



Primary Medical Care Policy and Guidance Manual (PGM) refresh

February 2021: Summary of changes document

The PGM was first published as ‘the Policy Book’ in January 2016 to support local commissioners to effectively commission and contract manage primary medical care providers, recognising the advance of co-commissioning policy and full CCG delegation. Where NHS England delegates its functions to CCGs, it still retains overall responsibility and liability for these.

A commitment was made to review and refresh the PGM periodically to ensure it remained fit for purpose and reflected the latest legislation and national direction. The PGM was first refreshed in November 2017 and then again in April 2019 and a third refresh was ready for publication in April 2020 but held back due to the pandemic.

This refresh carries forward the planned changes from April and is aligned with the latest GP contractual changes (1 October 2020), current NHS England and NHS Improvement policies, and feedback from local commissioners on the PGM on areas identified as requiring further guidance. It also includes advice to assist commissioners in their contractual management responsibilities for general practice during the pandemic.

The main changes within this refresh are summarised below:

Executive summary

- Acknowledges pandemic context and provides high level principles of how commissions will apply contractual management responsibilities to support recovery and maintenance of GP services during the pandemic.

Part A: Excellent commissioning and partnership working

- A link to a suite of e-learning modules we have developed with Health Education England to complement the PGM in key areas identified with commissioners as requiring further support – **Chapter 1.1.4**
- An update on the outcome of the CCGs mergers programme, reflecting the current status of CCGs, including CCGs with delegated authority – **Chapter 3.2.1**
- No other significant changes.

Part B: General contract management

- The *Contracts Described* chapter has been updated to highlight the role of the commissioner in maintaining PCN membership – **Chapter 1 (1.2.6)**
- The *Managing Patients List* chapter has been updated to reflect safeguarding concerns where a child or a vulnerable adult is at risk of being removed from the patients' list – **Chapter 3 (3.2.3.7 – 3.3.3.11)**
- The *Temporary Suspension to Patient Registration* chapter has been updated to explain circumstances in which an 'informal' or 'temporary' list closure is not appropriate – **Chapter 5 (5.5.6)**
- The *Special Allocation Scheme* chapter has been updated to clarify the role of the CCG in ensuring that violent patients on the scheme continue to receive healthcare – **Chapter 6 (6.6.6.1; 6.6.2.5 and 6.6.2.8)**
- Additional sub chapter has been added to the *Contract Variation* chapter to strengthen the process for managing Incorporation requests that can establish existing GP partnerships as limited companies. Due to the potential to establish strategically important at scale providers a toolkit is signposted to provide more rigorous assurance of proposals – **Chapter 7 (7.10)**
- The *Practice Closedown (Planned/Scheduled)* chapter has been strengthened to set out the commissioner responsibilities when allocating a practice to a PCN to ensure continuous services to registered patients in a case where **Chapter 7 (7.18) and Chapter 9 (9.8)**
- The chapter on NHS England Procurement Support Contract has been amended to signpost to the APMS Purchasing System, which supports a more streamlined

approach to procuring GP services, including caretaker services – **Chapter 11 (11.5 and 11.4)**

- The *Premises Running Costs and Service Charges* chapter has been updated to ensure that the eligibility criteria and the Finance Model Template are still relevant. Sub chapters on NHS Resolution guidance note on premises costs disputes and PCN Workforce and Estates Guidance have also been added – **Chapter 12 (12.3; 12.6 and 12.7)**
- A new chapter on sub-contracting of clinical services has been added setting out an assurance framework for potentially novel or contentious sub-contracting proposals by GP contractors. While this is a new addition to the PGM, it is a guidance that has previously been circulated to commissioners. Advice on sub-contracting services to Trusts is also included – **Chapter 13**
- No other significant changes.

Part C: When things go wrong

- The chapter on *Death of a Contractor* (excluding single handers – see adverse events) has been separated into two chapters, now **chapters 3 and 5**. It was a drafting error in the current version of the PGM which has now been rectified.
- The *Adverse Event* chapter was previously part of chapter 3.
- No other significant changes.