

MORGANNWG LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE LTD

Registered Company No: 7582825

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**Newsletter
April 2011**

Chairman's Blog

*"As I enter my final term of office, having been re-elected by LMC members, the Welsh Assembly are about to go to the polls. It has been interesting reading their respective manifestos. Most seem to make a commitment to getting GP practices to open 8 – 8 and Saturday mornings. There is already a mechanism for the Assembly and Health Boards to implement this via the Extended Hours DES but where is the evidence that each and every Practice should offer this service? Surely in these times of financial austerity careful consideration should be given to effective use of financial resources. Plaid goes one step further and wants to renegotiate the GP Contract. Whilst the recent "Yes" vote has given the Assembly the powers to potentially negotiate a Welsh Contract, it can only do this with GPC Wales. GPC Wales is standing firm on an all-UK contract. However, should the situation change, it will be incredibly hard to give arguments for maintaining the status quo on Access to GP services given the recent article in the 'Western Mail'. The GPC Wales previous "Focus on" document for Access and "Sort it in one Call" policies were not about GPC Wales being paternalistic - it is simply that Practices not offering availability during these hours makes our negotiating arguments virtually impossible to win. You may wonder why GPC Wales would reveal its negotiating hand in this way – well, the other side are only too well aware of what is happening in surgeries out there – the Minister's postbag remains full of letters from disgruntled patients. You may also argue that the reporter's evidence is possibly flawed but having followed this up, the reporter actually rang each surgery or checked each surgery website – therefore, it is incumbent on us all to make sure that our websites opening hours information is up-to-date and that, where surgeries have reduced services available on a given day, that receptionists still make it clear that a doctor is available for advice and for emergency care. **Please can we ask that all Practices give this their urgent attention so that should we have to actively look at a Welsh Contract, we are in the strongest possible position to negotiate on your behalf.***

Effective use of resources is of course key to delivering the Welsh healthcare agenda as I have touched on above. The new Community Networks are up and running and, having attended the recent pan-Swansea Network event, it was great to see such enthusiasm within the room and a real sense of motivation to think innovatively how to deliver effective patient care. However, one recurring question that I am hearing is where are the financial resources to support this work and to develop the projects. I appreciate that times are difficult financially for the Health Board, but I believe that without truly investing money in the Primary Care Networks (which will ultimately not only improve service delivery and thus release savings) that this enthusiasm will wither on the vine which will be such a shame. I would strongly urge the Health Board to look at this matter urgently and get things moving.

On a slightly different note, thank you to those who contacted the LMC office about the decision made by Cardiff University School of Medicine who decided, in conjunction with Swansea University, to stop the Cardiff students in their final year from having clinical placements with Swansea GP Practices. This decision was made on the basis of:

- the current administration and accommodation provided by ABMU no longer being available due to demands of providing the clinical years of Swansea Medical School training*
- an assumption that Swansea Practices would not be financially penalised as they would have the Swansea clinical year students.*

What this decision failed to consider was that Swansea medical students also have placements in the neighbouring areas (who were offered to continue to take Cardiff students) which clearly negates their assumption that Swansea would be having all these students. Also, it didn't ask the Swansea Practices if they would be able to continue providing teaching for the Cardiff students and look into alternative accommodation (e.g. University accommodation). This naturally left Swansea practices believing that this was unfair and unjust given the energy and work put into developing the training of these students over the year. Recently, Swansea medical school has been informed by the General Medical Council that the clinical placements are not quite ready so these Swansea students will now be completing their clinical years in Cardiff. We understand that Cardiff will be in touch with Swansea practices shortly to see if they wish to provide teaching. Morgannwg LMC remains unhappy that:

- some of the issues have not been answered as yet*
- the decision-making process has lacked engagement/involvement/inclusion of the Swansea practices*

and it will be discussing this further at the next LMC meeting.

Other important news/issues:

- **Notional Rent** – Morgannwg LMC has become aware lately that Practices who have had a reduction in their District Valuation have appealed the valuation and have then been told that “this is within the Regulations”. This is not the case. The Regulations they are referring to are the 1999 Regulations but these have been superseded by the 2004 Regulations (Appendix 2c) where it states quite clearly that for the first 15 years on Notional Rent, there can be no reduction in the amount of Notional Rent payable to Practices. If you have accepted a downward valuation based on the advice from Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board which has used the 1999 Regulations then you should give consideration to an appeal ASAP citing the 2004 Regulations and advising that a downward revision is illegal and outside of the current Regulations. You should also consider asking for a backdated payment complete with interest. If you need the support of the LMC office with this please get in touch.*
- **Veterans' Health** - I am sure you will have all read the recent letter from WAG about prioritising Veterans' health when they need specialist input for their healthcare. We have discussed this with GPC Wales and Welsh Assembly. In order to identify Veterans within our Practice population, we would like Practices to consider putting up posters / using the right hand side of their prescrip-*

tion / advertising on their website for Veterans to inform Practices of their status so that we can update their records accordingly. We feel this would be valuable and ensure this group of patients get the medical help they are entitled to expeditiously.

- **Sessional GPs** – we understand that the ABMU Health Board now has a database of all Sessional doctors and they should now be sending out invitations to clinical meetings including Protected Learning Time sessions via email. Thanks to the CPD co-ordinators and Medical Director's team for getting this sorted out.
- **New contract changes to QOF** - Detailed guidance coming shortly from GPC UK although Business Rules and Data Sets with the READ codes are available on BMA website. The LMC has had a number of questions about the Referral Pathways and Prescribing elements of the new QOF areas.

Referral points - these are for engagement in deciding on Pathways to use at Practice and then at Locality level, writing a plan and then reviewing achievement against use of those Pathways at the defined times. Any work involved in developing/writing/designing the Pathways is NOT resourced under QOF and should be reimbursed separately by Health Boards. The Referral Pathways being used are not to reduce Referrals but to improve quality and appropriateness of referral in defined areas. You should get all the points if you engage in the Referral elements and none if you don't, as there is no 'tiering' of points. Also, using the Pathways should not supercede the decisions that are appropriate for the individual care of a patient, i.e. if a patient is not appropriate for inclusion in the Pathway then they are exempted. Any Cancer or Suspected Cancer patients are automatically exempt from the use of the Pathway.

Prescribing points - these are about achieving cost savings for the NHS and these will be tiered and scored according to your achievement in how close your Practice gets to the upper quartile. Your Practice have a year to achieve this as the points are measured on the last quarter's achievement."

That is all from me this month.

I hope you all enjoyed the glorious Bank Holidays,

Regards,

Charlotte

Morgannwg LMC 2011-14

Morgannwg LMC has just held its triennial election and your new LMC 2011-14 is:

- **Bridgend Constituency** - Drs John Anthony, Alison Meredith-Smith & Sean Young with 2 vacancies (*Any Contract-Holder in the area who wishes to stand should contact the LMC*)
- **Neath Port Talbot Constituency** - Drs Chiranjib Ghosh, Clive Rosser, Alan Stevenson, Helen Walters & Heather Wilkes
- **Swansea Constituency** - Drs Katherine Berry, Andrew Bradley, Charlotte Jones, Charles Danino, Kannan Muthuvairavan, Emmanuel Owoso, Anny Pritchard, Ashok Rayani, Stephen Rix & David Werner
- **Sessional GP Constituency**—Drs Oak Aung-Kyi, Stephen Bassett, Ian Millington, Nimish Shah & Sherard Le Maitre

Morgannwg LMC Officers were then elected at the AGM on 12 April 2011 for the next year:

- **Chair** - Dr Charlotte Jones & **Vice-Chair** - Dr Alan Stevenson
- **Secretary** - Dr Ian Millington has a contract for provision of Services to Morgannwg LMC
- **Co-opted Members** - ABMU AMD (See below), Practice Managers (Ann Burtonwood, Linda Vickery, Joanne Lane & others TBC) on rota, Public Health Doctors (Prof Stephen Monaghan & Drs Annie Delahunty and Nina Williams) on rota, VTS Trainees (Drs J Fitchett & 2 vacancies) and a Consultant (to be nominated by the ABMU LMAG).

Morgannwg LMC thanks all its former members for their valuable service in the past

Morgannwg LMC Limited

Morgannwg LMC has formed and registered a new company known as Morgannwg Local Medical Committee Limited (Registered Company no: 7582825). The new company began operating on 01 April 2011 and it will deal with all the non-statutory functions that were formerly dealt with by Morgannwg LMC. The effects will be fairly minimal for constituents (apart from the change to letterheads, the website and the greeting received when phoning the LMC Office) but the changes will protect Members of the LMC from personal liability when carrying out non-statutory LMC-type work. The Directors of the new company are Drs A Bradley, C Jones, I Millington, N Shah, A Stevenson, A Rayani & S Rix and I Millington will hold the post of Company Secretary. The details of the new company are available for viewing on the Companies House website.

Management Changes - Swansea Locality

Following the retirement of the Swansea Locality Director, Dr Jane Harrison will be taking over this role until a substantive appointment can be made. In the meantime, Dr Geoff Tinkler will be providing the Primary Care input into the ABMU Health Board Medical Director's team

ABMU Path Lab Issues

Morgannwg LMC has been approached by a number of Practices (mostly in the western sector of the ABMU HB area) about issues they have with the Path Lab services. These include:

- **Pre-sorting of Samples** - The Path Lab have

issued different coloured bags for the pre-sorting of samples from GP Practices. Whereas the LMC fully understands the benefits for the Path Lab in pre-sorting, it would have been helpful if the Path Lab had engaged with GPs and the LMC as their representative organisation before making the changes. This is especially disappointing following the discussions that followed after the Path Lab had introduced new forms that required GPs to go back to hand-writing some or all of the details where many of these could have been printed from the Practice computer in the past.

- **LabelTrace** - It appears that there is some confusion as to which labels to print when patients are referred for Phlebotomy at the Path Lab and it appears that labels sent with the form (and paid for by the Practice) may be discarded by the Lab.

- **Indigo Review** - The issues that necessitated the switching off of this facility are being resolved and it is hoped that it will be possible to reinstate access for GPs in the near future.

Morgannwg LMC has raised all of the above issues with ABMU Health Board in the hope that communications can be improved and that the issues will be resolved in the near future.

And finally

Constituent GPs (including all Sessional GPs) and GP Trainees in the ABMU HB area are welcome to attend full Morgannwg LMC meetings. Please ring Lorraine Rudd PA to the Secretary at the LMC Office to receive the papers for the meeting.

Next LMC meetings: Full Committee 7.00pm Tuesday 10 May 2011 - Towers Hotel, Jersey Marine
LMC Executive 7.00pm Tuesday 14 June 2011 - TBC
Full Committee 7.00pm Tuesday 12 July 2011 - Towers Hotel, Jersey Marine