

# **MORGANNWG LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE**

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## **LMC Newsletter September 2010**

### **Chairman's Blog**

*"I find it amazing that in early September shops start putting out all their Christmas stocks to try and get us spending our festive cash, but thankfully for my husband and sadly for local shopkeepers, I can't start entering the Christmas spirit as we are now having open discussions about 8am-8pm for healthcare together with Saturday morning surgeries. All Health Boards have been tasked with preparing an outline of how this could be delivered in their area. Interestingly, there are some different interpretations of what this means. At the top we are told this isn't just being aimed at GPs but Health Boards could look at other aspects of service to deliver this political promise (e.g. physiotherapy, day theatres) but on the ground, in reality, it is being interpreted as being GPs who will be doing this. Morgannwg LMC had quite a lively discussion with executives from ABMU Health Board (Mr David Sissling, Mrs Alex Howells and Mr Paul Stauber) at our last meeting. There were clear expressions of concern about this seemingly being a political whim with no clear evidence of need, that in a difficult financial and economic climate the money could and should be used elsewhere more effectively, and that most GPs will not wish to undertake this work either individually or at Practice level for many reasons (including: exhaustion, concerns about staff security if they are working late in night and ancillary staff not wishing to work additional hours). It was also pointed out that we have a UK contract for 8am-6.30pm Monday to Friday and there were no moves to change it from GPC Wales. That said, there is a clear drive to deliver a pilot. We have requested that we continue to be engaged in the process and have had assurances that will be the case as well as assurances that this money will not come from GMS funds. It appears that in Swansea, the most likely solution will be a pilot where all Practices within a designated Clinical Network will be involved in triaging patients requesting these later appointments which will then be delivered by a doctor running a surgery at the MIU base in Singleton. This will then be scrutinised to see how it works.*

*The flu campaign is about to commence and I do hope that you are all enjoying wearing the yellow t-shirts that were supplied to the surgeries to advertise the campaign! The campaign is going to be more complicated than previous years in terms of who gets what and mix of sub-cutaneous and intra-dermal vaccinations being in surgeries, but Public Health Wales have produced some easy to follow flowcharts which will help. There have been concerns that practices may also lose out financially with patients refusing the vaccine due to it containing H1N1 strain and questions have been asked whether patients should be informed about the contents of the vaccine. The Defence Organisations say they should and many areas across the UK are considering advertising the contents of the vaccine via posters, informing patients verbally when they book or using the right hand side of the prescription. We would not like to see Practices being chastised for poor uptake simply because patients refuse to have the vaccine, as we know how much work goes into delivering the campaign at a practice level. One word of caution, please make sure that your mechanisms for recording the vaccination can distinguish between which preparation has been given otherwise you might lose out financially when claiming back (please contact us at the LMC if you would like more details/guidance)"*

Regards

**Charlotte**

## Community Health Councils in Wales

The Community Health Councils (CHCs) in Wales have undergone a major reorganisation in the last few months that has seen their numbers reduced from 19 to 8 in line with the reorganization of Local Health Boards in Wales. The new CHCs are now very different organisations with more aspects of health to cover in their areas and there is an emphasis from the Minister of Health & Social Services on CHCs having strong patient and public involvement. Each CHC will be inspecting GP and Dental Surgeries, Community Pharmacy premises and Nursing Homes (although there has been some delay in starting the latter because of an ongoing legal case in North Wales). Although this is a considerable amount of work, all CHC members are volunteers and so cannot be pushed too hard. ABM CHC has three local committees but the Executive Committee has to take all the decisions.

Each CHC also has an important role in assisting individual citizens via its Complaints Advocacy Service and ABM CHC has three Advocates who are available to do this important work. Notices giving details of the Service have been sent out to Practices to display in their waiting rooms (and these will be looked for at surgery inspections carried out by the CHC).

Mrs Heather Barrow (Chairman) & Sue Evans (Patient & Public Involvement Officer) of ABM CHC attended the Morgannwg LMC meeting on 14 September 2010 to discuss matters of mutual interest, and it is hoped that this will be the start of an ongoing relationship between the LMC and the new ABM CHC for the benefit of the citizens of the ABMU Local Health Board area.

### GP earnings fall again

The *GP Earnings & Expenses Provisional Report 2008/09* published by the NHS Information Centre on 15/09/2010 says that family doctors' pay in the UK dipped again in 2008/09. The figures show that most GPs were on General Medical Services contracts, and had an average pre-tax income of £99,200. Further analysis shows that:

- GPs in England saw earnings fall by 0.5 per cent to £109,600
- GPs in Wales had the sharpest decrease of 2.9 per cent to £90,700
- Expenses for GPs across the UK rose by 5.1 per cent on average, eroding the 2.6 per cent rise in their gross resources.
- Average income before tax for salaried GPs in the UK rose 2.7 per cent to £57,300.

These figures will hardly encourage GPs to come to Wales! Also, the figures are very far removed from ones used by the national press to generate their sensational headlines and to denigrate GPs!

### Seniority Payments

GPs are reminded that when submitting their Seniority claims, if the Primary Care Organisation (the LHB in Wales) cannot verify the years of service from NHS records, the onus is on the individual GP to produce evidence to verify their claim. This will particularly apply to GP locum work before it was superannuable. Payments may be made while verification issues are being resolved. With regards to the evidence that should be provided, a contract for services, invoices or any other documentation (e.g. a letter from a

partner in a Practice) that indicates the length of time the doctor spent as a locum should be sent to the LHB. The amount of income during this period will not have a bearing and it does not matter whether the work was full time or part time. The purpose of the evidence is to demonstrate that the doctor was providing primary medical services at this time.

### *Application for Council Tax Discount of Severe Mental Impairment*

Following correspondence on the GPC Wales Listserver, Morgannwg LMC has had occasion to seek advice in respect of the above form. This form is used to "support a claim by or on behalf of a severely mentally impaired person for exemption from liability to pay the council tax or eligibility for a discount in respect of the amount of council tax payable" as laid down in the Local Gov Finance Act 1992. It has now been confirmed that this form is covered by GMS (Part 5 Reg 21 schedule 4 point 9) and so no fee is payable for completing the form.

**Prophylactic Antibiotics for Dental Treatment**  
NICE guidance issued some time ago suggested that the prophylactic prescribing of antibiotics for patients who have heart valve damage, stenosis, replacement joints, history of RH fever, etc before dental extractions or periodontal procedures was no longer indicated. Advice to dentists is that they should not prescribe but if the patient insists on the basis that "They were needed last time so why not now?" they ask their managing physician to prescribe if they too feel it is indicated.

**Next LMC meetings:** Exec Committee 7.00pm Tuesday 12 October 2010 - venue TBA  
Full Committee 7.00pm Tuesday 09 Nov 2010 - Towers Hotel, Jersey Marine  
Exec Committee 7.00pm Tuesday 14 December 2010 - venue TBA