

# Stockport Local Medical Committee

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## December Newsletter

Another year end is approaching and what a year of change in General Practice. I'll take a deep breath and relate to you all, what I think the important issues are for now and 2007. Relationships are built on trust and my main concern at present is that the relationship we have as an LMC with Stockport PCT, appears to be deteriorating weekly.

The first example is *Prescribing Incentive Payments* being frozen for this financial year. Despite significant protestation, progress on release of these monies has been minimal, and I suggest you all write, if you haven't already, to Richard Popplewell, and Michael Greenwood, Chief Executive and Chairman of Stockport PCT respectively, expressing your concerns and requesting Richard Popplewell to meet with individual practices. We as an LMC will continue to raise this issue at every opportunity and will attempt to ensure the freeze does not continue into 2007/8.

Choose and book monies are another area of concern, it appears that Stockport PCT are trying to use our Directed Enhanced Service choose and book monies to fund the PBC incentive payments for ICAT referrals. In other words diverting Nationally agreed choose and book monies to fund the locally agreed PBC incentive scheme which was presented to GPs at the Stockport County presentations as additional resources to fund the considerable workload embarked upon by Stockport GPs to assist Stockport PCT in balancing its books. This is totally inappropriate and at present, results in a disinvestment in General Practice. We are presently seeking clarification on this issue.

We are also aware that some practices have not received all the PBC incentive monies they thought were due to them. I am therefore encouraging all practices to rigorously check the details of their recent PBC payment. Should you require any assistance in this respect or identify any discrepancies please contact Paul Stevens at the LMC. We will be sending the strongest possible message to the PBC Board that such discrepancies will only lead to practices disengaging in the PBC process.

At a time when I am very aware that all our hard work analysing out patient and emergency admissions data, reviewing prescribing and identifying patients for active case management is showing positive results, I am deeply disappointed that the difficulties detailed above are beginning to emerge. I stand by what I said 6 months ago that PBC will have LMC support providing we are adequately rewarded for work undertaken, otherwise we will have to look for another mechanism to deliver PBC.

Premises is another area which is causing great concern, whether it be those practices based in dilapidated Health Centres where proposals for redevelopment are becoming a more and more distant dream or those that are earmarked for the earlier schemes but feel there is a lack of information surrounding the real cost of moving into the premises or those owner occupiers who feel trapped in premises that prevent them delivering today's healthcare. Your LMC is very much aware of your concerns and will continue to represent all practices on premises issues.

I hope the above comments will go some way to reassure all, that your LMC is determined to represent Stockport GPs through 2007. General Practice still represents good value for the monies invested contrary to comments made by certain parts of government and the media and will continue to do so with appropriate continued investment.

May I take this opportunity of wishing you all a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous 2007.

D Gilbert  
Chairman