Frequently Asked Questions from Practice Managers

For the NHSE-funded Practice Manager Coaching and Mentoring Programme 2019

Beyond Coaching

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DISCLAIMER 4

GENERAL 4

HUMAN RESOURCES 4

How do I develop a skill mix matrix? 4

How do I develop a succession plan? 4

How do I reduce the occurrences where staff feel bullied or threatened by patients? 5

How do I calculate Annual Leave for part-time workforce? 5

Is there a best practice or common approach to establishing Staff Rotas? 5

How can you manage locum rates and 'richer' practices offering significantly higher salaries? 5

What guidance is available for managing staff, including grievance procedures, poor performance, sick absence, disciplinary procedures etc.? 5

FINANCE 6

What guidance is available for help with Accounts/invoices/Open Exeter? 6

What financial elements does a Practice Manager usually have responsibility for? 7

What are the main income streams for Practices and what are the different ways to claim? 7

What is the best way to monitor and improve practice finances? 7

CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC) 7

What guidelines are there to help me understand the expectations that each practice is required to meet for CQC? 7

QUALITY OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK (QOF) 8

Where can I find a guide to QOF? 8

How can I maximise QOF income? 8

ADMINISTRATIVE 8

How do I reduce DNA rates? 8

How do I ensure we are GDPR compliant? 8

What is a best practice system for 'recalling' within practice? 9

Where can I find best practice guidelines for improving patient experience? 9

What is the best way to handle patient complaints? 9

How do I improve care navigation and how do I find out more about this? 9

PRACTICE MANAGER TRAINING/NETWORKS/STAKEHOLDERS 10

What training is available to PMs and how do PMs access this? 10

What are the Practice Manager networks I can tap into? 10

Are there any 'buddy' networks to pair experienced PMs with new ones? 10

Who are the key stakeholders (both internal and external) that Practice Managers need to establish relationships with? 10

OTHER 11

How do I keep up with National guidelines and policies? 11

How do Practice Managers maintain a good knowledge of emerging policies, procedures and requirements from government departments, to feed back into the Practice? 11

How do I find out more about Personalised Care? 11

What should PMs do about the GPFV? 11

What is the role of the CCG and a typical GP Federation? 11

What are the key policies that Practice Managers need to ensure are established within their Practices? 11

Which key performance measures should Practice Managers have a role in monitoring and ensuring the achievement of? 11

What are the key managerial responsibilities of a Practice Manager? 12

Where can I find out more on responsibility for premises? 12

Where can I find out more on ongoing upkeep? 12

Where can I find out more on mergers? 12

APPENDIX 1 13

TOP TIPS GUIDE 15

Most important things PMs need to know about QOF and to maximise QOF income 15

Most important things to think about to improve your practice profit 15

Disclaimer

The companies and websites listed in this document are listed for advice purposes but are not sponsored or in any way endorsed by the authors or Beyond Coaching. There may well be other similar companies and products which are unknown to the authors but are equally as helpful or effective.

These FAQs are based upon work undertaken during 2018/19, but if there are any issues/gaps being identified by Practice Managers as we move into the work of Primary Care Networks and you want to share these with the national team for consideration in any future development of initiatives to support Practice Managers, please email these to england.gpdevelopment@nhs.net.

General

There are at least two websites that are aimed specifically at Practice Managers (PMs); here are two examples:

- Practice Index (https://practiceindex.co.uk/gp)
- First Practice Management (https://www.firstpracticemanagement.co.uk)

Both of these sites have a wealth of information and advice and a whole library of standard documents which can be downloaded and modified. Both sites have an annual subscription fee to access some of the content but it is well worth joining one of them for the policies and procedures libraries which are regularly updated. They also have forums which allow you to ask questions of other PMs.

- Your Local Medical Committee (LMC) is a wealth of information and help for Practice Managers.

Human Resources

How do I develop a skill mix matrix?

- Review what is available on First Practice Management (https://www.firstpracticemanagement.co.uk) or Practice Index (https://practiceindex.co.uk/gp) to give you a helpful starting point.
- Ask local Practice Manager colleagues.
- If you don't have regular meetings with local practices you could start a group and meet once a month. This kind of group can be very supportive and you can share best practice with each other.

How do I develop a succession plan?

- Review what is available on First Practice Management (https://www.firstpracticemanagement.co.uk) or Practice Index (https://practiceindex.co.uk/gp).
- Ask local Practice Manager colleagues.
- Your local LMC may be able to help you with this and other HR questions.

How do I reduce the occurrences where staff feel bullied or threatened by patients?

- Organise Assertiveness Training for appropriate staff.
- Ensure you have a Zero Tolerance policy which is followed.
- Consider any modifications to the reception area and desk which may help.
- Ensure staff are supported by managers and partners.

How do I calculate Annual Leave for part-time workforce?

- Practice Index or First Practice Management have tools for this calculation.
- There is a government tool to help you calculate annual leave for all types of workers (https://www.gov.uk/calculate-your-holiday-entitlement)
- There are a number of companies who specialise in HR advice and support for GP Practices. One is Peninsula (https://www.peninsulagrouplimited.com). You can take out a contract with them to provide you with HR advice and support and, if you have such a contract, they will help you calculate employees' annual leave.

Is there a best practice or common approach to establishing Staff Rotas?

- This is very much practice-dependent. Ask local colleagues for their suggestions and what works in their practices. Involve staff in setting up a rota that suits as many as possible and is fair.

How can you manage locum rates and 'richer' practices offering significantly higher salaries?

There are a number of strands to this:

- Firstly think about the reasons you are using locums. Is there a better way, such as: a salaried GP, an Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) or an Emergency Care Practitioner (ECP)?
- Where do you source your locums? RLocums (https://rlocums.com/) is an online marketplace rather than an agency and is a good place to source locums.
- Do you have any contacts with local practices who may be able to recommend locums or do your GPs know other GPs who are locums?
- It is worth noting the following:
    - Be open about what you expect a locum to do for the money. For example, do you expect them to be on-call, do visits, and do paperwork or none of these.
    - Always be open, friendly and supportive to your locums to make them feel welcome and part of the team.
    - Invite them to practice meetings if appropriate.
    - Make sure you have a 'Locum Pack' which explains how the Practice operates/referral processes/templates and coding.

What guidance is available for managing staff, including grievance procedures, poor performance, sick absence, disciplinary procedures etc.?

There is a great deal of free advice from:

- The BMA (https://www.bma.org.uk) (if you have a GP who is a BMA member).

- The medical defence societies (the MDU, the MDDUS or MPS) if you have a group scheme with them.
- Often you will be able to access free advice through your surgery's insurance policy if it is GP practice-specific (which it should be).
- ACAS (http://www.acas.org.uk) offer a limited amount of free advice.
- You can pay a company for advice on a one-off basis or as a contract. These are some of the companies we are aware of:
    - Peninsula (https://www.peninsulagrouplimited.com/hr-advice-support/) who are a national company with a specialist GP department.
    - Croner (https://croner.co.uk/hr-services/hr-consultancy/) - also a national company.
    - CoLaw (https://www.colaw.co.uk/) Leicestershire-based but may work further afield.
- If you join CIPD (https://www.cipd.co.uk) as an Affiliate Member (£448 for 18 months' membership) you can access resources and a free legal helpline.
- XpertHR (www.xperthr.co.uk) is a commercial resource that HR people use for employment law advice, templates, contracts, etc. They offer a free 7-day trial.

It is worth looking at Clarity GP TeamNet (https://clarity.co.uk/teamnet/gps/) which is a web-based sharing platform which can be used to record sickness and other absences, disciplinary issues, mandatory and other training and to store policies and ensure these have been read. Many practices find it very beneficial and it is useful for CQC visits. GPs can link it to their appraisals if they use Clarity. This can be a good platform to share information with your neighbouring practices/Federations.

There is a Facebook Practice Managers group called "General Practice Managers UK" which is useful for support and hints and tips on all practice management subjects.

Finance

What guidance is available for help with Accounts/invoices/Open Exeter?

- If you use a specific accounting package, courses are likely to be available from the developer. Many practices use Iris GP Accounts (https://iris.co.uk) although you can also use general accounting software such as Sage (https://www.sage.com) or one of the cloud-based systems such as Xero (https://www.xero.com/uk) or Quickbooks (https://quickbooks.intuit.com/uk).
- There may also be online courses available through their help sections.
- Your practice accountant may be able to offer training with the accounts and invoicing.
- There is an online guide to using Open Exeter accessed through (https://nww.openexeter.nhs.uk) (only available through the N3 network).
- Also, if you have a good relationship with other practices, ask them if you can pop over and see how they do it.

What financial elements does a Practice Manager usually have responsibility for?

- A good place to start for this is your job description.
- It will vary depending on the structure of the practice - do you have a Business Manager who is responsible for the finances? How much control do the partners have or are they happy to delegate financial responsibility?

What are the main income streams for Practices and what are the different ways to claim?

- This will vary by area but the main income streams are:
    - Global sum (capitation)
    - QOF
    - Directed Enhanced services
    - Local enhanced services (LES)/Community based services (CBS)
    - Private Income
    - Teaching and training income (if your practice does this)
    - Dispensary income (if your practice has one)
- You should check with your local CCG team and your practice accountant and other local practices.

What is the best way to monitor and improve practice finances?

- Budget properly by doing a cashflow.
- Use a spreadsheet to ensure all money is received and you keep track of all outgoings.
- Make sure nothing is purchased without prior authorisation and staff understand that value for money is expected at all times.
- Ask your practice accountant for advice and how you compare to other practices.
- Join buying groups such as the LMC buying groups to get discounted prices.

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

What guidelines are there to help me understand the expectations that each practice is required to meet for CQC?

- The CQC Website (https://cqc.org.uk/) has a wealth of information and help. Read the reports from other practices and in particular look at the evidence tables the CQC are using during their inspections.
- There is a wealth of advice from Nigel Sparrow, CQC's Senior National GP Advisor, titled: “Nigel's surgery: Tips and mythbusters for GP practices” (https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/gps/nigels-surgery-full-list-tips-mythbusters-latest-update).
- You can invite your local inspector to see you and have a chat or invite them to a local PM meeting.

Quality Outcomes Framework (QOF)

Where can I find a guide to QOF?

- This link will take you to the 18/19 NHS Employer's QOF guide:
- https://www.nhsemployers.org/-/media/Employers/Documents/Primary-care-contracts/QOF/2018-19/2018-19-QOF-guidance-for-stakeholders.pdf
- Also if you drill down in the QOF area of your clinical system it should tell you the wording behind each indicator.

How can I maximise QOF income?

- Monitor QOF throughout the year.
- Have a robust recall system for calling in patients.
- Involve all clinicians and ensure everybody in the practice is aware of what QOF is and how important it is for patients and as a source of income.
- If necessary 'name and shame' clinicians by comparisons to their peers.
- Understand and increase disease prevalence to maximise QOF income. There are companies who will come and help you maximise your prevalence and therefore your income, for example:
    - Qmasters.co.uk (EMIS only) (http://www.qmasters.co.uk/)
    - Insight Solutions IT Services (https://www.insightsol.co.uk)
    - Interface clinical Research (https://www.interface-cs.co.uk/)
- Discuss with your local colleagues.

Administrative

How do I reduce DNA rates?

- Audit your rates so you have a starting point.
- Work out your capacity versus demand.
- Try to stop forward booking for repeat offenders, use text message reminders, get your PPG involved. See the National Association for Patient Participation (https://www.napp.org.uk/) for advice on setting up a group if you don't have one.
- Advertise rates of DNA or attendance in the practice and on your website.

How do I ensure we are GDPR compliant?

- Use the ICO website (https://ico.org.uk) as they have a lot of information and advice.
- Register and complete the mandatory areas of the Data Security and Protection Toolkit (https://www.dsptoolkit.nhs.uk).
- If you have a Data Protection Officer ask them for advice.
- The First Practice Management (https://www.firstpracticemanagement.co.uk) or Practice Index (https://practiceindex.co.uk/gp) websites have a lot of help on this.
- See this guidance on NHS Digital website (https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/looking-after-information/data-security-and-information-governance).

What is a best practice system for 'recalling' within practice?

- Whatever suits your patients and practice; many practices use a birthday recall system where patients are called in in the month of their birthday (which helps patients remember) and some use the month of the patient's medication review.
- It also depends on the skill mix of your nurses and HCAs. If you have nurses who specialise in one area, you will need a system to recall patients to different clinics, but if you have nurses who can see patients for all Long-Term Conditions you would need a different system.
- First Practice Management (https://www.firstpracticemanagement.co.uk) or Practice Index (https://practiceindex.co.uk/gp) are worth looking at for ideas.
- Ask local practices what works for them.

Where can I find best practice guidelines for improving patient experience?

- We are not aware of any guidelines; however, review your results from the GP national survey (https://gp-patient.co.uk/) to see where you are.
- Do your own patient survey to see how it compares to the national one.
- Act on survey findings and do a "You said, We did" poster and publicise the information on your website or patient newsletter to show patients (and CQC) that you are listening and acting.
- Manage patient expectations via your website, social media and local publications.

What is the best way to handle patient complaints?

- Try and diffuse complaints as soon as they arise.
- Ensure staff are well trained.
- Have a robust complaints process in place.
- Be aware of NHS complaints procedure (https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/gp-practices/service-provision/nhs-complaints-procedure).
- Staff training.
- Your LMC may be able to help you with advice on this.
- Make sure you share any learning points from each complaint with the wider practice team. CQC will ask for written evidence that each complaint has been handled correctly and in a timely manner, and that any learning points have been shared and acted upon.

How do I improve care navigation and how do I find out more about this?

- This depends what services are available locally to you.
- Read the GP Forward View (GPFV) document (https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/gpfv.pdf).
- Ask your CCG where your local GPFV money has been allocated and if there is any training related to care navigation.
- Make sure your GPs and wider team are on board.

Practice Manager Training/Networks/Stakeholders

What training is available to PMs and how do PMs access this?

- There are a number of nationally available courses, for example, from First Practice Management/Thornfields (https://www.firstpracticemanagement.co.uk), Practice Managers Association (PMA) (https://practicemanagersuk.org).
- Fairway training (https://www.fairwaytraining.com) run pensions training courses.
- You may have local training available; contact your CCG to ask about this.
- There is e-learning available from companies such as Bluestream (https://www.bluestreamacademy.com) and E-Learning for Healthcare website (https://portal.e-lfh.org.uk).
- The medical defence bodies sometimes run training courses and webinars.

What are the Practice Manager networks I can tap into?

- There is a Facebook Practice Managers' group called "General Practice Managers UK" which is useful for support and hints and tips on all practice management subjects.
- First Practice Management (https://www.firstpracticemanagement.co.uk) and Practice Index (https://practiceindex.co.uk/gp) both have forums.
- There may be local groups available; ask your LMC, Federation (if you have one) and CCG.

Are there any 'buddy' networks to pair experienced PMs with new ones?

- Ask your LMC, CCG or Federation.
- Contact local practices directly; if there isn't one already, consider setting up a locality PM group.
- Your local Health Education England (HEE) (https://www.hee.nhs.uk/) may have something.
- First Practice Management (https://www.firstpracticemanagement.co.uk) has a mentoring programme.

Who are the key stakeholders (both internal and external) that Practice Managers need to establish relationships with?

- Internally:
  - staff, partners, salaried GPs, allied health professionals, your PPG. Realistically the wider team you work with on a day-to-day basis.
- Externally:
  - NHS England, Public Health, your local Federation if you have one, the CCG, PM networks, patients, practice neighbours, accountants, PCSE, NHS Pensions, alternative pension providers such as NEST, defence bodies, insurance companies, suppliers, contractors, locums and locum agencies, solicitors.

Other

How do I keep up with National guidelines and policies?

- Read emails and attend conferences, listen to the news, subscribe and read PM magazines, e.g. Practice Management (http://www.practice-management.org.uk/) or Management in Practice (http://www.managementinpractice.com/).

How do Practice Managers maintain a good knowledge of emerging policies, procedures and requirements from government departments, to feed back into the Practice?

- As above, and also attend local networking meetings run by the CCG, Federations, LMCs or PM groups.

How do I find out more about Personalised Care?

- Have a look on the NHS website (https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/) or contact an organisation such as Health Coaching Academy (https://health-coachingacademy.com/) for training programmes on how to implement this.

What should PMs do about the GPFV?

- Read it (https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/gpfv.pdf) and be aware of it.
- Question your CCG regarding the allocation of this money.

What is the role of the CCG and a typical GP Federation?

- The CCG are the commissioners, i.e. they buy appropriate health services for the local population
- The Federations are groups of local practices joining together to allow them to work at scale and are also sometimes providers.

What are the key policies that Practice Managers need to ensure are established within their Practices?

- See the CQC Evidence table by looking at the results of a recent inspection on the CQC website (https://cqc.org.uk/). These policies will be a good starting point.
- Also, look at all the policies on Practice Management (http://www.practice-management.org.uk/) or Management in Practice (http://www.managementinpractice.com/).

Which key performance measures should Practice Managers have a role in monitoring and ensuring the achievement of?

- A Practice Manager needs to have a strategic overview of the running of the whole practice.
- Be aware of who is doing what and have the evidence to back this up. For example, if your nurses are having meetings, do you have the minutes? If somebody attends a course, ensure they bring in the certificate.
- Evidence is required for your peace of mind but will also form good evidence for CQC inspections.

What are the key managerial responsibilities of a Practice Manager?

- See above.
- Most should be listed in your Job Description.

Where can I find out more on responsibility for premises?

- Find out who owns the building.
- Ask the CCG or LMC for guidance on extending leases, extensions, new premises, section 106 money, notional rent.

Where can I find out more on ongoing upkeep?

- This depends on who owns the building. It may be the partners, or NHS England, or a company such as Assura (https://www.assuraplc.com/) who have developed and own many GP practices.

Where can I find out more on mergers?

- LMC Law (https://lmclaw.co.uk/) and BMA law (http://bmalaw.co.uk/) can help. LMCs are knowledgeable and a great source of support generally for practices.

Appendix 1

List of websites in alphabetical order:

Organisation	Website
Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)	http://www.acas.org.uk
Assura plc	https://www.assuraplc.com/
Bluestream Training	https://www.bluestreamacademy.com/
British Medical Association (BMA)	https://www.bma.org.uk
Calculating Query Reporting Service (CQRS)	https://digital.nhs.uk/services/calculating-quality-reporting-service
Care Quality Commission	https://www.cqc.org.uk
Data Security and Protection Toolkit	https://www.dsptoolkit.nhs.uk
E learning for Health	https://www.e-lfh.org.uk
Fairway Training (Pensions)	https://www.fairwaytraining.com
First Practice Manager	https://www.firstpracticemanagement.co.uk
General Practice Forward View (GPFV)	https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/gpfv.pdf
GP Patient Survey	https://www.gp-patient.co.uk
Health and Safety legislation	http://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation
Health Coaching Academy	https://health-coachingacademy.com/
Health Education England	https://www.hee.nhs.uk/
HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)	https://www.gov.uk/log-in-register-hmrc-online-services
Information Commissioners Organisation (General Data Protection Regulations - GDPR)	https://ico.org.uk
Insight Solutions IT Services	https://www.insightsol.co.uk
Interface Clinical Services	https://www.interface-cs.co.uk
Iris Accounts and Payroll	https://www.iris.co.uk
National Association of Patient Participation (NAPP)	https://www.napp.org.uk
National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)	https://www.nice.org.uk
National Performers List	https://www.performer.england.nhs.uk
NHS Choices (now known as NHS)	https://www.nhs.uk
NHS Digital	https://digital.nhs.uk
NHS Employers	https://www.nhsemployers.org
NHS Pensions	https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk
NHS Prescription Services	https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-prescription-services

Organisation	Website
NHS Complaints	https://www.england.nhs.uk/contact-us/complaint/complaining-to-nhse
Nursing and Midwifery Council	http://www.nmc.org.uk
Open Exeter (only available through N3 network)	https://nww.openexeter.nhs.uk
Personalised Care (NHS England)	https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/
Practice Index Ltd	https://practiceindex.co.uk/gp
Practice Managers Association	https://practicemanagersuk.org
Primary Care Indicators	http://www.primarycareindicators.nhs.uk/
Primary Care Support England	https://pcse.england.nhs.uk
Qmasters (Qof data validation for EMIS users)	http://www.qmasters.co.uk/
Quickbooks Accounting Software	https://quickbooks.intuit.com/uk
Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP)	https://www.rcgp.org.uk
Sage Accounts	https://www.sage.com
Xero Accounting Software	https://www.xero.com/uk
XpertHR	https://www.xperthr.co.uk

Top Tips Guide

Most important things PMs need to know about QOF and to maximise QOF income

1. Understand each of the criteria
2. Monitor progress throughout the year
3. Involve the whole team so all staff understand
4. Code accurately using up-to-date clinical templates to capture data and correct codes
5. Have a good recall system
6. Understand prevalence
7. Understand exception reporting
8. Run auditing searches
9. Have a GP lead for QOF or a GP lead for each area of QOF
10. Have as a regular agenda item at meetings
11. Follow year end procedures to ensure final payments
12. Check expected payments from points achieved match money received using CQRS. See CQRS website for more information on how to use it and contact CCG to get a login

Most important things to think about to improve your practice profit

1. Check bank statements and always do a monthly reconciliation
2. Keep costs down by closely managing expenditure
3. Be aware of overhead costs
4. Use most appropriate staff for the job (left shift)
5. Maximise QOF income
6. Sign up to any additional NHS services
7. Become a teaching and training practice
8. Private work – insist on payment upfront and review private fees annually
9. Robust monitoring system for Subject Access Requests (SAR)*
10. Budget and cash flow
11. Understand payment mechanisms including contractual reimbursements such as locum and maternity payments
12. Payments – check Open Exeter monthly statements to ensure you are being paid what you should be paid.

*you can't charge for these but ensure you know the difference between an insurance report (which you can charge for) and an SAR request.