**GPC England update to GPC UK 23.9.21**

**Meeting with NHSEI**

Follwing the additional GPC England meeting three weeks ago we have met with the NHSEI team and with Ian Dodge directly. We have been clear that we will not discuss future extended access plans until they have brought forward an emergency package for general practice to respond to the acute situation we are experiencing at the moment.

**Flu vaccination payment for practice staff**

After many years of trying we have secured agreement that practices can claim an item of service fee for providing flu vaccination to their workforce. This is long over due and included in the updated flu enhanced service specifiction.

**Covid vaccination exemption arrangements**

We have discussed with the Department of Health arrangements for covid vaccination exemptions. The accepteable reasons for exemption are very limited, although it will include pregnant women despite vaccination being recommended in this group. The system will use 119 initially to triage applicants and to pre-populate a form that is then sent to either the GP practice, midwife or specialist involved in the person’s care. The practice would need to add an exemption code to the summary care record if they believed the patient fulfilled the criteria. The national system would inform the patient of the outcome so there is no need to contact the patient about this. We and the BMA Professional Fees Committee are discussing with them what the fee for this will be.

**Meeting with Health Minister**

Yesterday I met with the new health minister with responsibility for primary care in England, Maria Caufield. She is a former nurse and appears to understand and was concerned about the impact of the negative media and the workload pressures in general practice. This afternoon, after a lot of pressure, I will be meeting Sajid Javid, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and I will be pressing him for action to tackle abuse, including pushing for legislative change to protect healthcare workers, to publicly support general practice and explain to the public why we are working differently, to suspend QOF and remove unnecessary bureacracy, and to invest in the GP workforce and premises so we start to tackle workload pressures.

**Annual GP patient survey**

The annual [GP patient survey](https://gp-patient.co.uk/) results were published in July, and with 83% of patients rating their overall experience of general practice as good, an increase on the previous year, this is testament to just how hard GPs and their teams have, and continue to, work in order to provide care to their patients and communities. To see an increase in overall patient satisfaction despite the really challenging year the entire NHS has faced - is incredibly positive.

**Government in England response to DDRB award**

The [Government’s announced 3% pay uplift for doctors](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nhs-staff-to-receive-3-pay-rise) did not apply to GP partners in England. For salaried GPs, a 3% uplift is more than the 1% the Government recommended at the beginning of the year and is the highest uplift they have received in many years. However, 3% does not compensate for the years of pay erosion experienced by all doctors. The government has said that practices in England will not be given additional funding on top of the 2.1% for staff already allocated for this year which means GP partners could be faced with deciding between service cuts or being able to pay the full amount to salaried GPs. However appraisal and trainers payments increased by 3%.

**GP Earnings and expenses 2019/20 report**

The annual Earnings and Expenses report for 2019-20, which is the first year of our contract deal in England was published in August. This was a year when the DDRB recommendation for a 2.5% pay increase but we secured and increase of 3.8% for GP contractors and 4.9% for salaried GPs in England.

**Earnings declaration**

The Department of Health and Social Care have imposed [regulations](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/64cbCp211tnEA7LSPMER6?domain=legislation.gov.uk) which will require GPs and their staff with NHS earnings of £150,000 and over in 2019/20 to declare these through national arrangements. This information will then be published by NHS Digital as part of the government's pay transparency agenda. The government insisted on the inclusion of this as part of the overall package in 2019 but it was also agreed that this should not solely relate to general practice but would be progressed for all those working in the NHS. However at the moment there are at present no similar proposals for pharmacists, optometrists, dentists, consultants or other doctors in the NHS, anywhere else in the UK. As such the Government and NHSE/I have breached the 2019/20 agreement. We have not agreed the change and health ministers have instead decided to impose this on the profession.

**Blood bottle supply**

By far the main supplier of blood bottle, Becton Dickinson**,** declared there was a global shortage of products from their Blood Specimen Collection Portfolio, in August which limited the number of blood tests that could be done over the last month. We met with NHSEI and DHSC about this a number of times and general practice has been prioritised in being given new supplies this week, so blood tests should be able to resume again, although concerns remain about a potential backlog bulge impacting supplies again.