BMA House

Tavistock Square

London WC1H 9JP

13 November 2020

Supporting practices locally

Dear [*insert CCG lead name*]

As we continue to work hard to provide general practice services to our patients, both those with symptoms relating to COVID-19, and the many other patients who need the care of GPs and their teams, and following the biggest flu vaccination campaign that your local practices are successfully engaged in, I am writing to encourage you to work together with your LMC to prepare to deliver an unprecedented COVID-19 vaccination programme (CVP) in this area., It will be of critical importance that general practice receives all the support available from the wider system, to ensure that those practices and practitioners who choose to be involved can prioritise the COVID vaccination programme, as well as providing care to patients who most need it.

You will be aware that NHSEI has [announced](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/C0828_GP-funding-letter-_second-wave_9novreb.pdf) a new General Practice Covid Capacity Expansion Fund., exclusively for the use of general practice to expand capacity until 31 March 2021 and that the letter sets out a non-exhaustive list of priorities the money can be spent on. The letter also states the need for local resource to be provided in a similar way as many have seen for the flu programme.

As NHSEI sets out, it is crucial that the funds flow through to practices with minimum bureaucracy and maximum flexibility to allow them to put it to sensible and effective use and we therefore urge you to work together with the LMC to establish a simple mechanism to ensure that this will be the case.

We would also strongly encourage you to consult with the LMC to agree further measures that would support your local practices at this critical time, such as providing income protection for local enhanced services, including those commissioned by local authorities, utilising the PCN linked workforce and Extended Access services in evenings and weekends to support the Covid vaccination programme and enabling greater flexibility in local contractual arrangements. In doing so, and trusting GPs as professionals, you will enable practices to have confidence that they can prioritise their work and focus on the most important aspects for the benefit of their patients this winter.

With this additional national funding, QOF income protection and local agreements, and with an “all hands to the pump” approach by all local organisations, practices will be in a better place to prioritise care delivery for their patients. We must remember that there is only one workforce and that workforce cannot be in two places at the same time. When nurses and other practice staff are delivering the vaccinations there will inevitably be pressure on the delivery of other important services. Practices will need the help of CCGs in informing patients of the importance of these changes at this critical time for our nation.

Thank you for your support at this critical time

Yours sincerely



Dr Richard Vautrey,

GPC England chair