GP SUB-COMMITTEE OF NHS LOTHIAN AREA MEDICAL COMMITTEE

Monday 27th October 2025
7.30pm
MS Teams

Chair – Dr Andrew Forder

MINUTES

Attendees – Dr Andrew Forder, Dr Neil MacRitchie, Dr Annie Lomas, Dr Euan Alexander, Dr Gordon Black, Dr Stuart Blake, Dr Peter Cairns, Dr Michelle Downer, Dr Jenny English, Dr Fiona Ferguson, Dr Rebecca Green, Dr John Hardman, Dr Alexander Kelly, Dr Hazel Knox, Dr Katie MacKenzie, Dr Jane Marshall, Dr Ramon McDermott, Dr Laura Montgomery, Dr Iain Morrison, Dr Catriona Morton, Dr Nick Payne, Dr Katherine Robertson, Dr Suzy Scarlett, Dr Joanna Smail, Dr Debbie Strachan, Dr Elizabeth Strachan, Dr Jane Sweeney, Dr Laura Tweedie, Dr Hayley Harris, Ms Tracey McKigen, Ms Elaine Weir, Mrs Nicola Smith

Apologies – Dr Jeremy Chowings, Dr Kim Rollinson, Ms Alison McNeillage, Dr Roy O'Conaire, Ms Tracey Gillies

Welcome - Ms Alison Shiel, *Child Protection Training Lead, Public Protection Team*
Dr Drummond Begg, *GP, Penicuik Medical Practice*
Mr Andrew Deans, *Lead Research Nurse, NRS Primary Care Network*
Dr Katie MacKenzie *(Newly elected GP Retainer rep)*
Dr Harriet Boyd *(GP ST3, Craigshill Medical Practice), observing*

Chair opened the meeting and warmly welcomed committee members and guests.

1. Presentation: ICON Implementation

Committee welcomed Alison Sheil who gave a brief overview of ICON, a national service to support parents with crying babies which has recently launched in Lothian.

The GP 6-8 week baby check is intended to be the last of the 5 touch points in the pathway. A toolkit of resources is available, including a short questionnaire which GPs may choose to use as a guidance tool. Posters have been issued to practices to raise awareness. E-learning can also be accessed via this link ICON eLearning – Babies cry, you can cope

The ask of GPs is to capture "ICON discussed" within the patient notes following any discussion with the patient.

It was acknowledged that this was an additional ask of practices, however there is flexibility around how this can be adopted. It was also noted that further investigation would take place to look into any possible IT enhancements to allow this to be automatically recorded.

Committee thanked Alison for attending.

2. Presentation: Practice Embedded Research Unit

Committee welcomed Mr Andrew Deans and Dr Drummond Begg who summarised the key points from a scoping paper to establish a primary are research infrastructure to support the Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicine Pricing, Access and Growth (VPAG) Programme, which was issued in advance.

The desire to shift the balance of research from secondary to primary care was noted, recognising the significant amount of clinical care that takes place within primary care and offering the opportunity for patients who wish to take part in research to do so.

It was acknowledged that the process is in its very early stages and is currently looking to work with a small number of "pathfinder" practices, supported by the research team, to identify opportunities, share learning and consider how this might move forward.

A number of concerns were raised regarding the time commitment and funding to support the work. It was noted that while some funding was available as part of the pilot, it was not currently known if this would continue.

It was noted that, while GP Sub-committee were broadly supportive of the research, concerns were raised around any commercial funding of this work. This was not something that GP Sub-committee would be involved in supporting and would instead be a decision for independent contractors to make.

Committee gave their support in principle for the concept of research in Primary Care, while also noting that a number of questions remain at this early stage, particularly around sustainability, equity and funding, and welcomed further updates to be brought back to committee as more details become clear.

Committee thanked Andrew and Drummond for attending.

3. Minutes of the last meeting 22nd September 2025

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

4. Matters Arising / Actions from last meeting;

4.1 – (ONGOING) **Office** to discuss Management of Type 2 Diabetes with Primary Care Contracts Team. **Update:** Discussions ongoing, update to follow. **ONGOING**

4.2 – (ONGOING) **JC** to provide further update on discussions with Endocrine Clinical Lead regarding post-cancer thyroxine monitoring. **Update:** Any patients discharged to GPs earlier in the year should be passed back to Endocrinology. Examples of a small number of cases still being referred were highlighted and these will be reviewed. **CLOSED**

4.3 – (ONGOING) **JC** agreed to take further action to highlight that more transparency and accuracy is needed around secondary care wait times and initiatives, to provide much needed support to GPs and patients. **Update:** Work ongoing. Committee asked that this includes the digital appointment/ text service as concerns continue around patients missing details of appointment due to thinking this is a scam. **TM** agreed to discuss with Communications colleagues. **ONGOING**

4.4 – (ONGOING) **Office/PCCO** to discuss next steps for developing a guidance framework for practice Emergency/Business Continuity Plans. **Update:** PCCO team are carrying out some initial work and a further update will come back to committee. **ONGOING**

4.5 – (ONGOING) **TM** to provide a detailed update on the routine colposcopy waiting times. **Update:** Awaiting update on wider position within Gynaecology. Details of recent case being shared with TM and JH. AL involved in other discussions looking at how to minimise wait times within Gynaecology. **ONGOING**

4.6 - **JC** to investigate potential disadvantage to practices if historical pre-diabetes diagnoses are not retrospectively funded as part of the proposed Pre-Diabetes LES. **Update:** Coding approach being confirmed that would ensure that practices are remunerated accordingly for this work. **CLOSED**

4.7 - **Office** to look into the level of GP representation on the NHS Lothian Neurodevelopmental Pathway Sub-group. **Update: ONGOING**

4.8 - **Office** to discuss and propose Committee stance and approach for sharing sponsored educational events via the Weekly Email Distribution. **Update:** The next example will be worked through in real time to agree the best approach. **CLOSED**

5. Facilities SLA update

It was noted that while the next stage of the SLA phased increase (from 50% to 75% of the increased charge) was due to happen at the start of October, this has now been paused and charges will continue to be held at 50% until the end of March 2026.

Committee welcomed this decision on what has been a source of worry for many practices.

6. Thyroid Cancer Monitoring

Covered under 4.2.

7. GP Laboratory Sample Transport Service Changes

It was noted that, due to the reeduction in working hours for Agenda for Change staff, it is likely that there will be a reduction in the laboratory sample transport services across Lothian.

This would have a significant detrimental impact across primary care, Out of Hours service and laboratory services themselves, with initial estimates indicating that approximately 30% of practices would receive no afternoon pick up of laboratory samples and therefore impacting practice ability to process their own phlebotomy, in addition to those also done for secondary care.

It was noted that this has been raised with the Director of Estates and Facilities, highlighting the need for a thorough risk assessment of the wider impact to be carried out ahead of any decision.

Committee's hope for an acceptable resolution was noted.

8. GPAS

The September report was shared with committee in advance and was taken as read.

Concern was raised around the practice comments and Committee queried what actions were being taken either by PCCO or others to intervene and resolve the issues that are routinely raised.

The low levels of return in some areas were acknowledged, and it was felt that this was in part due to the lack of any remedial action being taken.

It was noted that this data has been very helpful at a national level.

9. Medical Directors Business

9.1 – GP Retainer representative
Committee welcomed Dr Katie MacKenzie, newly elected by the GP Retainer community as committee representative, following Dr Joanna Loudon stepping down recently.

10. AOCB

10.1 – On behalf of Committee, Chair expressed thanks to Dr Rebecca Green, Clinical Director Midlothian HSCP, for her valuable input to Committee over the years and wished her well in her new post as Associate Medical Director for Primary and Community Services, NHS Borders

Meeting closed.

Date of next meeting - **Monday 24th November 2025 on MS Teams**

2025 Meeting Dates;

Monday 15th December (3rd Monday) - **Novotel**