

Sessional Subcommittee Update - Yorkshire

Jan 2017

Dear all,

There are a few key areas to update you on and also to let you know there is a full sessional subcommittee meeting coming up at the end of the month, so I may have further progress reports for you then. The sessional subcommittee are continuing to work on a number of simultaneous projects so please forgive the lack of a cohesive theme to this update but I felt it was more useful to bring you up to speed than not.

Death in service benefits for locum GPs - in order to answer the criteria for locum doctors who pay into the NHS pension receiving death in service benefits once and for all, we are looking for a test case. I would be grateful for your help in finding a locum GP who is on a short term contract (less than 6 months) with a practice and who is prepared to share their details with us. Someone covering a fixed absence of maternity locum, and ideally not working every day would be ideal. They must be paying into the NHS pension scheme but can be any age or gender otherwise. Please ask any locums who are interested to email MLasham@bma.org.uk Once we have a test case, we will have support from the BMA legal team in pursuing clarity over death in service benefits for locums, so we can clearly advise GPs on where they stand.

Indemnity - access to the indemnity funding for sessional GPs in the GPFV is our current challenge. NHSE are clear that funding will go directly to practices. We are working with them to ensure that practices receive clear guidance on how to ensure the correct amount of funding is passed onto their salaried GPs, and to give guidance to locum doctors on how much they can expect to receive when working at practices. We have tried to propose a number of ways of getting this funding to sessional GPs, and NHSE assure us that they do want it to reach all doctors. This being the case, we will be working with GPC and NHSE to ensure unequivocal advice is given, and wanting to hear from any colleagues where this is not happening.

Capita - you will be aware that the main issue from a sessional perspective is the loss of pension payments from locum work. Capita have been failing to answer emails, provide confirmation of pension payments, provide any update on payments, and colleagues are clearly very concerned that substantial amounts of money for their pensions are missing, or will not reach the NHS pensions agency within the 10 week deadline. BACS payment of pension contributions (which should be more reliable) is happening in those parts of the country whose central Capita base is Preston. This does not include Yorkshire, so none of our sessional doctors are currently able to access BACS. The timescale for BACS going live for Yorkshire is March 2017, so I'm told...

For now, the advice remains the same, arduous though it is:

-Photograph and keep a record of all your pension A&B forms, and the accompanying cheques.

-Post them to Capita via recorded delivery.

-Request an email acknowledgement of receipt as well, or include a SAE. I have just received an email from my own pension cheque submitted in July. I've yet to find out where August to December's payments have gone....

I have asked NHSE and Capita to:

- Issue up to date pension statements free of charge to all sessional doctors affected, both immediately and every 6 months until this situation is resolved
- Work with the NHS pensions agency to remove the 10 week limit on any payments which have been delayed through Capitas' mishandling
- Financially compensate doctors where pension payments have been lost and are not recovered

The Capita website detailing information for locum doctors is now up to date <http://pcse.england.nhs.uk/locums/> although not hugely detailed, but we continue to hear that it is difficult to get answers to queries answered by phone or email. We finally managed to get a face to face meeting just before Christmas, having been told that Capita staff were too busy trying to sort out the problems to spare time to speak to us. However, since then both Capita and NHSE have been more forthcoming with trying to resolve this but it won't be fast.

Please, *please* keep track of your pension payments so you can be appropriately compensated when we do eventually get this sorted out. Keep informing me, your sessional group or your LMC of problems you are having as it gives us more evidence to challenge them with.

Sessional GP survey - you will probably have seen news coverage of the GP survey run by the BMA prior to Christmas. Some of you may have completed this, but we know it under-represented sessional GPs. With this in mind, and given the desperate need for accurate data on the doctors we represent, the sessional subcommittee will be launching a dedicated sessional survey in the next few months. This will be open to all GPs who work in any sessional capacity, both BMA and non-BMA members. I am hoping this will give us much needed information to represent you better, and make the case for the increasing number of sessional doctors even stronger to all the devolved nations governments. I would appreciate your support in publicising this and making all colleagues aware of it when it goes live.

MCP contracts - The BMA has published its guidance on the proposed MCP contracts. <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/contracts/gp-partner-contracts/mcp-contract-framework>

It is likely these contracts will significantly affect the sessional workforce across England. Worryingly, this paragraph is from the BMA guidance:

“Employment models & conditions There is no explicit mention of what employment models should be utilised within MCPs. NHS England is clear that each MCP will be allowed to organise its workforce as it feels best fits with its organisation structures, meaning locally negotiated employment contracts. As the contract will not be GMS, it will not retain the requirement to offer terms equal to the model salaried contract for any employed GPs, unless they are employed by an individual practice which maintains an active GMS contract.”

It is vital that any GP employed as part of an MCP is offered terms no less favourable than the model salaried contract. Our aim is to ensure this is crystal clear to all involved and if

you are a sessional GP in an area where MCPs are progressing, or an LMC in such an area, please be assured this is the expectation. I will endeavour to have it explicitly agreed before the final contracts are published.

Salaried and Locum handbooks - we will shortly be publishing updated versions of the salaried GP handbook, and Locum handbook. These will be available online for both GPs and LMCs and updated regularly moving forwards. We hope they will be a useful resource given the rapidly changing pace of sessional work at present.

Please keep talking to me and the rest of the sessional subcommittee. The examples coming from LMCs, sessional groups and individual doctors are absolutely vital, as is feedback on what we are doing and how we can improve. You can contact me on email at sessionalsgps.gpc@bma.org.uk, via Facebook, or on twitter @dr_zo

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