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**LOTHIAN LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE LIMITED**

**SESSIONAL GP COMMUNICATION DOCUMENT NO.1**

**1st May 2020**

***Dear Colleague***

Lothian Local Medical Committee supports and represents all GPs working within NHS Lothian and during these unprecedented and challenging times, we felt it important that we reach out to our sessional GPs. Sessional GPs are making significant contributions to the phenomenal NHS Scotland response to Covid 19 and during this time we have identified some additional requirements that are unique to sessional GPs.

**Guidance and communication**

We hope that you are managing to keep abreast of the many changes that continue to occur on a daily basis in light of Covid 19 and therefore the change in service provision, patient pathways, clinical advice, etc. May we suggest that you approach a practice you feel affiliated to (either because of recurrent sessions with them or because of best rapport) and request the Practice Manager includes you on their practice mailing list. The LASGP website is also maintained frequently and updates are often uploaded here. Furthermore a repository for important Scottish primary care documentation has been developed by a practice in the West and if you wish to have access to this, please contact Amy.Small@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk.

All Lothian ‘speed reads’ are also available on their external site <https://staff.nhslothian.scot/COVID-19/SpeedReads/Pages/default.aspx>

**Contributing to Covid 19 work in and out of hours**

The Covid 19 Community Pathway is a national pathway introduced to manage Covid 19 demand. In Lothian, the model for the community pathway includes: -

* a local telephone triage hub, providing clinical assessment of people referred by NHS 24 (operates 24/7)
* if clinically indicated, access to face to face assessment within one of five community assessment centres located in Bonnyrigg, Musselburgh, North Edinburgh, St John's Hospital and the Western General Hospital (operating hours vary from daytime hours to 24/7)

Please contact covid19@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk , with “Community Pathway” as the subject heading, to receive a registration form or for further information.

LUCS Out Of Hours are running as normal (except not from WGH base) and have streamlined their recruitment process. Contact cathy.grant@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk if interested in work.

**Death in Service Benefit**

Death in Service pension benefits for GP locums is complex and continues to be high on the BMA priority list. On 24th April Scottish government made what seems a positive announcement on Death in Service (see <https://bmascotland.home.blog/2020/04/20/death-in-service-update/> ). Whilst promising, we await further details due on 1st May. The main concerns are defining the healthcare workers to include all forms of locum GP work, and clarifying the details on what circumstances of death would allow these benefits.

Westminster also announced a new life assurance scheme involving £60,000 one-off payment if death from Covid to ANY healthcare worker, but this is for NHSE.

Individual health boards have been encouraged to offer fixed term temporary locum contracts and Scottish BMA are involved in guidance on what this might look like.

**NHS Mail Accounts**

It is important that locums have a secure NHS email to allow safe cIinical communication. Currently, unless on nhs.net or if you have a secure global desktop organised, you can’t access NHS emails remotely. We are in contact with NHS Lothian IT to try and find a way forward and will update when progressed.

**Cancellation of work**

We have heard unfortunate stories of locums work being cancelled at short notice by practices. We would hope that locums have Terms & Conditions in place around their booked work and that practices honour these. It is worth highlighting that early in April, Scottish Government announced additional funding to practices for Covid related expenses, and further details clarify that relevant locum costs can be reimbursed eg to allow time for contacting shielding patients. Perhaps a way of honouring locum work agreements?

**Testing**

If you are concerned that you or a household member is symptomatic of Covid-19 then testing is available through occupational health. We have clarified that contacting the last practice you worked is appropriate and they can refer you as they would for someone from their practice. The information that is required is the suspected case’s name, mobile contact number, job, job location and date of onset of symptoms. If it is over the weekend, please email directly to OHenquiries@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

**LMC Office and Support**

The LMC is currently operating under contingency arrangements with office bearers and staff largely home working. However we remain available for advice and support and are keen to help. Please contact us directly by email lmc@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk or via our website [www.lothianlmc.co.uk](http://www.lothianlmc.co.uk) where the section “What we do” has information on support available, but also links to The Cameron Fund which can potentially provide help to clinicians in financial difficulty due to ill health.

Follow Lothian LMC on twitter @lothianlmc

Kim Rollinson is our dedicated Sessional GP representative on the GP Subcommittee and can be contacted on drkimrollbma@hotmail.com .

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you need us.

Stay safe,

Yours sincerely

Dr Annie Lomas Dr Kim Rollinson

West Lothian Rep, LMC & GP Sub Committee Sessional GP Rep Lothian LMC, Scottish Sessional Rep BMA, Chair, LASGP