



Dear colleagues

## **GPC England vote for GP contractors / partners ballot ahead of collective action**

### **If Not Now, When?**

GPC England (GPCE) met yesterday and unanimously [voted to move to Phase ONE of Saving General Practice, with the announcement of a ballot for GP contractors / partners across England](#) next month, ahead of prospective action commencing on **1 August**.

In March, 99.2% of nearly 20,000 GP BMA members voted 'No' to reject the 2024/25 GP Contract. Almost 75% of the votes cast were from GP contractors / partners, who have told us they are ready to take action and take it soon. The online ballot will outline a menu of actions which will not breach GP contracts. GP contractors / partners are the key decision makers: able to take small steps leading to a big impact to "Protect Practices and Protect Our Patients."

Following the vote at GPCE to proceed to a ballot ahead of action, we will be explaining what action we are asking GPs to take, why, and when, early next month to coincide with our roadshows (see below). We will also be sharing profession-facing resources and a public-facing campaign very soon.

GP contractors/partners will be asked to **vote YES** to send a message to Government.

**We are committed to fight for the future of General Practice.**

We will reassure our patients that 'GPs Are On Your Side'.

Read the press statement [here](#)

### **The GP contractor / partner ballot**

The ballot *will open on Monday 17 June and close on Monday 29 July ahead of action commencing from Thursday 1 August.*

Please login to [bma.org.uk](https://bma.org.uk) to make sure your personal details, job roles, place of work and best contact email are correct. If you experience any issues, please email [gpcontract@bma.org.uk](mailto:gpcontract@bma.org.uk) for support. *Please look out for an email from Civica which will allow you to vote.*

Your details **MUST** be up to date for your vote to count.

#### **If not now, when?**

1. **Take Action to Save General Practice.**
2. **Protect Your Practice, Protect Your Patients.**
3. **Vote Yes in the GP contractor / partner Ballot.**

**Colleagues, it's time.**

### **GPC England Officer Team face-to-face contract roadshows – June and July 2024**

Across June and July, the GPC England Officer team - Samira, David, Julius and I will be undertaking over 20 events nationwide, hosted by regional LMC leaders near you. We will be presenting GPC England manifesto and sharing the BMA GP Practice Survival Toolkit to Protect your Practice, Protect your Patients. These face-to-face events provide the perfect opportunity to hear about the menu of actions, understand the ballot, and give you an opportunity to ask us any questions. You can also take campaign resources and goodies back to your practice. These events are free and open to:

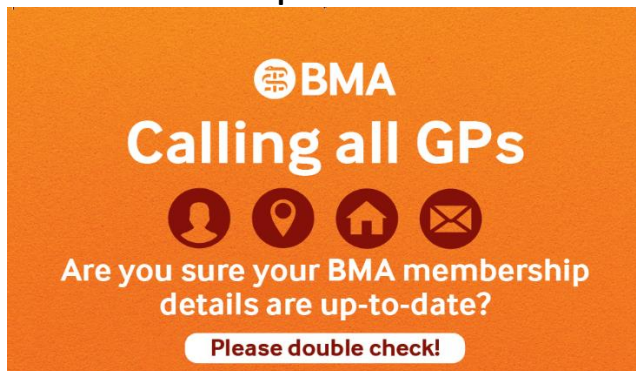
- All holders of a GP contract
- Every GP and GP Registrar
- Practice Managers and Practice Nurses

You do NOT need to be a BMA member to attend.

Please encourage your colleagues who are not members to register too.

See the list of events across the country and register here: <https://bma.org.uk/gproadshow>

### **BMA GP Membership Refresh**



**It is vital that you keep your BMA membership details up to date so you can vote in the non-statutory ballot for all GP contractors / partners in England that has just been announced.**

Following the referendum BMA member services have refreshed the GP membership system.

To vote in the ballot, we need you to login to [www.bma.org.uk](http://www.bma.org.uk) to check your details are correct. *We must have the right information for your vote to count, so please double check. If you have any issues updating your details, email [gpcontract@bma.org.uk](mailto:gpcontract@bma.org.uk) for further assistance.* We need:

- ✓ Your personal details, including a valid email address
- ✓ Place of work details for all your roles

We must have the right information for your vote to count. Please double check!

**In this first ballot, GP contractors / partner need to vote YES to send a message to Government that we are ready to stand up for a better service for our patients, and to protect our practices.**

**Please check and update your details at: [BMA - Sign In](#)**

If you are not a BMA GP member, you can join here: [www.bma.org.uk/join](http://www.bma.org.uk/join)

### **LMC UK Conference Agenda 2024**

The LMC UK Conference will be held next week, 23-24 May, at Celtic Manor, Newport, Wales.

The [Agenda 'Yma o hyd'](#) ('still here') has now been published and further information is available [here](#)

#ConfLMC24

### **GP contract guidance**

GPC England is currently preparing contractual guidance following the imposition on 1 April and this should be available on the BMA website shortly. There is also a planned update of the [safe working guidance](#), which it is hoped will be completed by early June.

### **Premises Costs Directions**

After almost a decade of pressure from the BMA, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) have published the long-anticipated update to the [Premises Costs Directions \(PCDs\)](#), which will bring changes to assist premises costs, including permission for commissioners to award improvement grants of up to 100% of the project value, (up from 66%), and new powers for commissioners to better support contractors.

These changes were initially agreed five years ago, as part of the multi-year GP contract in 2019. The full guidance will be published at a later date.

Responding to the announcement, Dr Gaurav Gupta, GPC England premises lead, said:

"We're pleased to see positive steps to help GP premises owners, and any partners aspiring to buy into property-owning partnership in advancing their services to provide the best possible care for patients.

But we still have a very long way to go, with no additional funds going into ICB budget lines. The past decade has seen us caring for an additional eight million patients, with over a thousand practices lost, and record numbers of appointments. It's clear to patients and GPs alike that we must push Government and NHS England for significantly greater investment into General Practice premises." Read the full statement [here](#)

### **Accelerated Access to GP-held patient records – update**

Following engagement with the ICO and NHSE, BMA maintains the position outlined by the Information Commissioner. While the direction to provide prospective record access to patients is legal, mitigations outlined by practices in DPIAs submitted to the ICO should also be implemented to ensure that processing is compliant with the requirement of the Data Protection Act.

Where practices are facing pressure from ICBs to move ahead with prospective automatic access and have produced a DPIA, they should cite the ICOs response and continue in line with their DPIA.

Read more [here](#)

### **Cloud based telephony**

Following changes that have mandated adoption of Cloud Based Telephony on NHSE's approved procurement framework GPC England has received extensive complaints from GPs being charged excessive costs for adopting new systems.

While we remain in discussion with NHSE to seek a resolution, we have been advised that GPs can raise concerns directly with NHSE about additional costs they are experiencing using the following email [commercial.procurementhub@nhs.net](mailto:commercial.procurementhub@nhs.net). Please continue to get in touch via [info.lmcqueries@bma.org.uk](mailto:info.lmcqueries@bma.org.uk) with any concerns.

### **Changes to the benefits payment process**

The DWP and DHSC has published a [call for evidence](#) that will inform a programme of work announced at the autumn statement in 2023, to explore reforming the fit note process to support those with long term health conditions in accessing work and health support. The evidence will help to assess the impact of the current fit note process in aiding work and health conversations, and the exploration of enhancements that GPs and other health care professionals would require for the fit note to better support people to start and stay in work. GPCE will submit its evidence in due course.

### **Medical Examiner System in England**

The BMA continues to engage with stakeholders on the implementation of the Medical Examiner system in England which is currently scheduled for 9 September 2024. The Statutory Instruments and timeline of the ME implementation can be found [here](#) with the relevant legislation found [here](#).

### **WorkWell Pilot**

During the recent BMA Occupational Medicine Committee (OMC) meeting, the Government announced increased services being rolled out in occupational health. At ARM 2023, Motion 69 was passed which called on universal access to occupational health and medicine. Since the announcement, the Government has [published](#) the areas to pilot the WorkWell health and support service (all in England). Going forward, OMC will be lobbying the Government on a truly universal occupational health and occupational medicine system for all workers in the UK.

OMC also discussed recruitment and other challenges for those undertaking work in occupational medicine. For further information please contact [info.omc@bma.org.uk](mailto:info.omc@bma.org.uk)

### **Wellbeing resources**

We continue to encourage practices to focus on their own team's wellbeing and take time to reflect on what can be done to protect it (this will also meet the requirements of QOF [quality improvement project on staff wellbeing](#)). A range of wellbeing and support services are also available to doctors, from the BMA's [counselling and peer support services](#), [NHS practitioner health service](#), [Samaritans](#) and [Doctors in Distress](#). See also our [poster with 10 tips to help maintain and support wellbeing](#).

### **GPC England committee pages and guidance for practices**

Read more about the work of [GPCE](#) and practical guidance for [GP practices](#). See the latest update on X [@BMA\\_GP](#) and read about [BMA in the media](#). Contact us: [info.GPC@bma.org.uk](mailto:info.GPC@bma.org.uk)

### **Read the latest [GPC England bulletin](#)**

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