



# Communique

The newsletter of the GPDF  
Issue 1 | April 2019

## Welcome

This is the first edition of our new regular GPDF newsletter, Communique.

One of the clear messages that came back from the extensive research that we have carried out is LMCs want us to improve our communications. You confirmed the GPDF needs to be more transparent and accountable, to deliver better value for money and to support LMCs in a range of their activities.

In this edition, we will update you on a number of initiatives that support those aims including the proposed voluntary quota for this year, a response to your comments about the levels of our reserves, the launch of new LMC Grant Development Scheme, new identity and more.

We've also included details of the speech that I delivered at the recent GPDF funded LMC UK Conference in Belfast and answered some of the questions raised at the conference regarding payments to GPs for representative work.

We would be pleased to get your feedback on Communique and ideas for future editions.



**Dr Douglas (Doug)  
A Moederle-Lumb**  
Executive Chair

## Setting a new voluntary quota and moving on reserve levels

The GPDF Board has listened to LMC concerns regarding the level of the voluntary quota. We have set ourselves a challenging budget for this year, bearing down on costs. This has resulted in us reducing the per capita value for this year by 10%, down from 6 pence to 5.4 pence.

Many of your concerns regarding the level of the quota was related directly to the level of reserves that the GPDF has accumulated over many years.

On reserves we do need to strike a responsible and appropriate balance between understanding the pressures that LMCs face,

whilst retaining our 'firepower' to act on your behalf as needed, and manage the fluctuations in the value of investments particularly on the verge of Brexit.

However, the GPDF Board intends to distribute some of the reserves directly back to LMCs, and we are actively working on the best way to achieve this.

It is my intention to announce further details on the process, timing and the quantum of the distribution in the next few months.



# Addressing some 'thorny' issues

**During the debate on the GPC/GPDF at the LMC Conference there was a passionate exchange of views and concerns about the clarity and transparency of the agreement that the GPDF and the BMA reached. Members of GPC UK and its national committees in England, Scotland and Wales were concerned about being properly remunerated.**

In the spirit of transparency that the GPDF wants to abide by with its members, we are sharing our answers to some of the thorny questions raised at the Conference debate.

More than that, on this occasion and to make it absolutely clear to everyone we have attached a short document to the email with this Newsletter. This shows the 'agreed grand standards' of the transitional agreement we signed with the BMA (the Deed of Grant), to maintain the status quo in the 2018/19 session, while the BMA and GPDF negotiate a longer term agreement. You can read the detail for yourself in the document 'GPDF BMA Agreed Grant Standards 1819'.

## Some context

Prior to July 2018 the GPDF paid for GPC representatives' and negotiators' honoraria and expenses for attending meetings. The BMA was supposed to partially reimburse GPDF for those payments under an agreement signed in 2011.

However, by October 2017, the amount owed by the BMA to the GPDF, extending



back over several years, totalled close to £1,500,000. At the same time, some LMCs had become increasingly unhappy about increases in the voluntary levy or 'quota' and were refusing to pay all or part of it.

Agreeing the BMA's historical liability took months of negotiation, which we finally achieved in January 2018. At the insistence of the BMA, the final settlement involved the BMA taking back sole responsibility for the GPC(UK) and its national committees in England, Scotland and Wales (which is a BMA committee), including payments of honoraria and expenses.

In recognition of the additional burden on GPs who are members of GPC and who take time out of practice to represent their colleagues, the GPDF agreed to make a grant of £1,375,000 to the BMA in order to ensure that the status quo was maintained during the course of the 2018/2019 Session, and that GPC members and the members of the Executive Teams did not suffer financially, all as set out in the Deed of Grant.

The GPDF absolutely recognises the complexity of GPC work in comparison to other branches of practice and the need to promote grassroots GP involvement.

However, to be perfectly clear, GPC activity and payment is in the control of the BMA not the GPDF and if there are questions about the payment of honoraria they must be directed to the BMA.

The GPDF is now working hard to finalise an ongoing agreement with the BMA but the pace of that work has slowed with multiple changes of personnel at the BMA.

Some questions and statements from the LMC Conference debate

**Q: The LMC Conference is not funded by the GPDF as it is part funded by the BMA as well?**

**A:** The GPDF pays for all the LMC Conferences during the year – it is part of our agreement with the BMA. The BMA's involvement concerns the organisation and staffing of the conferences. The BMA also pays expenses for GPC members attending conferences.

**Q: There has not been transparency in the discussions between the GPDF and the BMA.**

**A:** During the process of negotiation both the GPDF and BMA, through Dougy Moederle-Lumb and Andrew Dearden respectively, provided material updates

on the progress of negotiations to the GPC list servers and, throughout 2018, they attended each of GPC England, GPC Scotland and GPC Wales to provide face to face briefings.

**Q: At last year's conference LMC UK, Dougy Moederle-Lumb told us 'everything was sorted and everything is fine'?**

**A:** What was actually said in Dougy's speech at the Liverpool Conference on 9th March 2018:

'I am also pleased to confirm that our discussions with the BMA regarding historical funding issues have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion this year. We are now working towards creating a future working relationship between the BMA and the GPDF with greater clarity regarding funding, responsibility, accountability and responsiveness to the needs of GPs and LMCs. Our aim is to provide greater support to GPs and LMCs in a manner that better reflects the working environment of GPs today and is flexible to their rapidly changing requirements. Several meetings have been held between the BMA and the GPDF. We are both encouraged by the progress achieved to date. As the BMA and GPDF move towards finalising the details of this new arrangement, we will keep all GPs, LMCs and the GPC fully updated with progress and we are hopeful of being to say more shortly.'

**Q: Is all this hiatus to do with making this 10% cut in the voluntary quota for 2019?**

**A:** No, it is not. Although the BMA took back sole responsibility for the costs of the GPC, the GPDF agreed to pay a grant of £1.375m to the BMA to ensure that the status quo pertains during the period to June 2019.

With regard to the quota, the GPDF has set itself a challenging budget, bearing down on various costs, with the result that there will be a 10% reduction in the per capita value for this year's voluntary quota, down from 6 pence to 5.4 pence, and this



is in no way related to payments to those undertaking work for the GPC.

**Q: On 1st July 2018 we had our contract with the GPDF revoked as employees.**

**A:** As far as the GPDF is concerned, this is simply not correct. As the BMA took back full control and responsibility for the GPC on 1 July 2018, the contracts of those employed by the GPDF became the responsibility of the BMA. Moreover, the GPDF met part of the cost for the members of the Executive teams to obtain independent legal advice in relation to this.

**Q: The GPDF thinks it no longer needs to fund GPC members to attend conference.**

**A:** This is simply not correct. As explained earlier, the BMA insisted on having complete control over the costs of the GPC, and it was a BMA requirement to withdraw that funding.

**Q: Agenda committee members are not going to get paid for their work at conference.**

**A:** As you will see from the Deed of Grant, the BMA is obliged to pay the agenda committee members a day's work to recognise the work involved with conference.

A number of other accusations or claims were made during conference that were in part directed towards the GPDF:

- 'It's been chaotic in GPC this year...'
- 'There are many colleagues who are struggling with the transitional year...'
- There are meetings that are no longer funded...'

- 'GPC reps are not funded to attend conference but are still expected to attend...'
- 'Reps have been told that there are meetings that are not funded and then after not attending have been told that they are in actual fact funded...'
- 'Reps have attended meetings and sometimes they get paid and sometimes they don't...'
- 'Senior members have been working for the past nine months without any formal contract...'
- 'National executives have been treated appallingly...'
- 'There is an increasing lack of representation at GPC.'
- 'Policy leads are working in their own time...'
- 'We may be transferred across to the BMA scheme. No payment for the first 12 meetings and £250 per meeting thereafter.'

The GPDF clearly has concerns about all these issues and shares the frustrations of those who have raised them. There should be no reason why GPC members are not being paid this year, as they were paid last year. As we have explained above, the GPDF has provided a grant to the BMA to ensure the status quo is maintained. However, following the GPDF's agreement with the BMA, (which the GPDF entered into in good faith) the resolution of these GPC issues lie firmly with the BMA and further queries directed to them.



# New branding and [www.gpdf.org.uk](http://www.gpdf.org.uk) launched

As part of the improvement in our communications, the GPDF's has developed a simple visual brand and identity to emphasise our corporate purpose and commitment which is to Listen, to Support and to Influence – all in the best interests of LMCs, GPs and General Practice.

If any LMC would like a copy of the new logo and guidance on how to use the new GPDF branding in any joint events or initiatives do contact [lisa@jlral.co.uk](mailto:lisa@jlral.co.uk)

The first phase of a new GPDF website has been launched and is up and running. Please take the opportunity to take a look at it. You'll find a range of clear and transparent processes for applying for support, and details about a number of aspects of the GPDF.

We will continue to build the GPDF's digital presence. In the next few months we will add various forms of library material including the guidance notes on topics such as GDPR, E-Signatures, Fixed Rate Loans and Interest Swaps as well as the updates to the GMS, PMS and SFE Regulations.



A page from our new brand guidelines

Our branding in action!



Our refreshed website





# New LMC Grant Development Fund started



## Join Peer Review Panel

We would like a panel of individuals from LMCs to vet applications to the LMC Grant Development Fund before they come to the GPDF Board. Our aim is to create a Peer Group Advisory Panel made up of individuals from LMCs. If you would like to be considered to join the assessment panel, contact [mail@gpdf.org.uk](mailto:mail@gpdf.org.uk)

**The GPDF has created and launched a new LMC Development Grant Scheme to fund 'projects' over and above what might be considered 'normal LMC business'.**

The scheme will not fund recurring expenditure, nor will it be a subsidy to any LMC that could and should have a higher statutory levy.

It focusses on providing Grants, not Loans to LMCs. Areas that are eligible for a Grant will include:

- Issues of 'widespread' importance or benefit to LMCs where the results, outcomes, findings or experiences are transferable across a number of LMCs.
- Developmental activity across a group or consortium of LMCs. (This could be a regional grouping or across multiple regional LMCs).
- Activity, which when replicated across several LMCs, could increase efficiency or innovation.
- Activity to foster collaboration between LMCs, to strengthen the LMC sector generally.
- Projects over and above the normal business activity undertaken by LMCs.

There will be two opportunities to apply for funding in any 12-month period – in July (for award in October) and then in January of the following year (for award in March).

Look on the GPDF website at [www.gpdf.org.uk](http://www.gpdf.org.uk) for further details and a clear process for application.

## Help us to keep in touch

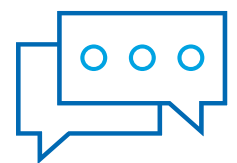
**We are working to update our database with LMC contacts so that we can engage with you more effectively.**

You may have recently received an email already from John Canning, GPDF Operations Director. Thank you to those of you who have already completed the short form. If you haven't yet, please do and if you don't have the email and link let John know on email [doo@gpdf.org.uk](mailto:doo@gpdf.org.uk) and we'll get it to you. We want to make sure we can communicate effectively with all LMC Officers about what we are doing for you and to allow you to take part fully in our activities.

## Further Consultations to come

As part of our new engagement approach, we will be asking for your views on a range of topics throughout the year. We have been very grateful for your input into our recent electronic questionnaire on what National Representation means for LMCs. It undoubtedly helps inform our ongoing discussions with the BMA.

**Thanks also to those who took part in the recent consultation regarding the composition of our Board. Please look out for future consultations as we are very grateful for your input as we continue to evolve**



# Chair of GPDF

## Speech at LMC UK Conference, Weds 10.30 – 20th March, Belfast

**A year ago, the then membership of the Company voted to limit membership of the GPDF to LMC nominees. At conference I set out the Board's vision and plan for the coming months.**

In that year, we have made significant progress on several fronts.

As far as governance is concerned, other than Julia Densem and Vicky Wright, who are the appointed Directors, I can confirm that all of our other Directors are nominees of their LMC.

My intention is to ensure the future structure and efficiency of the Board meets your expectations and we will shortly be seeking your views to aid me with ongoing Board development.

We carried out an extensive piece of research both quantitative and qualitative, backed up by three workshops in the autumn of last year.

The results of this research gave new impetus to my commitment to ensure that the GPDF engages directly with LMCs in order to listen to your views.

You confirmed to us that the Board needs to commit to being more transparent and accountable, to deliver better value for money and to support LMCs in a range of their activities.

That is why the GPDF's new logo emphasises our corporate purpose and commitment which is to Listen, to Support and to Influence – all in the best interests of LMCs, GPs and General Practice.



We've heard what you have said...and I can assure you that the GPDF is acting on what you have told us.

By way of an example, the level of the voluntary levy, or quota as I'll refer to it from now on.

We listened to your concerns and we have set ourselves a challenging budget, bearing down on various costs, with the result that there will be a 10% reduction in the per capita value for this year, down from 6 pence to 5.4 pence.

Many of your concerns regarding the level of the quota were related directly to the level of reserves that the GPDF has accumulated over many years.

As far as the level of reserves is concerned, we need to strike a responsible and appropriate balance between understanding the pressures that LMCs face, whilst retaining our 'firepower' to act on your behalf as needed and as you know the value of investments do fluctuate and with Brexit just around several corners who knows what will happen.

However the Board will distribute some of the reserves directly back to LMCs, and we are actively working on the best way to achieve this.

Now you may ask, when and how much? At this stage, I think it is prudent to say sometime sooner rather than later. I need to ensure there are no obstacles, eg our mem and arts and if they are in the way then I will make sure they are changed. Nevertheless, it is my intention to announce further details on the process and the quantum of the distribution as soon as possible.

Turning now to how we will support LMCs, I want to take this opportunity to announce the launch of the new GPDF website. It's up and running and we have a live version on display at the GPDF exhibition stand. Please take the opportunity to see it and to look at what it contains.

We are keen to add value to what you do and, as you have made clear to us, to provide support to assist in the development and/or to increase the effectiveness of LMCs.

But let me be very clear about one thing. ....we completely understand that you do not want us to interfere with your day to day operations and your interface with the practices and GPs in your area.

Nevertheless, I believe that there are areas where some help from the GPDF could contribute to the value you provide, particularly to enable or to promote collaboration across LMCs and the sharing of good practice.

So, we have created a new LMC Development Grant Scheme to fund 'projects' over and above what might be considered 'normal LMC business'.

To be very clear, the scheme will not fund recurring expenditure, nor will it be a subsidy to any LMC that could and should have a higher statutory levy.

The scheme focusses on providing Grants to LMCs. Areas that are eligible for a Grant will include:

- Issues of 'widespread' importance or benefit to LMCs where the results, outcomes, findings or experiences are transferable across a number of LMCs.
- Developmental activity across a group or consortium of LMCs. (This could be a regional grouping or across multiple regional LMCs).
- Activity, which when replicated across several LMCs, could increase efficiency or innovation.
- Activity to foster collaboration between LMCs, to strengthen the LMC sector generally.

There are further details in the GPDF flyers in your packs and I urge you to visit the new GPDF website at [www.gpdf.org.uk](http://www.gpdf.org.uk) where you will find further details and a clear process for application, and I mean clear having learned from the past. If anything is unclear, then do ask us. I wish to thank Michael Wright and Peter Higgins for giving up some of their LMC time to help me develop this policy.



Working in partnership I want a panel of individuals from LMCs to vet applications before they come to the Board and welcome members coming forward to join this Peer Group Advisory Panel.

We want to make sure, wherever we can, that the GPDF involves LMCs and promotes collaboration so that collectively we share the knowledge and ideas that are circulating amongst our LMC members.

Another area that you have talked to us about is the quality of the GPDF's communications and our transparency as an organisation.

We have set ourselves the challenge of making sure our processes are transparent and our communications to you are clear, direct and unambiguous.

For example, we have updated and clarified the criteria and process for securing funding for legal support which you will find on our new website.



I have mentioned the new website on a couple of occasions, but I should say that this is merely the first phase of building the GPDF's digital presence. In the next few months we will add various forms of library material including the guidance notes on topics such as GDPR, E-Signatures, Fixed Rate Loans and Interest Swaps as well as the updates to the GMS, PMS and SFE Regulations.

You have confirmed that you regard Annual Conferences as an important feature of the medico-political year, and I am therefore delighted that the GPDF is once again funding this Conference. Of course, this would not be possible without the ongoing support of LMCs nationwide, so my thanks to you for that.

As you will have noticed here in Belfast (and indeed at future conferences), the GPDF will have a far more visible presence, adding more clarity to the work that we do on your behalf.

We will continue to build on our process of engagement with all LMCs so the GPDF becomes more closely aligned to your needs. This will include further research and LMC workshops.

Another aspect of our drive to improve engagement is to update our database with LMC contacts. You may have received an email from us last week.

Thank you to those of you who have already completed the short form. If you haven't yet, please do and if you don't have the email and link let us know and we'll get it to you. We want to make sure we can communicate effectively with all LMC Officers about what we are doing for you and to allow you to take part in consultations about the future, which will be conducting during 2019.

However, there is still much to be done to drive forward our programme of transformation and that includes building on the relationship we have with the BMA.

You have confirmed that National Representation is important to you. We want to be absolutely clear what LMCs mean when they refer to National Representation and you will have received a short electronic questionnaire designed to explore this topic. My thanks

to all who have already responded. The real value of this exercise is that it will also help inform our ongoing discussions with the BMA.

We eventually signed the Deed of Grant with the BMA that settled funding for the transitional year to June 2019. This took a long time but I do not apologise for that as it was crucial that we got it right as this will form a solid basis for any ongoing agreement. We now intend to build on the spirit of co-operation that has been created as we must deliver a medium-term agreement providing our political representatives with the reassurance and certainty that they need and expect.

Also in the spirit of collaboration the GPDF has made several offers of support to GPC UK regarding a number of funding issues for example taxation and legal advice re PCNs.

Finally, I am grateful to my fellow Directors for their support over what has been a very challenging year of change. I thank my DOOs John Canning and my CS Hugh Christie for their invaluable contribution. I thank Jim Law and Matthew Moth for working with the GPDF, helping us with our transformation agenda.

Can I also thank all those LMC officers who have worked tirelessly for GPs over the past year and those LMC officers who may be standing down or retiring. I wish you well as you move to pastures new.

In conclusion, thank you LMCs once again for your continuing help and support. My fellow Directors and I will be available throughout the remainder of the Conference to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you Chair for providing me with the opportunity to address Conference.

