

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 16 MAY
2006 AT 7.30 PM AT PINWOOD EDUCATION CENTRE,
STEPPING HILL HOSPITAL**

PRESENT:

Dr D Gilbert – Chairman	Dr C Day
Dr R S Gill – Executive Committee	Dr A Gilman
Dr A Ghafoor – Executive Committee	Dr N Hussain
Mr P Stevens – Executive Officer	Dr G Parker
Dr H Azmy	Dr Y D Sharma
Dr G Carter	Mrs V Cording – In Attendance
Dr C Crook	

The Chairman thanked GSK for their kind sponsorship of the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2. MATTERS ARISING

Dr Azmy said that Dr Y D Sharma's name had been missed off the list of attendees at the 21st March 2006 meeting. Mrs Cording said that she realised her mistake after the papers had been circulated and Dr Sharma's name had now been added to the list.

3. LMC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mr Stevens said that clarification of the Constitution was needed to resolve the appointments of the Executive Committee. Following a long discussion it was agreed to write to all practices to let them know what the Committee had agreed and if the practices had any comments to make they should then reply within 14 days.

4. MINOR SURGERY

Concern was expressed regarding a recent letter circulated by Stockport PCT excluding payment if an excision either did not include sutures or involve a scalpel. The committee expressed surprise that the PCT had issued this letter without consulting the LMC. The committee was reminded that it has a statutory right to be consulted by the PCT about the administration of GPs' contracts, and any proposed local interpretation of their Terms of Service under the arrangements set out in the Statement of Financial Entitlements. Clearly, this had not happened.

The Chairman was hopeful that the matter could be resolved amicably. A meeting has been scheduled for the 14th June 2006 with Stockport PCT management and medical advisers to seek a resolution.

It was also agreed that a letter should be sent to all practices outlining Stockport LMC's position on this issue.

5. PRACTICE BASED COMMISSIONING INCENTIVE SCHEME

Following discussion the Chairman expressed his view that Stockport GPs should work collectively in support of PBC over the next few months. Dr Gill said that PBC is probably the only avenue for attracting new monies into our practices in this and future financial years. The alternative, and the implications of overspends will be cuts in services to our patients and possible threats to our income orchestrated by external management accountants.

The Committee formally supported Stockport's PBC Incentive Scheme as it incorporated the Practice Based Commissioning Directed Enhanced Service, and acknowledged the significant work undertaken in PBC within Stockport, offering practices the opportunity to be further rewarded for their PBC efforts. Dr Gill said that a meeting was being held next week to discuss the subject.

6. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE – LMC NOMINATIONS

A letter had been received from Elaine Whittaker, Complaints Manager, Stockport Primary Care Trust asking for LMC nominations of GPs who would participate in the NHS Complaints Procedure. The GPs would provide independent advice to the conciliator prior to or at local resolution meetings when a conciliator has been asked by either party (complaints department or Stockport GP) to be present. There were two vacancies following the resignations of Dr Pal and Dr Wells.

Dr Azmy and Dr Parker agreed to serve on the panel and Mrs Cording said that she would pass the names onto the Complaints Manager.

7. GUIDANCE NOTES ON COLLABORATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

The committee were informed that rates for work under collaborative arrangements have until 2006/7 been set by the DDRB and issued via an NHS circular. However, in their 2006 Report, the DDRB has not recommended collaborative arrangement fees for 2006/7 and seem unlikely to do so in the future, advising doctors to set their own fees for work done under the collaborative arrangements.

The BMA advises doctors that it is their individual decision whether or not to continue carrying out work under the collaborative arrangements based on the rates published for 2005/6. It is also the decision of individual doctors whether to use the 2005/6 fee rates as a reference point and then apply an annual increase based on their own rate.

Competition legislation and the Office of Fair Trading prohibit the BMA, LMCs and Local Negotiating Committees from advising on fees, and it is also illegal for individual doctors or staff to discuss the fees outside their practice. The penalties for breaching this law are severe and can be up to 10% of organisation/practice turnover (not profit).

The BMA is very aware that doctors are the only individuals who can undertake many of the items of work under the collaborative arrangements. Therefore doctors will need to strike a balance in setting their own fee making sure their remuneration levels and overheads are charged on a time basis. The fee levels must be reasonable, transparent and be subject to scrutiny where necessary. The BMA strongly advises that fee agreements should be made in writing.

The Committee agreed that they should publish a handbook on the do's and don'ts on the following topics:- sicknotes, probation services, jury, housing, welfare rights, citizen advice bureau, schools, blue badge scheme and community services.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Stevens said that significant volumes of IM&T Guidance have been issued in recent months regarding the NHS IT Agenda. Copies of all these guides can be found on the website. If any practice has any IT problems they should contact Dr Gilman, Dr Parker or Mr Stevens.

The committee discussed staff pay rises and suggested a cost of living rise of two and a half per cent seemed to be the going rate for 2006/07.

At the request of Dr Gilman it was also agreed to clarify the procedure that the PCT would adopt should a QOF fraud investigation ever be necessary in Stockport. It was agreed that this issue would be raised at an LMC/PCT meeting.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

This will be held on Tuesday 27 June 2006 at 7.30 pm in Lecture Theatre A, Pinewood Education Centre. A hot buffet will be available from 7.00 pm in the Common Room Servery.