

SHEFFIELD LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2013

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FIT NOTES: GUIDANCE FOR GPs

It has been brought to the LMC's attention that not all GPs are aware that:

- Computer-generated fit notes are acceptable. Practice systems should be able to generate these and by taking this approach a permanent record (read coded) is created in patients' notes.
- If a patient who has been signed off from work believes they are fit enough to return to work they do not require a return to work note from their GP.

Sheffield LMC guidance on sickness certification can be downloaded from <http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/lmc%20guidance/Sickness%20Certification.pdf>. This includes a link to Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) guidance for GPs *Getting the most out of the fit note*, which clarifies the above points and covers issues such as:

- How the fit note can help you.
- What is the evidence behind the fit note and this guide?
- Do you need to issue a fit note?
- How to assess a patient's fitness for work.
- Filling in the fit note: instructions for completion.
- Giving advice in the fit note – the tick boxes and the comments box.
- How your patient will use their fit note.

- The fit note in action – best practice case studies.
- Further information and support.

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REGULATION 9 REQUIREMENTS

Following a consequential amendment order, there has been a change to the wording of the *Regulation 9 – Requirements with which a Practitioner included in a performers list must comply*.

The subsection noted in the August 2013 edition of the LMC Newsletter now states that a Practitioner must make a declaration to the Area Team if the Practitioner "has been found by a coroner to have caused, or contributed to, the death of the deceased or otherwise had their conduct brought into question at an inquest conducted as part of an investigation under the Coroners and Justice Act 2009".

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GENERAL PRACTICE NON-CLINICAL TRAINING 2014/15

All Sheffield Practice Managers should have recently received an email from Pamela Williams, Learner Support Unit Manager at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) regarding the Training Needs Analysis (TNA)

for the 2014/15 training programme. The TNA can also be accessed via STHFT's intranet at: <http://www.sth.nhs.uk>

The LMC is keen to see that the funding available for training general practice non-clinical staff is fully and appropriately utilised and that the training provided meets the needs of general practice. Therefore, we would urge all Practice Managers to complete the TNA **by Monday 30 September 2013**.

Any Practice Manager that has not received the TNA and is not receiving regular communications about general practice training can contact Pamela to ensure their details are added to the relevant distribution lists:

Pamela Williams
Tel: (0114) 2602642
Email: pamela.williams@sth.nhs.uk.

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INFORMATION SHARING GUIDANCE

Further to the article in the June 2013 LMC Newsletter regarding the new care.data service commissioned by NHS England, materials have now been tested in a small number of practices and their feedback has been incorporated into a revised set of materials and resources.

From mid-August, over a 4 week period, practices should have received information about the implementation of care.data. The information should have included links to a number of resources and materials. Practices will also receive a separate communications pack containing patient information and materials.

The Health and Social Care Act removes the duty of GPs to seek consent prior to extractions, but it does not remove the duty to raise patient awareness about the extractions. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has been involved in discussions and has made it clear that GPs as data controllers are responsible for patient awareness raising. It is important that when practices receive this information they display the poster and make leaflets available in the practice without delay, as extractions will begin approximately 8 weeks after they receive the materials.

Detailed supporting documentation can also be downloaded from NHS England's website via:
<http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/tsd/data-info/>.

In addition, the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) is providing a helpline for GPs with queries, which can be contacted via:

Tel: 0845 300 6016
Email: enquiries@hscic.gov.uk
(quoting 'care.data – GP' in the subject line).

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TREATING VULNERABLE PATIENTS

The Medical Ethics Committee of the British Medical Association (BMA) has recently produced guidance outlining the importance of a doctor's duty of confidentiality to vulnerable adult patients. The guidance contains recommendations to help health professionals treat adults who are being abused and do not want confidential information disclosed, even if it will help protect them from harm. It seeks to address some of the dilemmas for doctors caring for vulnerable patients who retain capacity under the terms of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

The main topics covered include:

- Vulnerable adults, confidentiality and the disclosure of information;
- Consent and the disclosure of confidential information;
- Disclosure to the police, social services and partner organisations;
- Public interest and the competent adult;
- Vulnerable adults and jurisdiction of the High Court;
- Adults who lack the capacity to consent or disclose information.

The guidance can be accessed on the BMA website at:

<http://bma.org.uk/practical-support-at-work/ethics/mental-capacity/vulnerable-adults-and-confidentiality>

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COMMUNITY PHARMACY ADVANCED SERVICES

NHS Employers (NHSE), the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) and the General Practitioners Committee (GPC) have produced a joint briefing to provide information for GP practices about advanced services provided by community pharmacies under the NHS structures implemented in April 2013. The briefing covers Medicines Use Reviews (MURs) and the New Medicine Service (NMS).

A copy of the briefing can be downloaded from the GPC website at:

<http://bma.org.uk/-/media/Files/PDFs/Practical%20advice%20at%20work/Doctors%20as%20managers/Managing%20your%20practice%20staff%20services/gpNHSCommunityBriefingAug2013.pdf>

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SOCIAL HISTORY OF DOCTORS DOCUMENTARY

Article submitted by Shane Stickels, Assistant Producer, Silver River

We are making a documentary about the social history of doctors for a new four-part Channel 4 series. The series aims to tell a social history of Britain through the experiences of people in four professions - teachers, police, office workers and doctors.

Using a mixture of archive and interviews, we hope to give an insight into how Britain and British values have changed since the 60s and how professions have changed with it.

One of the programmes will feature doctors and hear their experiences of how Britain has changed over the course of their careers. By drawing on doctors' personal anecdotes we want to reveal how different the recent past is. For this reason we would love to hear from retired and practicing doctors employed anytime from the 1950s onwards that can give us an insight into the social changes that they have witnessed.

How has the doctor-patient relationship changed over time? Are doctors as well respected as they used to be? How have British attitudes towards contraception, abortion, death and birth changed over the past 50 years? In what ways have consumerism and patient choice affected the life of a doctor in the last 50 years?

It is history through ordinary people, finding stories that are funny, shocking, revealing, and give us a human everyday way into examining social changes we have all taken for granted. We want to spark debate about how social change has influenced the role of the doctor.

All conversations we have are, of course, confidential and will be conducted over the telephone. Our timescale is to find suitable people and stories within the next 5 weeks.

Please get in touch either by emailing doctors@silverriver.tv or by calling Shane on 0207 907 3443.

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Please forward any articles, comments etc for inclusion in the LMC newsletter to the LMC office via:

Email: manager@sheffieldlmc.org.uk

Post: Sheffield LMC, Media House, 63 Wostenholm Road, Sheffield S7 1LE

Articles for the October edition to be received by Friday 11 October 2013