Dear Colleagues,

Following last week’s announcement about the five year GP contract framework for England, we have published more information about the important changes and they are available here.

One of the key aims within this agreement is the abolition of the personal expense of indemnity cover across the profession, and the introduction of a state-backed indemnity scheme to begin in April 2019. This will mean that all GPs and practice staff will be covered, thereby freeing GPs from the significant risk of rapidly rising indemnity costs. You can read more about these changes to the indemnity scheme in a blog by Mark Sanford-Wood, GPC England deputy chair.

**Indemnity costs**
Following some queries since the announcement, we have had discussions with the medical defence organisations regarding the likely indemnity costs for their membership offering after April, and so far we can share the following information:

- The MDOs are in the later stages of pricing the post-April product and we expect them to announce this soon.
- We would advise all GPs to remain members of one of the MDOs to ensure they have cover for GMC, criminal/coroners cases, private reports etc.
- There will be a competitive market for this cover after April and this is likely to influence pricing decisions.
- In the meantime all indications suggest the market rate for this cover is likely to be broadly in range with our expectations.
- Renewals falling due before April 1st are likely to be in line with current costs.
- All trainees will be covered for clinical negligence under the CNSGP scheme.

**GP Contract (England) Roadshows**
We have over 30 roadshows and events lined up for the coming weeks to explain the contract changes for practices in England – see attached the updated list and the details are also available here. The following have been added since last week:

- Kent LMC (Maidstone) – 26 February
- Derbyshire (Risley) – 26 February
- Avon (Bristol) – 28 February
- West Midlands (Birmingham) – 13 March

Details for the following locations will be announced soon: Cleveland, Leicestershire, Liverpool, London, Norfolk, Surrey and Sussex, and we are also planning to do a webinar – details of this to be announced once the date and time has been confirmed.

**Integrated Care Provider contract**
GPC England has serious concerns about the risks related to NHS England’s integrated care provider contract (previously the multispecialty community provider contract) which has been proposed as a way of integrating services. Practices entering in to such an arrangement would be required to give up their existing GMS or PMS contract in part or altogether. With the new GP contractual focus on primary care networks, which build on the existing core GP contract, we do not believe the use of the ICP contract is necessary.
The BMA has produced some briefing materials on the ICP contract and its potential impact on the NHS, and for general practice. These provide a brief overview of what GPs and patients need to know about ICPs, the BMAs concerns about them, and the alternative options available for achieving integration of NHS services. The briefings can be accessed via the BMA website.

Pulse workload survey
On Monday Pulse will launch a survey on GP workload, asking readers to record information around hours spent providing clinical care as well as other non-clinical work. I wrote a blog for Pulse this week to coincide with the survey’s launch, discussing the issue of workload and how we hope the contract deal will start addressing the existing pressures. You can find more about the survey here.

Falsified Medicines Directive and Brexit
NHS England has written to all Heads of Primary Care in England about the Falsified Medicines Directive. The letter states that in an event of a No Deal Brexit the FMD requirements would be removed from law. Whilst mandated to continue preparations, these need to continue with appropriate caution given the possibility of a No Deal scenario.

Helpfully, the letter states that work has been progressing with system suppliers to provide an FMD solution as part of their package to practices — thereby signalling that practices do not need to take immediate action. Unhelpfully, the letter also states that dispensing doctors would need to make their own provision as part of dispensing. We have serious concerns about this and will be meeting with NHS England and the Dispensing Doctors Association to discuss this as soon as possible.

Recruitment crisis in Liverpool sees GP contracts handed back
Pulse reports that a non-for-profit company set up by GPs has been forced to end its contracts with six practices in Liverpool due to problems recruiting permanent GPs. Commenting on this I said: “It is concerning that an organisation running six GP practices in a large city like Liverpool has ended its contract with the NHS because they cannot find enough GPs across the UK. In the recently announced changes to the GP contract, the Government recognised workforce issues need to be addressed. This now needs to be delivered rapidly and practically, or patient care will only continue to decline.”

CQC reimbursement - reminder
In 2016, we negotiated for practices’ CQC fees to be fully reimbursed by their Commissioner. This is a practice entitlement, therefore please ensure your practice contacts their Clinical Commissioning Group for details about their local procedure for doing this.

Regulation of the Medical Associate Professions (MAPs)
The government’s response to their 2017 consultation on the regulation of the Medical Associate Professions (MAPs) has now been published. It does not confirm who the regulator will be but does confirm what Matt Hancock announced in a video last year; that PAs and PA(A)s will be regulated and that SCPs and ACCPs will not for the time being. A further consultation on prescribing rights will be required. The BMA’s response to the consultation can be read here.

Chief Medical Officer stepping down
It has been announced that the Chief Medical Officer for England and Chief Medical Advisor to the UK government, Professor Dame Sally Davies, is stepping down after 9 years in the role. Read the press release here.
Supply chain update
Please see attached the supply chain update for January /February from the Department of Health and Social Care.

Read the latest GPC newsletter here

Have a good weekend.

Richard