

SHEFFIELD LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2009

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LMC NEWSFLASH: SWINE FLU UPDATE FOR GPs

Since the last LMC Newsletter, all represented GPs and Practice Managers should have received an LMC Newsflash offering an update on Swine Flu.

A copy of the Newsflash can also be accessed via the LMC website on: http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/Swine_Flu_Update_Jun09%5B1%5D.pdf

In view of the unprecedented workload for practices in the Sheffield 10 area recently, the LMC Executive would strongly recommend that practices review our previously issued guidance, particularly in relation to business continuity plans and flu pandemic plans. It may well be that practices will be expected to demonstrate that they have a fit for purpose plan if transitional financial arrangements come into place in the event of a pandemic. Please see the following links:

http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/lmc%20guidance/Preparing_for_Pandemic_Influenza_May09.pdf

http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/OG09/Preparing_for_Pandemic_Flu.pdf

The LMC will continue to disseminate information, as appropriate, and would urge practices to check the following websites regularly:

- Health Protection Agency (HPA) www.hpa.org.uk
- NHS Sheffield www.sheffield.nhs.uk/swineflu
- BMA www.bma.org.uk/health_promotion_ethics/influenza/index.jsp

SHEFFIELD LMC NEWSLETTER: YOUR CHOICE OF DISTRIBUTION

The LMC office has received a number of enquiries from Sheffield practices regarding the distribution of the LMC newsletter. Currently, the newsletter is emailed to all Sheffield Practice Managers, followed by a mailing of yellow hard copies (1 for each GP working within the practice).

It appears that an increasing number of GPs no longer wish to receive a hard copy of the newsletter and feel that an emailed version is sufficient. Obviously, the LMC would want to assist practices wishing to work more electronically and is keen to use the LMC's time and resources in the most efficient way possible.

However, we recognise that some practices value receiving a hard copy of the newsletter and would wish to continue with this system.

In order to ascertain which practices still wish to receive hard copy newsletters and which practices would prefer an electronic mailing only, a poll has been introduced on the LMC website.

It would be appreciated if individual practices could reach a consensus view and follow the on screen instructions to register their vote. The poll can be accessed from the LMC website home page or via: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=epra9Ndi4wd6tZRbWbLlgQ_3d_3d

If GPs or Practice Managers have any queries they would like to raise prior to voting, please do not hesitate to contact Tina Smith, LMC Admin Assistant via:

adminassistant@sheffieldlmc.org.uk or tel: (0114) 2588755 (Tuesday to Thursday).

RESOURCES FOR DOCTORS IN DIFFICULTY

The LMC has received a number of queries regarding support services

and resources that are available for doctors in times of difficulty. The BMA website contains links to such organisations, covering issues such as:

- Accommodation
- Addictions
- Bereavement
- Career guidance
- Counselling and support
- Disabilities
- Employment and legal
- Financial
- International doctors
- Mental health
- Relationships
- Royal Colleges and Postgraduate Deans
- Stress
- Training and education

Further details can be found on the BMA website at:

http://www.bma.org.uk/doctors_health/d4dresourcesfordoctorsindifficulty.jsp

LICENSING AND REVALIDATION OF GPs

Further to the article in the May 2009 edition of the LMC newsletter, the General Medical Council (GMC) has announced that from 16 November 2009, all doctors will need a licence in order to practise medicine in the UK. The GMC has written to all registered doctors asking them to decide whether or not they want a license when licensing is introduced. GPs can either respond by post (in the envelope provided) or electronically via the GMC's secure online facility at: www.gmc-uk.org/decide

GPs will be prompted to enter their GMC reference number and the unique survey reference number contained in the letter from the GMC.

The GMC also recently published *Revalidation: Information for Doctors and Frequently Asked Questions*, which covers a wide range of issues, including the timetable for implementing revalidation, the information that doctors will have to collect as part of the process, how revalidation will work for doctors in different types of medical practice, and the role of the Responsible Officer. A copy of the

document can be downloaded from the GMC website at:

http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/licensing/docs/GMC_Revalidation_FAQ%20document_02_06_2009.pdf

STORAGE OF VACCINES IN PRIMARY CARE

All practices should have recently received an alert from NHS Sheffield regarding a number of serious untoward incidents (SUI) relating to the storage of vaccines in primary care.

As you will be aware, vaccines may lose their effectiveness quickly if they become too hot or cold at any time during transport or storage. This may result in the failure of the vaccine to protect, as well as resulting in vaccine wastage.

The LMC feels that the following sources of additional information are of particular interest and relevance to practices:

- **Immunisation against infectious disease – The Green Book**
Chapter 3 – Storage, distribution and disposal of vaccines
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/PublicHealth/Healthprotection/Immunisation/Greenbook/DH_4097254
- **NHS Sheffield Vaccine Transport and Storage Policy**
Available for adaptation locally to suit individual practice/premise needs.
<http://www.sheffield.nhs.uk/policies/resources/vaccine.pdf>
- **NHS Sheffield Medicines Code**
<http://www.sheffield.nhs.uk/policies/resources/medicinescode2008.pdf>

In the event of a problem relating to vaccine storage, please contact Frances Cuning, Consulting in Public Health on (0114) 305 1038.

GPC ANNUAL REPORT

The GPC has recently published its annual report, which contains updates on the work of numerous subcommittees, including:

- Contracts and Performance
- Representation
- Commissioning and Service Development

- Education, Training and Workforce
- Sessional GPs
- GP Trainees
- Clinical and Prescribing
- Practice Finance
- Joint GP IT committee
- General Practitioners Defence Fund Limited

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

http://www.bma.org.uk/images/gpcannreport09_tcm41-186519.pdf

In addition, an Executive Summary can be downloaded from the GPC website at:

http://www.bma.org.uk/images/gpcannreport09_summary_tcm41-186520.pdf

NHS COMPLAINTS IN ENGLAND: REGULATIONS AND PRINCIPLES

New regulations governing NHS complaint handling came into effect on 1 April, as reported in the April 2009 edition of the LMC Newsletter. As a result of this the Medical Protection Society (MPS) has produced guidance *NHS Complaints in England: Regulations and Principles*.

This guidance has been produced in order to help members understand the implications of the new regulations and to improve the quality and service of care to patients. A copy of the guidance can be downloaded from the MPS website at:

<http://www.medicalprotection.org/adx/asp/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=22073.129.127.9698.22.11.Documents&MediaID=5999&Filename=Final+NHS+Complaints+Booklet.pdf>

Hard copies of the guidance can be requested via tel: 0113 2410530.

FIT NOTE CONSULTATION

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is undertaking a consultation regarding the proposed introduction of a "fit note" system.

It is estimated that every year around 350,000 people leave work to claim health-related benefits and 172

million working days are lost due to sick absence.

GPs are, in most cases, the primary source of advice and guidance for individuals with a health condition. Evidence shows that GP advice is pivotal to an individual's decision on returning to work. However, the proposal to introduce fit notes has raised a number of concerns and the LMC would encourage GPs to access the consultation document and offer their views.

The consultation, which will close on 19 August 2009, can be downloaded from the DWP website at:
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations/2009/Reforming-the-Medical-Statement-consultation-28May2009.pdf>

THE SHEFFIELD WATCH IT PROGRAMME

*Article submitted by Jeremy Wight,
Director of Public Health,
NHS Sheffield*

NHS Sheffield has commissioned a new community based weight management service for overweight and obese children aged 7-14 and their families. The Sheffield Watch It Programme will be delivered by ZEST and aims to support and empower overweight and obese children to achieve long term weight loss.

Families can self refer and or be referred to the service by their GP if the child has a BMI at or above the 91st centile. The service will work with children and families and it will be offered in a range of community venues across the city.

Each child entering the service will undergo an initial assessment by ZEST. Where the child has a BMI at or above the 98th centile a further health check is required from their GP before they can begin the programme. The purpose of the check is to identify any co-morbidities related to the obesity to ensure that the child's involvement in the service is safe and appropriate.

Further details of the health check and information about the Sheffield Watch It Programme will be sent directly to GP practices.

For more information about the Watch It Programme please contact:

Janet Skirrow or Matt Dean
Tel: (0114) 2011490 or email:
sheffieldwatch-it@zestcommunity.co.uk

THE NATIONAL CHILD MEASUREMENT PROGRAMME (NCMP)

*Article submitted by Jeremy Wight,
Director of Public Health,
NHS Sheffield*

The Department of Health's National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) takes place during every academic year and is led locally by NHS Sheffield. The Sheffield School Nursing Service weighs and measures children aged 4-5 (Reception year) and 10-11 (Year 6). The Department of Health (DH) has introduced a new requirement for the 2008-09 academic year to inform Year 6 parents/carers of their child's weight status. A standard parent feedback letter has been produced by the DH which NHS Sheffield is required to use.

The NCMP is being carried out during the summer term (May-July). Parents/carers will therefore begin receiving the letters from June 2009. The NCMP is not a screening programme and therefore children will not automatically be referred on the basis of this information.

Parents/carers will receive their child's weight status based on four categories determined by the clinical cut offs for underweight, healthy weight, overweight and very overweight (obese). All parents of overweight or obese children will be signposted to general healthy lifestyle advice and provided with contact information for the Sheffield School Nursing Service and the Sheffield Watch It Programme into which they can self refer. Parents/carers of underweight children will be signposted to general health lifestyle information and advised to contact their GP for advice if they remain concerned. Further information to support GP practices should they receive any queries from concerned parents/carers will be made available shortly.

For further information please contact NHS Sheffield:

Bethan Plant: 0114 3051034
Amy Plant: 0114 3051032

GP PRACTICE SUPPORT FOR COLLECTING FEEDING STATUS AT 6-8 WEEKS

*Article submitted by Ian Atkinson,
Director of Performance,
NHS Sheffield*

With the support of GP Practices, Sheffield has met the Care Quality Commission (CQC) target to achieve at least 85% of "infants with breastfeeding status recorded at 6-8 week check" by March 2009. However, of the overall data coverage, only 79% was achieved through GP Practices returning fully completed carbon copies (flimsies) to Child Health Services.

For 2009/10, NHS Sheffield needs the continued support of all GP Practice staff (including GP locums and temporary staff) to get the feeding status at 6-8 weeks recorded for 90% of infants. To achieve this it is vital that:

- Carbon copies (flimsies) are completed fully and clearly, including information on feeding status
- Completed carbon copies are quickly returned to Child Health Services, Centenary House using pre-printed address labels.

To assist Practices in briefing staff, a one page flowchart of the process will be distributed to all Practices by the end of June.

Contact for further Information / queries: Child Health Services, Centenary House on Tel: 226 2091

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

Email:
administrator@sheffieldlmc.org.uk

Fax: (0114) 258 9060

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

Articles for the July 2009 edition of the LMC newsletter to be received by **Monday 13 July 2009**.