

SHEFFIELD LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

NEWSFLASH

CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR 2008

MEDICAL COVER

Following Sheffield PCT's email to all practices yesterday (18 November), the LMC Executive feels the need to clarify our position.

We have argued long and hard on your behalf with the PCT, pointing out that Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve are traditionally low demand periods and, in particular, 4pm to 6pm is anticipated to be very quiet.

The PCT has pointed out the choice and access agenda driven by the Government, the fact that pharmacies are open until 4 pm, and concerns from Secondary Care about demand prior to a four day holiday.

The situation has, therefore, been a compromise after discussion with the LMC Executive, rather than agreement.

We would suggest that it would be extremely useful for practices to audit demand on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve afternoon this year, to strengthen our case for earlier negotiations next year.

We would like to remind you that your contract relates to opening hours, not numbers of appointments available, as stated in the practice leaflet.

No doubt, many practices will organise their staffing to meet the anticipated demand on these two afternoons, rather than having a full doctor and staff presence.