

LMC Secretariat Newsletter (November 2005) (Berks Supplement)

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Private AAA Screening in GP Practices

LMC has been asked for a view following calls from patients to their PCT and an exchange of letters between MP and minister

LMC Secretary's views are

1. Practices are advertising a service to their NHS registered patients but delivered by a private company in their premises
2. This does not breach regulations
3. The text for the Health Screening Clinic letter reads as if it was written by the private company
4. Practices seem to have added their own header and footer and may not have edited the text
5. As written the text gives an unbalanced view of AAA screening and I am surprised that practices have sent it without more alteration
6. As Jane Kennedy says in her letter to Theresa May the National Screening Committee (NSC) will soon pronounce on the issue. My reading of the evidence is that AAA Screening is less beneficial than implied in the letter sent by practices
7. Given the text patients have received, I am not surprised some have asked why the service is not available on the NHS
8. PCT Public Health Director should have a view on whether what is written in the letter to patients is backed up by current evidence

Restrictions on Referrals

Both East and West Berks PCTs working collaboratively have produced versions of the RBBH document "List of Ineffective Referrals to Secondary Care"

In East Berks the policy document status is draft and undergoing consultation (LMC included)

In West Berks the policy seems to have been implemented with inadequate consultation with GPs and LMC. I have written to PEC Chairs about consultation deficiencies but so far not received a satisfactory response.

It is also not clear whether GPs have rights to identify (and refer) exceptions to what is written. Given that one of the commonest reasons for complaints against a GP is failure to refer, and that patients in primary care don't fit neat patterns, I feel it is essential that GPs can override the guidance on clinical grounds, as they see fit

District Nurses, Leg Ulcer Clinics + Wound Dressings

Secretary sent letter to WAM CEO after last LMC

The following list of LMC concerns appeared in the letter

1. The PCT LES document says that practice nursing services are part of nGMS essential services. I know of no regulation that states this and would be interested to hear the basis for such wording.
2. The LMC feel it is inappropriate for a disputed interpretation of essential services to appear covertly in an enhanced services document.
3. Leg ulcer care is a considerable drain on NHS resources. The LMC feel better and more affordable care would be achieved by specialist referral much earlier than the six week definition allows.
4. Isabel Mower has cogently argued the LMC view and more in her paper to WAM PEC. The LMC supports her paper wholeheartedly.

The PCT reply (6.10.05) stated

1. SHA advice is that wound care / dressing is part of essential services
2. PCT not trying to hide a disputed issue
3. All WAM practices undertake wound care under LES specification
4. System allows for earlier referral for patients with recurrence of leg ulcer
5. Six week threshold comes from RCN Guidelines

The problem grumbles on!

Domiciliary Oxygen

Regional contractor takes over from 1.2.06. (date was meant to be October 2005)

Postponement means a shortage of headsets in pharmacies

To mitigate DOH has

- Introduced a new 2122 litre integrated cylinder and headset
- Allowed on GP prescription the 1360 litre integrated cylinder and headset
- Reduced the threshold required to initiate an O2 Concentrator (now 2h/d compared to 8h/d)

A Concentrator is prescribed on an FP10

(specify flow rate and need for backup cylinder and set)

- Give FP10 to patient for handing to supplier at their home assessment
- GP also phones supplier to arrange installation (BOC Gases on 0800 136603)
- When concentrator no longer needed GP phones same supplier and TVPCA (0118 918 3333)

LMC Constitution and Elections

New constitution was agreed at AGM.

It now has to return to LMC for final approval

Secretary has clarified how Sessional GPs obtain LMC representation and voting rights Under the HSC Act 2003 LMC can only represent GPs providing services in the area under a GMS or PMS Contract

Secretariat has therefore designed a Sessional GP registration form

This has been sent to all practices for individuals to complete and return.

It will also form part of the TVPCA literature sent to new Sessional GPs

LMC Elections

Secretariat plans to hold a partial committee election in April 2006 and a full election in April 2008

PCT Reconfiguration

West Berks Staff Bulletin No 8 states that at the November "Coming Together Project Group" it was agreed to move forward with a single West Berkshire PCT.

In the interim period before a final DOH decision, a new organisation "Berkshire West PCT" will serve Wokingham, Reading and Newbury/West Berkshire.

Group proposes an interim management structure to be in place by 1.1.06.

- A single chief executive
- Three Area Director posts, one for each of the existing PCTs areas
- Four central support Director posts
 - Service Improvement
 - Public Health
 - Clinical Standards
 - Finance and Business Management
- Each of the 7 director posts above will be partnered with an Associate Director with a defined range of responsibilities

See www.berkshire.nhs.uk/collaboration/collaboration.asp