



TAYSIDE LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE LTD

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Hot Topic

Use of BMA Safer Workload Guidance and BMA Business Guidance

We are planning to hold an evening event by Teams for GPs and PMs to look at the use of these in greater detail and give Practices confidence around their use. More details to follow.....

Tayside Local Medical Committee Limited does not provide legal or financial advice and thereby excludes all liability howsoever arising in circumstances where any individual, person or entity has suffered any loss or damage arising from the use of information provided by Tayside Local Medical Committee Limited in circumstances where professional legal or financial advice ought reasonably to have been obtained. Tayside Local Medical Committee Limited provides representation, guidance and support to GPs and practices. Tayside Local Medical Committee Limited strongly advises individuals or practices to obtain independent legal/financial advice.



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Sedative Prescribing Requests

Fear of Flying

It's that time of year when patients will be considering holiday plans and so we may be beginning to see requests for something to help patients with a fear of flying start to increase. We thought it useful to re-share our advice from Jan 2024.

The BNF details that Benzodiazepines are contraindicated in phobia and hence a request to prescribe for 'fear of flying' would be contra-indicated.

We have therefore drafted the following guidance that you may wish to share, via your website or a poster in the Practice, to head off any requests you may receive for this.

(Insert Practice name here) does NOT prescribe sedatives for fear of flying. This policy decision has been made by the GP Partners and is adhered to by all prescribers working in the practice. The reasons for this include:

- 1) Diazepam is a sedative, which means it makes you sleepy and more relaxed. If there is an emergency during the flight it may impair your ability to concentrate, follow instructions and react to the situation. This could have serious safety consequences for you and those around you.
- 2) Sedative drugs can make you fall asleep, however when you do sleep it is an unnatural non-REM sleep. This means you won't move around as much as during natural sleep. This can cause you to be at increased risk of developing a blood clot (DVT) in the leg or even the lung. Blood clots are very dangerous and can even prove fatal. This risk is even greater if your flight is greater than four hours.
- 3) Whilst most people find benzodiazepines like diazepam sedating, a small number of people experience agitation and even aggression. They can also cause disinhibition and lead you to behave in a way that you would not normally. This could impact on your safety as well as that of other passengers and could also get you into trouble with the law.
- 4) According to the prescribing guidelines doctors are required to follow (BNF), Benzodiazepines are contraindicated (not allowed) for phobia (fear). Your doctor is taking a significant legal risk by prescribing against these guidelines.
- 5) Diazepam and similar drugs are illegal in a number of countries. They may be confiscated, or you may find yourself in trouble with the police.
- 6) Diazepam stays in your system for quite a while. If your job requires you to submit to random drug testing, you may fail this having taken diazepam.

We appreciate that fear of flying is very real and very frightening. A much better approach is to tackle this properly with a Fear of Flying course run by the airlines and we have listed a number of these below.

Easy Jet www.fearlessflyer.easyjet.com Tel **0203 8131644**

British

Airways www.flyingwithconfidence.com Tel **01252 793250**

Virgin www.flyingwithoutfear.co.uk Tel **01423 714900**

Requests for sedatives for Radiological procedures

We are aware that the 2018 Royal College of Radiologists' guidance [was updated in October 2024](#), and does not mention the use of oral anxiolytics. Midazolam is the sedative of choice and requires specialist assessment and management by departmental staff. We had raised concerns around the requests locally for Diazepam to be prescribed by GPs and believe a local departmental policy is being developed.

IT Issues

Trakcare Vetting Change - Enforce GP Letter

Thank you to all the Practices who contacted us about the letters Practices are receiving when a referral has been vetted or the status changed, which do not contain the department details or Consultant name. This was discussed at a meeting this week with IT and moving forward these should now contain the department / name.

In regard to the letters you are receiving when the GP was not the referrer, or the ones with no status change, the Trakcare team are working on a solution for this, but this may take a bit more work. We have advised that if a long term workable solution cannot be found imminently then this part of the system may have to be turned off meantime.

Labs issue

The issue whereby multiple /non practice bundle results are coming back to practices is also being looked at, and IT are currently working on SOP which will be brought back to the IT group. We have raised this at the highest levels in Tayside as a critical issue that involves data breaches when you have the results going to the wrong practice and have made it clear we are not willing to wait for the new Labs system to fix this, as this has already been delayed.

SCI-Gateway missing dropdown

This is a national issue that occurred when an update was done and some sites were removed that should



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not have been, e.g. Dudhope, TAACT, etc. IT have fixed the ones they are aware of but have asked if Practices could let them know, via Helpdesk, if any problems occur or you are unable to do a referral to a location, and they will sort this out.

Sterilisation costs

We are aware of the challenge with increase prices in costs of sterilisation. Meetings have been held with the Procurement team with a view to not increasing costs. With adjustments to packaging and contents the costs will now be maintained at £3.50+VAT. The pack will contain: 1 x Scissor, straight/curved, 1 x Speculum Cusco 1 x Forceps vulsellum Wilson/tissue Allis. They will remove all additional devices and add them as supplementary packs additional flat rate of £2 per item.

Cancelling of ADHD / Autism referrals

Following a presentation at the GP Sub, and also the Area Clinical Forum, that the service would work collaboratively to mitigate impact and ensure alternate pathways were in place, and that the timescales for changes was around 6 months. We were very disappointed to learn that referral cancellation letters are being sent out, with no alternative service in place, and have raised this, and the breaches in agreed protocol for enacting the changes, at the highest level in NHS Tayside. We note this has also made it into the local press and will keep you updated of any developments.

Tayside LMC Conference

Thank you to the 40 GPs that came along on 04th March for our annual GP Conference. We were delighted to welcome Dr Iain Morrison, Chair SGPC who gave an update on the negotiating teams' aims for the restoration of General Practice funding for patient services and outlined what they feel is needed to achieve this. We have attached a copy of the presentation given by Dr Morrison to this Newsletter. A local update was also given by our Medical Directors.

The AGMs of each Division were also held and the reps for each area confirmed for the year ahead, and details of your local reps can be seen towards the end of this publication under **Contacting the LMC Office**.

GP Sub / LMC Meetings Updates

March GP Sub Meeting - AGM

The AGM is in the main dedicated to the Chair and Medical Directors verbal end of year reports to the

committee and on insuring members are allocated to represent general practice at the various committees and groups we are asked to attend.

Claire Hosie, Planned Care & Cancer Services Manager, NHS Tayside, and Mr Peter Ross, Consultant & Clinical Services Director, Planned Care, NHS Tayside attended to give an update on the changes to patient communications around outpatients and surgical care.

IT update – IT are looking at how to reduce the communications back to practices acknowledging receipt of referrals, to only those from the practice.

March LMC Meeting - AGM

The committee confirmed the reply from Public Health acknowledging the likelihood that the majority of practices will cease to enter childhood vaccination data on behalf of vaccination teams from 1st April 2025 as this is associated with clinical risk, delay in data entry, and a lack of continuing funding for GPs to do this.

Contacting the LMC Office. Can we please ask that the office@taysidelmc.co.uk e-mail address is used to ensure any attachments are easily accessed and queries progressed as quickly as possible. GPs can also raise any issues they have with their Divisional reps, as well as the main LMC office team.

ANGUS – Dr Nico Grunenber, Dr Giles Ledlie, Dr Tara Morley, Dr Andrew Thomson

DUNDEE – Dr Andrew Cowie, Dr Mohamed Elseedawy, Dr Claire Moir, Dr Claire Part, Dr Amy Stewart

P&K – Dr Sarah Carter, Dr Roberta Hewitt, Dr Richard Humble, Dr Alan Smith

TNEF Locum Group – Dr Zahida Din

GP Trainees – Dr Amy Paterson

OOH GPs – Dr Stephen Pegg

TNEF Locum Group

The Locum Group AGM was held on 25th February and new office bearers elected. Alternatives to the current members e-mail system and website access were discussed. It was agreed that quarterly meetings should continue but that training input is not required. The membership fee remains at £60 and is now due for payment.

For anyone interested in joining the group, please contact office@taysidelocumgroup.co.uk for more information



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DocHealth: Email: enquiries@dochealth.org.uk
Website: <https://www.dochealth.org.uk/>

The Cameron Fund:
<https://www.cameronfund.org.uk/> or by
emailing info@cameronfund.org.uk

NHS Tayside Occupational Service:
Email: Tay.occhealth@nhs.scot

NHS Tayside Spiritual Care Services: - further details
of these can be found on the NHS Tayside Intranet

Doctors' Support Network: - a confidential peer
support group for doctors with mental health
concerns -<http://www.dsn.org.uk>

Care First: - is the employee assistant programme in
NHS Tayside and is open to GPs and their staff.

The service is free of charge for you to use, just
call **0808 168 2143** and you can speak to a
professional counsellor or information specialist in
confidence. Care first is available 24 hours a day, 7
days a week, 365 days a year and is accessible by
phone or online -<https://www.carefirst-lifestyle.co.uk>

The National Wellbeing Hub for people working in
Health and Social Care - <https://www.promis.scot/>

Parking availability for Ninewells Meetings

The LMC Offices are a 10-minute walk from Ninewells,
and with the difficulty of trying to find a parking space
at Ninewells, we may be able to offer use of our
parking spaces for GPs attending meeting.
As we have limited spaces available, if you wish to
book one of them, please email or call the office for
further information. These spaces will not be available
if all of the Team are in the Office so pre-booking is
essential.



Dr Andrew Thomson
Chair



Dr Richard Humble
Vice-Chair / Treasurer



Dr Claire Part
Medical Director



Dr Amy Stewart
Medical Director