



BMA/GPC Update – Important Information

Following the communication sent out by Calderdale LMC providing an update on the new contract changes from 1st October for Patient Access and Online Consultation, the following information has been provided by the BMA.

October 1st Contract Changes – BMA Essential Guides

GPC England has prepared guidance to assist preparations for the changes to the GP practice contract from 1 October, and will be producing more in the coming days:

GPC England Vote to Enter Dispute

At its September meeting, GPC England voted to re-enter dispute with Government, DHSC, and NHS England from 1 October 2025. Grounds: patient safety, workforce wellbeing, and GP risk. If safeguards are not agreed, the BMA has indicated it may escalate to legal action or a contractor ballot.

BMA press statement on entering dispute: <https://www.bma.org.uk/news-and-opinion/gpc-england-votes-to-enter-dispute>

Video summary by Dr Katie Bramall, Chair GPC England: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3q5vcVqKjk>

BMA campaigning around GP contracts in England: <https://www.bma.org.uk/our-campaigns/gp-campaigns/england/campaigning-around-gp-contracts-in-england>

October 1st Contract Changes

From 1 October, practices must:

- Provide three modes of access: in-person, telephone, and online consultation.
- Keep online non-urgent (routine) requests open 08:00–18:30 Monday–Friday.

The BMA considers this requirement unsafe, as it risks overwhelming practice capacity and increasing clinical risk. BMA advice to mitigate risk:

- Review triage and workflow so urgent and routine requests are clearly separated.
- Consider introducing waiting lists for routine care once capacity is reached.
- Revisit the BMA safe working guidance handbook to set safe limits for consultation volumes and protect staff wellbeing.

Guidance on regulatory changes 2025/26 and compliance with three modes of access:

<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/gp-practices/gp-service-provision/gp-contract-guidance-england>

Guidance on managing patient care safely post-1 October: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/gp-practices/gp-service-provision/safe-working-in-general-practice>

GP Connect – Current and Proposed Changes

Current: GP Connect is widely used to allow external providers (e.g. NHS 111, hospitals) to view GP records and book some appointments. Most practices use this comfortably in read-only form.

Proposed (from October): NHS England intends to mandate GP Connect: Update Record (write access), allowing external clinicians (e.g. 111, pharmacies, hospitals) to write directly into patient records.

BMA concerns:

- Audit trails are insufficient, making it hard to know who entered what.
- Liability risks, with practices potentially accountable for incorrect external data.
- Data quality, with entries that may not follow GP coding standards.
- Workload, as practices may need to check and correct entries.

BMA position: Do not mandate use until safeguards are in place.

Joint GP IT Committee statement on GP Connect: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/gp-practices/gp-service-provision/gp-contract-guidance-england>

Wider Context – 10-Year Health Plan

The BMA considers the 10-Year Health Plan an existential threat to GMS and the independent contractor model.

Risks include:

- Erosion of independent contractor status.
- Expansion of Integrated Health Organisations (IHOs) and Trust-run GP services.
- Unsafe access requirements being locked in.

At the Special Representatives Meeting, motions were passed to oppose the 10-Year Plan as written.

BMA analysis of the 10-Year Health Plan: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/nhs-delivery-and-workforce/nhs-reforms/reforms-to-the-nhs>

Other BMA Updates:

Locum GP pensions: From 1 October, contributions can be submitted via the PCSE portal using GOV.UK Pay, simplifying submissions.

PCSE pensions update: <https://pcse.england.nhs.uk/help/gp-pensions/>

OpenSAFELY: Practices using EMIS/SystemOne must accept the new Data Provision Notice (DPN). This is a legal requirement.

OpenSAFELY guidance: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/gp-practices/gp-service-provision/gp-contract-guidance-england>

GP wellbeing resources: Counselling, peer support, Practitioner Health, Samaritans, Doctors in Distress, Cameron Fund, and RCGP wellbeing resources.

BMA wellbeing services: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/your-wellbeing>

Key Takeaways for Practices

- The BMA is in formal dispute with Government over the October changes.
- Online consultation requirements are unsafe; mitigate risk with triage, waiting lists, and safe working principles.
- GP Connect write access is not ready; practices should not enable it until safeguards are in place.
- The 10-Year Health Plan poses major risks to the GP model; engagement must be critical, not unqualified.
- Use BMA resources for safe working, contractual compliance, and staff wellbeing.

We will continue to update practices as the situation develops and signpost to further BMA guidance when available.