Black		2	
Paul Gadsby			2
Paul Hobday			1
George Rae			1
Peter Swinyard			1

Print

1/9

- Downs Mail “Fight for GPs too” P44 **Paul Hobday quote**

4/9

- Derby Evening Telegraph “Right royal recognition for nurse-run practice pioneers” P10
- Sutton Guardian “Sister’s job threat as she nurses brother” P4
- Swindon Advertiser “Drugs charges are national disgrace” P6 **Peter Swinyard quote**

5/9

- Colchester Gazette “GPs angry at new dispensing plans” P21 **Paul Gadsby quote**
- Ealing and Acton Gazette “Medical care is not about cash” P17
- Halstead Gazette “Drug plan anger” P1 **Paul Gadsby quote**
- Norwich Evening News “GPs sign up to late hours” P5
- East London Advertiser “Doctors fear shake-up in NHS training” P17

12/9

- Watford observer “MP slams GP campaign as scaremongering” P20

18/9

- Manchester Evening News (1st ed) “Will conference mean goodbye Gordon?” P8,9 **Kailash Chand quote**
- Manchester Evening News (2nd ed) “Will conference mean goodbye Gordon?” P8,9 **Kailash Chand quote**

- Manchester Evening News (3rd ed) “Will conference mean goodbye Gordon?” P8,9 **Kailash Chand quote**
- 19/9
- Leicester Mercury “Patients are urged to support their GPs” P11 **Laurence Buckman quote**
 - Leicester Mercury “Patients urged to take action and support their surgery” P5 **Laurence Buckman quote**
- 24/9
- Chester Evening Leader “£16m deal to keep GP surgeries open longer” P4
 - Eastbourne Gazette “Campaign against super surgeries” P3
 - Newcastle Evening Chronicle “GPs ask public to resist changes – surgery shake-up row” P18 **George Rae quote**
- 26/9
- Chester Evening Leader “Scribblings from the Senedd” P26
 - Norwich Evening News “Outrage over extra payments for GPs” P47
- 30/9
- Oldham Evening Chronicle “Surgery shake-up battle under fire” P13 **Kailash Chand quote**

Broadcast

- 10/9
- BBC Radio London **Laurence Buckman interview**
- 15/9
- Kingdom FM
- 17/9
- ITV Wales **David Bailey interview**
- 24/9
- BBC Radio Wales x3
 - BBC Radio Wales **David Bailey, Phil White interviews**
 - BBC Radio Wales **David Bailey interview x2**
 - ITV Wales **Phil White interview**
 - BBC1 Wales **David Bailey, Phil White interviews**
- 25/9
- S4C **Phil White interview x2**
- 29/9
- BBC Radio Foyle **Tom Black interview x2**

GPC Communications Report (Scotland)

10 October 2008

Press Releases:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 30 September | Scottish General Practice: delivering quality, improving outcomes (Dr Dean Marshall) |
| 1 October | Scotland's doctors encourage patients to get their flu vaccination (Dr Andrew Buist) |
| 1 October | More exercise needed to tackle child obesity (Dr Dean Marshall) |
| 3 October | Are you a binge drinker? BMA Scotland calls for compulsory labelling of alcoholic drinks (Dr Peter Terry) |

Media coverage

Broadcast:

12 September

Talk 107

Dr Stuart Scott GP access

STV Politics Now

Dr Dean Marshall Alcohol strategy

Letters/Articles

16 September

The Scotsman

Learning from our - and other people's - mistakes. THE number of complaints in the Scottish Health Service is, according to the latest published data, up 7 per cent for family health services but down 7 per cent for hospital and community services. Regular Monthly Column by Dr John Garner

17 September

The Herald

I was surprised by the lack of evidence provided by Professor Allyson Pollock in her unusually unbalanced article on the out of hours care service in Kinloch Rannoch (The Herald September 12). Letter from Andrew Buist

26 September

The Herald

If medical records are no longer private, nothing is. In January, The Herald published an article reflecting upon my career of more than 30 years as a rural general practitioner and the changes those three decades have brought to the relationship between Scottish patients and their doctors. Letter from Dr Brian Keighley

6 October

Edinburgh Evening News

Immigration farce will damage Scottish NHS. Changes introduced to streamline the complex immigration rules in the UK have had unforeseen consequences for doctors from overseas who have completed their undergraduate medical training in Scotland. Article by Dr Andrew Conway Morris, SJDC

Comments/interviews published in the press on the following subjects:

GP Fees

Extended Hours

Waiting Times

Out of Hours

Private providers of GP Services

Patients' rights legislation

Glasgow GP Health Visitor campaign

Changes to immigration rules

Pharmacy services

Quality and Outcomes Framework

Co-payments

Palliative Care

Availability of drugs/rationing

Organ Donation

Obesity

Sexual Health

Alcohol misuse

Drink Driving

Political activity:

GP / MSP visit campaign - update

To date we have co-ordinated 65 visits for 60 MSPs (out of a total of 129 MSPs). We have written to all MSPs who have taken part requesting feedback and asking if they would like to repeat the experience in 12 months' time. All responses so far have been positive.

In late September, Wendy Alexander (Lab) tabled a motion in parliament congratulating the BMA for this campaign. To date it has received 31 signatures. An amendment was lodged by SNP MSP Michael Matheson (see also below) and all signatories to this have been contacted by the BMA.

S3M-02550 Wendy Alexander (Paisley North) (Scottish Labour): MSP Visits to GP Practices— That the Parliament congratulates the British Medical Association on its initiative in organising MSP visits to local GP practices; welcomes the opportunity to learn about current local and national issues from front-line staff working in practices; further welcomes the chance to witness first-hand the range of high-quality services available to patients; notes the integral role that GP practices play in local communities, and encourages all members who have yet to do so to sign up to this initiative.

S3M-02550.1 Michael Matheson (Falkirk West) (Scottish National Party): MSP Visits to GP Practices— As an amendment to motion S3M-2550 in the name of Ms Wendy Alexander (MSP Visits to GP Practices), leave out from “and encourages” to end and insert “notes the increasingly important role that practice nurses have in carrying out patient consultations, with practice nurses now carrying out 32.6% of practice consultations according to Audit Scotland, and encourages all members who sign up to this initiative to ensure that they meet all front-line staff, including practice nurses, to discuss their input into improving the nation’s health.”

Feedback from MSPs

“The visit was very useful and I would be happy to repeat it.”

“I appreciated the opportunity to visit a local GP practice and found this a useful visit.... In all, I found it a valuable experience and I am grateful to Dr Buist and his colleagues for giving up their time to host me.”

“The visit to Pathhead Surgery was very useful both for local issues and for national issues such as GP pharmacy policy.”

“I really enjoyed the visit & it gave the doctors & other health practitioner's a chance to bring my attention to a wide range of issues”

“Was a great chance to meet the doctors and staff who put aside a considerable amount of their time to talk to me about local and national issues affecting them and I was able to take up a number of issues on their behalf directly with local health board.”

“I enjoyed each visit and was able to hear from the managers, the doctors and the other medical support personnel about their current issues within the NHS.”

“I certainly found the visit very useful, particularly in that it allowed me to explore the issues surrounding the proposed change in the organisation of health visitors within Glasgow and Clyde.”

“The visit to my local GP surgery in Bank Street, Alexandria was very useful and I am grateful to the BMA for taking the initiative to engage MSPs in this way.”

“I was well briefed by the GP on a range of local and national issues, although I confess to spending more time on the local challenges...”

“I found the visit very useful, we discussed local and national issues and I came away with a much better understanding of some of the issues facing GP practises. I am also a lot more sympathetic to these issues having seen first hand how hard the GPs at that practice work.”

“We shouldn't believe all we read in the press about GPs any more than we believe what the media says about us politicians!”

GPC Wales Communications September 2008

Newspapers

- 10 September** – “Loophole sees surgeries in Wales stopped from dispensing”– Dr David Bailey – Western Mail
- 10 September** – “Locals lose out in dispensing farce” – Dr David Bailey – South Wales Echo
- 12 September** – “Protest vow in casualty unit row” – Dr Charlotte Jones – South Wales Evening Post
- 16 September** – “Trust says medics driving shake-up” – Dr Bryn John – South Wales Evening Post
- 18 September** – “Changes at unit will be discussed” – Dr Charlotte Jones – South Wales Evening Post
- 19 September** – “Rise in number of doctors in Wales may not be leading to increased care” – Dr David Bailey – Western Mail
- 20 September** – “Warning on ‘fatal’ boozing”- Dr Ian Millington – South Wales Evening Post
- 24 September** – “£16 million pound package to see surgeries opening until 8pm and on Saturdays” Dr David Bailey – Western Mail
- 25 September** – “£16m for longer hours at surgeries” – Dr David Bailey – Daily Post

Broadcasts

- 16 September** – ITV Wales – “Salaried GPs” – Dr David Bailey
- 19 September** – Real Radio – “Paracetamol link to asthma” – Dr David Bailey
- 24 September** – BBC Wales, Good Morning Wales “GP extended hours and enhanced services” – Dr David Bailey
- 24 September** – BBC Wales TV, Good Morning Wales “GP extended hours and enhanced services” – Dr David Bailey
- 24 September** – BBC Wales TV, Good Evening Wales “GP extended hours and enhanced services” – Dr David Bailey
- 24 September** – ITV Wales, Wales Tonight “GP extended hours and enhanced services” – Dr David Bailey, Dr Phil White
- 24 September** – Real Radio – “GP extended hours and enhanced services” – Dr David Bailey
- 24 September** - BBC Radio Cymru,, ‘Taro’r Post’ - “GP extended hours and enhanced services”- Dr Phil White

GPC: Parliamentary Unit Report October 2008

Health Select Committee inquiry into Lord Darzi's review of the NHS

Dr. Hamish Meldrum, Chair of the BMA Council, is scheduled to give evidence to the Health Select Committee on Thursday 16th October as part of its ongoing inquiry into the Next Stage Review of the NHS. As part of the briefing process, GPs and LMCs in areas represented by members of the Health Select Committee have been meeting their MP to discuss concerns about GP-led health centres and other aspects of the review. So far, GPs in North Staffordshire, Redbridge and Waltham Forest, Worcestershire, Northamptonshire and Kent have briefed their local Health Select Committee member.

Public Accounts Committee Report on the GP Contract

The Public Accounts Committee published its report on *NHS pay modernisation: new contracts for General Practice services in England* on Thursday 8th October. The BMA's response to the Committee's report was sent to key MPs including members of the Public Accounts Committee.

Party conferences

The BMA attended all three main party conferences this year. Dr. John Canning represented the BMA at the Liberal Democrat conference and Dr. Jonathan Fielden (Chair of CCSC) and Dr. Richard Vautrey represented the BMA at the Labour party conference. At the Labour party conference, Dr. Richard Vautrey participated in a Fabian Society roundtable discussion on access to primary care attended by Ben Bradshaw MP (Health Minister) and a selection of other organisations. Dr. Jonathan Fielden represented the BMA at the Conservative Party Conferences. Key events at all three conferences included participation in a consultation meeting and reception with the DH ministers and opposition health spokespeople. Although there were numerous opportunities for ad-hoc meetings with politicians at the conferences, there were also specific one-to-one meetings with key politicians including Baroness Tonge (Liberal Democrat Health Spokesperson in the Lords), Kevin Barron MP (Health Select Committee Chairman) and Ben Bradshaw (Health Minister).

In advance of the party conferences, the BMA circulated a newsletter to all MPs and a selection of Peers – GP issues such as GP-led health centres/polyclinics and supporting general practice were highlighted in the newsletter.

BMA MP-GP practice visit scheme

The BMA's Parliamentary Unit wrote to all Westminster MPs in the week commencing Monday 6th October inviting them to visit a GP practice in their constituency before the end of the year. This initiative is one part of a much wider effort by the Parliamentary Unit to raise MPs' awareness of the issues facing GPs in their individual constituencies. We hope that the MP- GP practice visit scheme will enable MPs to see the 'reality' behind many of the headlines GPs currently receive.

Meetings between MPs and local doctors

Dr. Neil Thomas, the GPC rep for Cheshire and Mid Mersey met the new MP for Crewe and Nantwich in September to discuss a wide range of health issues.

Meetings between key MPs and the Chairman of GPC

A new round of meetings has been set up between Dr. Laurence Buckman and opposition MPs. Dr. Buckman is due to meet with Norman Lamb MP, Liberal Democrat Shadow Health Secretary on Thursday 30th October and with Andrew Lansley MP, Conservative Shadow Health Secretary on Tuesday 9th December. Further meetings with key Labour backbench MPs are also planned.

Meeting with the Conservative members of the Health and Public Services Committee of the GLA
Dr. Chaand Nagpaul met Conservative members of the GLA and its Health and Public Services Committee to discuss Lord Darzi's plans to review health services in London.

BMA Parliamentary Unit
October 2008