

# **MORGANNWG LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE**

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## **LMC Newsletter July 2009**

### **Welsh GP Patient Survey 2008-09**

The results of the Survey are out and these have been mixed across the three LHB areas and although some Practices had achieved high scores, some had achieved low scores based on small sample numbers. The Confidence Factor accepted within the Survey was outside the normal 5% for such studies and this makes some very questionable.

**Loss of resources to General Practice** – overall, it appeared that £8 million had been taken out of General Practice across the UK of which £2 million had been taken out in Wales (a much higher proportion than one would have expected). Some of this is around 24 hour access to a GP or health professional and some appeared to be due to a complete lack of understanding of the questions by patients.

**Appeals by Practices against the results** – Practices will need to demonstrate that the Survey results are not a true reflection of what actually happens in the Practice. Evidence that appointments are available will be helpful and questioning of the Confidence Factor if outside the 5% is also relevant. The Appeal will need to be based on facts and not on a sense of injustice.

**The Strategic approach by GPC Wales / GPC UK** – Dr Lawrence Buckman, Chairman, GPC UK has been in discussions with the Department of Health and Dr David Bailey has been in discussions with Welsh Assembly Government. Further, the BMA Statistical Unit is carrying out a critique of the Survey. First impressions from the Survey results are that many aspects of the Survey appear to be outside the normal statistical “good practice”.

**Patient Survey 2009/10** - Apparently, there is likely to be a similar Patient Survey for 2009/10 and it is likely to be “more of the same”.

Morgannwg LMC has questioned the effect of the Patient Survey on motivating GPs at a time of major change to the NHS in Wales. Further, high workload makes access more difficult and that many of the high workload Practices had been penalised under the Welsh Patient Survey whereas low workload Practices had found it easier to achieve the targets for payment. Basically, the Patient Survey is likely to raise the bar on patient expectations which may well be undeliverable with the present resources. The Secretary advised that this matter would be progressed at a National level but reminded Practices that they should be gathering together the evidence to support their Appeals.

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#### **Re-organisation of the NHS in Wales**

**Transitional Arrangements** - The Primary Care Transitional Workstream appears to be working well in the ABMU area as it attempts to standardise processes across all three LHBs. This information is then fed into the Transitional Board.

**Locality Working** - It is not clear at present as to what is a locality although, in the transition, this is likely to be an LHB area. The messages from WAG & ABMU Local Health Board are that there should be “business as usual” during transition.

The LMC is concerned about some of the procedures currently operating well within the LHBs which will now need to operate on a wider ABMU LHB level (e.g. Violent Patients Procedures / Performers Lists). The limited corporate knowledge of General Practice and General Medical Services at nLHB level is worrying and there may also be practical difficulties in that the number of lay representatives available to service important Committees will be much reduced because of the merger.

## District Nursing Services

Morgannwg LMC is receiving reports from Practices across its area about problems associated with the reorganisation of District Nursing Services and its effect on Practices. The changes to service have not been made clear to GPs, have had little GP input into the discussions and are not being managed to ensure that patients do not suffer. Many of the decisions appear to be arbitrary and the patient is becoming lost in the need of District Nurse management to operate within tight budgets. Examples of the changes include:

- Moving District Nurses into a zonal structure which breaks the Attached Staff link with the Practice, affects day-to-day communications and changes the very nature of the Primary Health Care Team
- Changes in service delivery such as refusal to allow District Nurses to carry out certain procedures on house-bound patients when requested by the GP (e.g. Blood Pressure checks, Phlebotomy and certain Wound Dressings). Unfortunately, this then leaves the Practice with little alternative but to refer the patient back into Secondary Care as Practice Nurses are not employed to work outside the Surgery.
- GPs being required to sign Treatment Sheets for patients being managed at home even though the treatment was ordered by Secondary Care (e.g. a GP who was asked to sign such a form for the patient to receive bladder washouts although she had not prescribed or ordered this procedure). The LMC considers this to be inappropriate.

The LMC continues to raise these matters with the ABMU Trust / nLHB as it considers these changes to District Nursing Services to be detrimental to patients at a time when the NHS in Wales is changing its emphasis on service delivery to a more robust community care model.

## Pandemic Flu

You may wonder why Pandemic Flu has not been on the front page of the Morgannwg LMC Newsletter at a time when Practices are thinking of little else. This is because Morgannwg LMC has been working with the three Local Health Boards and with the National Public Health Service for Wales in its area (together with support and help from others) to produce a joint document summarising Pandemic Flu guidance and giving details of local services and local issues. The document will be going out at the same time as this Newsletter and it is hoped that GPs will find it to be useful. The Secretary is also involved in flu planning at an all-Wales level on behalf of GPC Wales and this has proved to be useful in escalating problems quickly. At a meeting on 29 July 2009. Mrs Edwina Hart, Minister of Health & Social Services for Wales made it clear to the profession that she is very appreciative of the work being done in delivering the Enhanced Primary Care Model in Wales in that it is still a service delivered by clinicians rather than a service that has reliance on the National (aka. England) Flu Line.

### All Wales Clinical Governance

#### Self Assessment Tool

Practices have a requirement as part of the nGMS Contract to demonstrate good Clinical Governance. The GPCGSAT is available to do this and many Practices have involved themselves in the process although not all have completed the Assessment. The LMC is concerned that Practices

who do not use the Tool will need to demonstrate evidence of Clinical Governance activity in an alternative way and that the new Local Health Board will bring in Clinical Governance measures used in Secondary Care or will insist on Practices completing the RCGP Practice Assessment tool (which is expensive and has a significant failure rate on the first completion). Further, demonstration of good Clinical Governance will be a requirement under GMS revalidation. Morgannwg LMC supports the GPCGSAT as fit for purpose.

## REMINDERS

### Introducing the Licence to Practice in 2009

Morgannwg LMC has received a letter from Dr Finlay Scott reminding GPs that they need to express their intentions to Practice by 14 August 2009 as GMC will be introducing a Licence to Practice on 16 November 2009 and any doctor wishing to practice Medicine in the UK will, by Law, need to hold both Registration and a Licence to Practice from this date.

### Physicians and Therapists Guide

Morgannwg LMC has had a further report from a local Practice that it has been invited to update their details for entry in the *Physicians and Therapists Guide*. Unfortunately, some Practices in past years have not been aware of the small print which requires them to pay 957 Euros a year as a result of signing the document (which is actually a Contract). The LMC will remind Practices that signing a Contract will render the Practice liable to pay this fee.

**Next LMC meetings:** Exec Committee 7.00pm Tuesday 11 August 2009 - Uplands Surgery  
**Full Committee 7.00pm Tuesday 08 Sept 2009 - Towers Hotel, Jersey Marine**  
Exec Committee 7.00pm Tuesday 13 October 2009 - Venue TBC