



eBulletin Issue 148 April 2020

1. N.A.P.P. Annual Conference and AGM 2020

Unfortunately, due to Coronavirus, the annual conference had to be cancelled. The AGM is currently under review and a way to hold this virtually is being explored.

When we know more, we will update the website, and email all members.

2. Corkill award and PPG Awareness Week 2020

These have been postponed until later in the year, when the current crisis is over, but please keep recording all the work PPGs are doing. We are considering having a specific Coronavirus award, based on how PPGs have worked with their practices to help with the pandemic. More news when we have it.

3. Repeat Prescriptions throughout Coronavirus

Please encourage your members to use On line requests, Electronic repeat dispensary or online repeat ordering. Please ask your members to order their regular medication in good time but encourage them not to over order or stock pile. All pharmacies are currently experiencing a high demand for products and as a result, deliveries are taking considerably longer.

4. Online isolation notes launched – providing proof of coronavirus absence from work.

People unable to work for more than seven days because of coronavirus (COVID-19) can obtain an isolation note through a new online service. Isolation notes will provide employees with evidence for their employers that they have been advised to self-isolate due to coronavirus, either because they have symptoms or they live with someone who has symptoms, and so cannot work. As isolation notes can be obtained without contacting a doctor, this will reduce the pressure on GP surgeries and prevent people needing to leave their homes.

For the first seven days off work, employees can self-certify so they don't need any evidence for their employer. After that, employers may ask for evidence of sickness absence. Where this is related to having symptoms of coronavirus or living with someone who has symptoms, the isolation note can be used to provide evidence of the advice to self-isolate. [More here](#)

5. What is Social Distancing?

Advice on social distancing measures we should all be taking to reduce social interaction between people in order to reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). It is intended for use in situations where people are living in their own homes, with or without additional support from friends, family and carers. [More here](#)

6. What is Shielding? - Advice for people at high risk

Shielding is a measure to protect people who are clinically extremely vulnerable by minimising all interaction between those who are extremely vulnerable and others. We are strongly advising people with serious underlying health conditions (listed below), which put them at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19), to rigorously follow shielding measures in order to keep themselves safe. [More here](#)
Update on the Government's shielding policy and implications for General Practice – [More here](#) (available for members only)

7. Freeing up capacity in general practice

PPGs can encourage their members to make the most sensible use of the practice. For example:

- Think carefully before contacting the practice
- Be clear what is the problem – perhaps write it down beforehand
- Expect to wait before phone is answered
- Practices vary in how they are dealing with inquiries, pass on this information to members.
- Ask practice how PPG can help

8. Alternatives to Face to Face consultations

In response to COVID-19 many practices are using alternatives to face-to-face consultations. A [Video Consultation document](#), by researchers at the University of Oxford, is available on the [RCGP website](#), and on the [BJGP Life blog](#). The RCGP has also produced a '[10 Top Tips](#)' guide to phone consultations. Both documents provide extremely useful advice to help navigate these almost uncharted waters at a time of unprecedented challenge for the health service.

[How do patients and GPs feel about video consultations?](#) Evidence from this scoping review suggests mixed views, but overall video consulting is not viewed as superior to face-to-face consulting.

9. Patient participation in primary care: Why is it important?

A paper written by our Hon President, Dr Patricia Wilkie, clarifying the importance to GPs of involving patients in the wider aspects of the organisation of health care, as well as in their personal care, and demonstrating why GPs need to work with the patients in their practice in order to fulfil aspects of the GP curriculum and revalidation. [More here](#)

10. Working with your Practice

Please tell us how you are currently working with your practice so that this information can be shared.