

FAO:
GP practices
Primary Care Networks
Regional Directors of Primary Care and Public Health
CCG Clinical Leads and Accountable Officers

17th September 2020

PRIMARY CARE NETWORKS: AMENDMENT TO THE NETWORK CONTRACT DIRECTED ENHANCED SERVICE FOR 2020/21

EXPLANATORY NOTE

1. Following discussion and agreement with GPC England, NHS England and NHS Improvement has today published an amendment to the Network Contract Directed Enhanced Service for 2020/21. The amended DES updates the terms of the 2020/21 Network Contract DES, and applies from 1 October 2020 to all practices who are signed up to the DES.
2. The amended DES introduces three substantive changes to the 2020/21 Network Contract DES: flexibility for the clinical lead under the Enhanced Health in Care Homes service requirements to be a non-GP; the introduction of two new reimbursable roles under the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS); and the introduction of an Investment and Impact Fund worth £24.25m. These are described in more detail below. A full list of changes to the Network Contract DES Specification is set out in the Annex to this letter.

Enhanced Health in Care Homes clinical lead

3. As set out in our [note to PCNs on the transition between the COVID-19 support to care homes and the requirements under the Network Contract DES](#), the amended DES has changed the requirement for the clinical lead under the Enhanced Health in Care Homes service to note that – by exception – the clinical lead may be a non-GP clinician with appropriate experience of working with care homes, provided this is agreed by the practices in the PCN, the CCG and the relevant community provider. Although we expect that this role will continue to be held by a GP in the vast majority of cases, we know that some alternative models have been established through the COVID-19 response – for example where the position is held by another member of the practice team, or by staff in community trusts. This amendment has been made to support the continuity of these models, and to support the positive relationships developing between clinical leads and care homes.

New reimbursable roles within the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme

4. [Ed Waller and Nikki Kanani's letter of 11 August](#) highlighted the criticality of PCN recruitment, and our intention to include nursing associates within the ARRS from 1 October to support this. The amended DES delivers on this commitment, with nursing associates reimbursed up to a maximum annual reimbursable amount of £29,135 per FTE (subject to the role meeting the minimum requirements set out in the DES). In addition, to provide further flexibility for PCNs, we are also introducing trainee nursing associates as a separate reimbursable role. Trainee nursing associates will be reimbursed up to a maximum annual amount of £25,671 per FTE (also subject to the role meeting the minimum requirements set out in the DES).
5. The addition of these roles takes the total number of reimbursable roles via the ARRS this year to twelve. We remain committed to introducing mental health practitioners and community paramedics as reimbursable roles in 2021/22, and continue to consider the introduction of advanced nursing roles. As set out in the DES, PCNs should update the National Workforce Reporting System (NWRS) on a monthly basis to support systems to understand how the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme is being used.

Introduction of the Investment and Impact Fund

6. The previous version of the 2020/21 Network Contract DES signaled the postponement of the introduction of the Investment and Impact Fund (IIF) until 1 October. Of the £40.5m funding originally earmarked for the IIF, £16.25m has already been allocated to PCNs through the PCN support funding stream (paid on the basis of a PCN's weighted population at 27p per weighted patient for the six month period to 31 September 2020).
7. This amended DES introduces the remaining £24.25m funding, which will be available for PCNs to earn through the new IIF. The IIF will operate in a similar way to QOF, with each indicator allocated a certain number of points (with the number of points indicating the relative allocation of funds). For 2020/21, each IIF point will be worth £111 and there will be a total of 194 points available to each PCN. Payments to PCNs will be proportional to points earned, with an adjustment for list size and (where relevant) prevalence. There will be a sliding scale of reward for performance between the lower and upper thresholds for each indicator. Thresholds have been set to strike an appropriate balance between rewarding good performance and enabling all PCNs to have the potential to access some IIF funds.

8. The six indicators for 2020/21, with associated points and thresholds, are set out in the table below. They represent key clinical priorities for PCNs in support of the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Indicator description	£m	Points	Lower Threshold (%)	Upper Threshold (%)
% 65+ who received a seasonal flu vaccination	9	72	70%	77%
% on Learning Disability register who received Learning Disability health check	5.875	47	49%	80%
% referred to social prescribing	3.125	25	0.4%	0.8%
% 65+ prescribed NSAID w/o gastro-protective	4	32	43%	30%
% 18+ prescribed oral anticoagulant & anti-platelet w/o gastro-protective	0.75	6	40%	25%
% 18+ prescribed aspirin & another anti-platelet w/o gastro-protective	1.5	12	42%	25%
Total	24.25	194		

9. Further details about each indicator and the calculation of payment are included within the amended DES and the associated IIF Guidance published alongside this document.

Auto-enrolment into the amended DES

10. We recognise the work involved in signing up to the Network Contract DES. Practices are reminded that, since April 2020, new 'auto-enrolment' provisions have been included in the DES which mean that practices and PCNs do not need to submit any further information to their CCG to confirm their acceptance of these revised terms and future years' specifications.
11. If a practice does not wish to accept the revised terms, and wishes to opt out of the Network Contract DES as a result, it must inform its CCG of its decision to opt out by 17th October and the terms of the Network Contract DES will no longer apply to the practice from 18th October. The CCG will work with the remaining practices in the PCN to consider the consequences, including whether the PCN remains viable.

Conclusion

12. PCNs have demonstrated their value in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including through the delivery of support to care homes and through the resilience they have offered to practices with staffing challenges. PCNs will continue to play a critical role in the NHS recovery from the pandemic, including tackling the health inequalities within our society which COVID-19 has vividly

highlighted. The new flexibilities and funding within this amended Network Contract DES will further support PCNs in their vital work.

NHS England and NHS Improvement

Annex

All changes to the Network Contract DES Specification are set out below.

Section	Change
6.2.6A	Addition of wording referencing the two new reimbursable roles
6.3.2A	Addition of wording allowing a PCN to claim reimbursement for the two new roles
6.3.3A and Table 1A	Addition of wording relating to the two new roles
7.2.1.h	Addition of a footnote containing a link to the published guidance on Structured medication Reviews and Medicines Optimisation
7.3.1A	Addition of wording acknowledging that the clinical lead for the Enhanced Health in Care Homes service may by exception be a non-GP clinician with appropriate experience
9.1.5A	Addition of wording clarifying the position on payments where there is a change to the Nominated Payee or a change to the membership of the PCN
9.9A	Addition of wording explaining the IIF
9.10.5	Correction of a section cross-reference
Table 2	Addition of the two new reimbursable roles
9.10.8.c(i)	Addition of wording clarifying the requirement to comply with local payment arrangements and deadlines when claiming workforce related claims
Annex B - B7.2	Correction of reference to "Physiotherapist" to "Physiotherapists"
Annex B – B7.2.i.ii	Correction of "Patient Activation" to lower case
Annex B – B9.3	Correction of reference to "Dieticians" to "Podiatrists"
Annex B – B10.3	Correction of reference to "Dieticians" to "Occupational Therapists"
Annex B – B11	Inclusion of minimum role requirements for Nursing Associate
Annex B – B12	Inclusion of minimum role requirements for Trainee Nursing Associate
Annex C	Addition of a new annex containing details of the calculation of achievement for the IIF
Annex D	Addition of a new annex containing details of the indicators for the IIF