

Reports for patients claiming benefit

Practices are not obliged, either by statute or contract, to complete reports requested by organisations assisting people with their claims for benefit. Practices may choose to do so and may charge a fee. Welfare Rights and CAB usually say that they are not in a position to pay a fee. If a claimant is turned down for a benefit after making an application without a report from the GP, s/he can appeal the decision and if the appeal comes before a Tribunal and the Tribunal feels that it would be helped in its decision making by a report from the GP, the Tribunal is entitled to request such a report from the GP and will pay a fee.

You may like to bear this in mind when responding to requests from Welfare Rights and CAB for reports.

Transferring patients' records

Some GP clinical systems include functionality that allows a GP to restrict access to elements of patients' electronic health records to different levels of user within the practice. This functionality is not consistent across systems and any data that is hidden is likely to be revealed when the patient record is transferred to another GP clinical system. This can happen when a patient's record is transferred to another practice via traditional paper record transfer or GP2GP or following a data migration to another GP clinical system in the practice.

GPs are therefore advised to inform patients, who want elements of their electronic health record to be kept confidential, that the information is not likely to remain hidden when the record is transferred to another system, either electronically or via paper transfer.

Seniority Figures

The NHS Information Centre has now published the Final Seniority Figures for 2004/05 and 2005/06 for GMS in England and Wales. The figures for England are: £81,123 and £91,123 respectively and for Wales £71,535 and £81,413. The figures for the other nations are being published separately.

After taking legal advice, the Department of Health has decided that the NHS Information Centre should not work out a Final Seniority Figure for PMS because PMS contracts are local contracts. The GPC therefore advises PMS practices and LMCs that they should also use the GMS figure.

Further details about how the Final Seniority Figures have been calculated are available on the NHS Information Centre's website at www.ic.nhs.uk

European Business Guide

Yet another business guide has surfaced and is sending emails to practices entitled 'European company registration 2009/2010' which says that "**Updating is free of charge!**" and you may be tempted to apply as you think it is free. If however you read the small print on the application form you will see it says:

" I HEREBY ORDER A SUBSCRIPTION WITH SERVICE PROVIDER EU BUSINESS SERVICES LTD "EURO BUSINESS GUIDE". I WILL HAVE AN INSERTION TO ITS DATA BASE FOR THREE YEARS. THE PRICE PER YEAR IS EURO 990. "

Unless you want to spend 990 Euros per year for 3 years, please DO NOT respond!

Licence to practise

The GMC will introduce the licence to practise on 16 November 2009.



Licensing will be the first step towards the introduction of revalidation.

To practise medicine in the UK after licensing is introduced, doctors will, by law, need to be both registered and hold a licence to practise. This will apply to doctors practising full time, part time, as a locum, privately or in the NHS, or whether they are employed or self-employed.

Doctors will need a licence if they undertake any form of medical practice for which UK law currently requires them to hold GMC registration. These include, but are not limited to, writing prescriptions, holding a post as a doctor in the NHS, and signing death and cremation certificates.

The GMC is writing to doctors who have not responded. You have until 14 August 2009 to inform the GMC whether you require a licence.

If you have a question about licensing, please visit the GMC Frequently Asked Questions or email licensing@gmc-uk.org.

Occupational health

BUPA are looking to recruit one or more occupational health physicians in the Derby area. They are looking for a minimum commitment of three days per week. The minimum qualification is a Diploma in Occupational Medicine.

If interested, please contact Robert Raja, Robert@drsdirect.co.uk

Tamiflu and Relenza

MHRA has a dedicated page on their website where patients and Healthcare professionals can report adverse side effects for the antivirals Tamiflu and Relenza:

<http://swineflu.mhra.gov.uk/>

Discharge summaries

We have recently corresponded with Alison Fowlie, Medical Director at Derby Hospitals Foundation Trust, about the quality of discharge summaries. Alison writes "very shortly we are introducing electronic discharge summaries, where certain parts of the patient's care will be downloaded from various other systems. Legibility should also be considerably improved." Alison says that the Trust will also be putting considerable training in place for junior doctors.

It is always helpful to be able to present evidence to external organisations when their standards slip, so we are grateful to those constituents who send us examples. When doing so, however, please ensure that the patients' details are anonymised.

Cytology

GP required to join Cytology Steering Group. Further details from Alison Cropper, Consultant Biomedical Scientist, Cytology, Royal Derby Hospital, 01332 340131, RDH 89327.

Latest advice

In the past month GPC has issued the following:

Improving GP services – July 2009
Assessment of children in primary care.

Further details are available on application to the LMC office or on the BMA website www.bma.org.uk

How to contact us

Derby & Derbyshire LMC Ltd office is at Norman House, Friar Gate, Derby DE1 1NU. Our telephone number is 01332 210008, fax 01332 341771. Our email address is now office@derbyshirelmc.co.uk. The two Practice/PCT Liaison Officers are Melanie Beatham and Kate Lawrence who will continue to liaise with the same North and Southern practices as before the PCT reorganisation. Their email addresses are: melanie.beatham@derbyshirelmc.co.uk and kate.lawrence@derbyshirelmc.co.uk