

LB/cc
21st April 2020

To: All GP Practice Managers
Sent by email

Dear Colleagues

PRACTICE INCOME

The CCGs in Mid and South Essex are committed to supporting practices to get on with the job in hand, without having to be concerned about cashflow, at this extremely difficult and challenging time. Thank you for all that you are doing and will continue to do. The approach below follows the principles being offered to other NHS providers and will apply **1st March 2020 to 31st July 2020** (the support phase). The arrangements may extend beyond this phase subject to national confirmation.

CCG Commissioned Enhanced Service Payments – 2019/20

The CCG has already paid practices for the final month or quarter of 2019/20 in line with previous claims and there was no requirement to submit a claim or invoices for this. Please see attached Appendix which sets out the basis on which these final payments were made.

CCG Commissioned Enhanced Service Payments - 2020/21

The CCG has paid practices on a block basis for the first three months of 2020/21. Practically this means the CCG has paid Q1 for 2020/21, based on the total payments in 2019/20 (including the final payment made). There was no requirement to submit a claim or invoices relating to these payments at this time. Please see attached Appendix which sets out the basis on which these payments will be made.

These steps are aimed at protecting practice income levels against any adverse impact of COVID-19. No new LES schemes will be commissioned through the support phase.

QOF

NHS England have already communicated directly regarding the arrangements for QOF payments and will provide updates as they are available.

Investment and Impact Fund (IIF)

NHS England have deferred implementation of the incentive scheme for the first six months of 2020/21 and the equivalent of £0.27 per weighted patient will be paid directly to the PCNs (this payment now referred to as PCN support payment) on a monthly basis. NHS England have raised the possibility that the incentive scheme will be suspended for the remainder of 2020/21 with transfer of the rest of the year's funding to PCNs.

Expenditure Relating Directly to the Management of Covid-19

Basildon & Brentwood, Thurrock, Mid Essex CCG practices

We understand that practices are incurring additional costs in delivering services at this time. Practices will be aware of guidance published by NHS England on 8th April relating to payment for additional costs incurred over the Bank Holiday weekend and this same guidance confirmed that details of a General Practice COVID support fund would be available soon and stated that additional COVID costs would be considered within this. As these three CCGs are not fully delegated for Primary Care these claims and payments will be dealt with directly by NHS England who will provide more details regarding payment shortly but in the meantime have confirmed that claims can be submitted to their generic finance inbox england.eastfinance-team@nhs.net.

Claims for staffing on the Easter Bank Holiday Friday and Monday should include details of the number and role of staff engaged along with the relevant overtime rate as per that individual's contract of employment. NHS England have informed us that they reserve the right to request evidence of the overtime rate paid if it seems out of line with other claims.

NHS England will review claims for other costs including additional staff costs but unfortunately, at the current time, we do not have the details of exactly which costs will be reimbursed. However, we expect that the cost of additional PPE equipment that has been purchased from recognised medical suppliers in line with national guidance will be reimbursed. There is an expectation that, going forward where possible, practices will use the existing national PPE ordering system and the Clipper when it comes on line to obtain PPE supplies when it is working effectively. There is also an expectation that NHS England will reimburse reasonable additional cleaning materials purchased for deep cleans. Practices should keep evidence of all costs for audit purposes.

We expect that NHS England will limit reimbursement to the net increase in costs incurred as a result of COVID and would encourage you to continue to record all COVID related additional costs, together with evidence, and also any fortuitous cash releasing benefits from ceased or reduced services. Further details will be provided as we receive them.

Southend & CPR

As these two CCGs are fully delegated for Primary Care services claims should be made directly to the CCG via your Primary Care Leads. As funding to reimburse practices for additional costs will be claimed from NHS England by the CCGs we expect the principles to follow those set out above for the non-delegated CCGs.

As set out above one of the main reasons for making up front block payments for CCG commissioned enhanced services is to assist with cashflow but if your practice is facing cashflow issues please discuss with your Primary Care Lead in the first instance.

We will need to undertake a full reconciliation of services received versus payments made later in the financial year. Practices, therefore, are reminded of the need to maintain adequate records to enable this process to be undertaken at the appropriate time.

All of us in your CCG thank you for your continued support and we commit to fully supporting our member practices to the best of our ability through very difficult times.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Barker". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mark Barker
Chief Finance Officer

Cc: Simon Williams
Jenni Speller
Alison Birch
Lee Bushell
Mike Shimmon
Debbie Vick
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