



# Communique

The newsletter of the GPDF  
Issue 4 | January 2020

## 2020 Quota reduced by 25%

At its meeting in early December the Board of GPDF agreed to set the level of the 2020 Quota rate at 4 pence per registered patient. This represents a significant reduction of 25% compared to the preliminary 2019 level of 5.4 pence per patient, which was itself a reduction of 10% on the 2017 quota. And, of course, the Board approved a rebate of almost £1,000,000 in October last year to reduce the 2019 quota even further, bringing it down to an effective 4 pence per patient.

We are very aware of the comments and views expressed by LMCs to ensure that we deliver value for money, both in terms of the funds we provide to others as well as it relates to our own costs and activity. This reduction is possible following a review of various supplier relationships and it will ensure that more funds are left in the hands of LMCs for local initiatives; the consequence of this initiative is that it will further reduce the accumulated funds held by the Company.

As a Board, the Directors of the GPDF are focussed on providing the very best support we can deliver to LMCs, GPs and general practice.

## Changes in Governance

The Board has responded to comments and, indeed, criticism regarding transparency and accountability, and that extends to the structure and corporate governance of the GPDF.

### The Remuneration Committee

For several years, we have had a Remuneration Committee made up of 2 elected Directors and chaired by one of the appointed, independent Directors. This committee had responsibility for setting the levels of remuneration for both Directors and management. Therefore, in the interest of transparency and accountability the Board has decided to separate the responsibilities of this committee from the oversight role of the Board.

A revitalised committee meeting typically twice a year, will be chaired by an experienced independent, non-medical person. He or she will be supported by two LMC representatives who, in order to avoid any immediate conflict of interest, are not members of the Company (i.e. not nominees or Directors). Once established it is expected that the Company's Annual Report will include a short report by the committee chair on activity during the year.

Recruitment of these three individuals will commence shortly, so if you would like more information on what is planned or you would like to nominate yourself or a colleague for one of the two LMC positions, please contact the Chair of the GPDF. ([chair@gpdf.co.uk](mailto:chair@gpdf.co.uk))

## LMC Development Grant Funding

The purpose of this fund is to support the development and/or increase the effectiveness of LMCs (and therefore contribute to the effective support by LMCs of General Practice and GPs).

This is a fund for 'projects' over and above what might be considered to be 'normal LMC business' and it is not to fund recurring expenditure; the scheme is focussed on providing Grants (not Loans or Investments) to LMCs.

There are two opportunities each year to apply for funding with the next deadline being at the end of this month - January - for award in March.

Collaboration between LMCs would be particularly welcome. All applications are reviewed by a 'Peer Review Group' from LMCs before the final decision whether or not to make an award is made by the Board.

Unfortunately, the several applications for support received in 2019 did not meet the criteria for grant funding. This was due to several reasons and the Board is enlisting support to assist LMCs with future applications. Please see the website for more details ([more info here](#)).

**Applications close at end of January**



# Advance notice of Elections to the GPDF Board in September 2020

The GPDF Board has an ambition to evolve into a broader and more diverse group that more accurately represent the composition of general practice. There will be elections to the Board later this year and we would like to encourage candidates to step forward and consider standing for elections.

There are 3 places on the Board which are linked to geography. LMC nominees who are resident in England, Wales and Scotland respectively, are eligible to vote for a candidate linked to each country, which ensures that members resident in each country have the opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice to sit on the Board; the candidate does not have to be a resident of that country.

*Note: In order to stand for election, individuals must be a nominee of their LMC. So now is the time for LMCs to consider who should be their nominee to GPDF, and if their nominee should stand for election to the Board later this year. Please ensure that the nominee confirms their up to date email address with GPDF's Company Secretary, Hugh Christie ([cosec@gpdf.org.uk](mailto:cosec@gpdf.org.uk)).*

A short document has been created to summarise the responsibilities and reward for being a Board member of the GPDF and it can be accessed on the website via ([more info here](#)).

If there is sufficient interest an informal session could be held in the spring where more information would be available and any questions regarding Board membership can be discussed and answered. If you would like to register interest in attending please email the Company Secretary, Hugh Christie ([cosec@gpdf.org.uk](mailto:cosec@gpdf.org.uk)).

## Dates for your diary

Please take a note of the following dates to ensure you don't miss out:

February: BMA PCN conference (with specific LMC content) – Saturday 8th February. (ICC, Birmingham)

*Note: GPDF has purchased one ticket for each LMC in England for this event.*

March: LMC Secretaries' Conference Thursday 5th March (BMA House, London)

May: UK LMC Conference Wed 6th / Thursday 7th May (Barbican, York)

September: GPDF Annual General Meeting, Friday 11th September (London venue TBA)

(Note – dates for England / Scotland / Wales LMC conferences in the autumn of 2020 have not been announced)

Visit our website  
[www.gpdf.org.uk](http://www.gpdf.org.uk)  
for updates & information

## Contact

We are always trying to ensure we reach as many people within LMCs as possible with information and news, and to invite them to participate in consultations. If you would like to be kept up to date and are not already on the database, please access the registration form for future communication ([more info here](#)).





## Articles of Association

The Articles are the rule book which determines who can be a member, how general meetings are held, and how the Board conducts its business (amongst other things). This is an extremely important document which the Board of GPDF is updating and which has been sent to members for their approval.

Changes to the Articles require a Special Resolution to be passed by 75% of the members of the Company. One of the many changes being recommended, for example, is that the Company name is changed from "General Practitioners Defence Fund Limited" to "GPDF Limited" if only to recognise the fact that everyone refers to the Company by its initials.

The key reasons for introducing the revised Articles and the key changes to the current ones are as follows.

The GPDF's "Objects" (which summarise the purpose of the GPDF) have been rewritten more simply and in more purposeful language, in order to reflect more closely the Company's current operations.

Several changes have been introduced to the composition of the Board, including:

- increasing the number of Independent Directors to allow a greater range of skills and experience to be brought to the Board;
- reducing the total number of directors from 11 to 10 to help streamline decision-making; and
- in order to avoid conflicts of interest, limiting the number of members who sit on any GPC or similar body who can serve as a director of the GPDF.

In order to widen participation in meetings and increase accessibility, new language has been introduced which, with Board approval, could facilitate members attending General Meetings electronically or at a "satellite meeting".

By introducing a table of contents and sub-headings and grouping all common provisions together in a logical order the new Articles are easier to navigate, and they are (where possible) written in plain English so that they are easier to read.

The Chair will write to Members to announce the result of the Special Resolution in due course.

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## New independent Director being recruited

Following the departure of Vicky Wright, a long serving independent member of the Board, the search has begun for a suitable experienced and knowledgeable individual to bring their skills to the Board for the benefit of LMCs and general practice.

The Board has retained a recruitment consultant to conduct a broad search to identify and bring the very best talent to the Board. This new Independent Director will have senior level experience from either the private, public or 3rd sector to compliment and extend the skills mix of the elected members of the Board.

Should you know someone who might be a suitable candidate, please contact the Chair ([chair@gpdf.org.uk](mailto:chair@gpdf.org.uk)).



Vicky Wright



## Why should GPs pay the Levy?

We have created a one-page document to help everyone – GPs, practices and indeed some LMCs – understand why it is important that GPs should continue to pay the ‘voluntary’ levy to support the activity that the GPDF funds.

This sets out clearly what GPDF does and what it funds, and it will hopefully clarify some of the misunderstandings and uncertainty which still exists. You’ll find the document on the website ([more info here](#)).

## Cyber Security



We are all becoming more aware of the threats and potential consequences of deliberate harmful activity from external sources related to computer viruses, malware and even ransoms.

In order to assist LMCs and to offer best practice advice to GPs in their area the GPDF has commissioned industry experts to prepare an advice note on the topic for use by LMCs.

This is now available on the GPDF website ([more info here](#)).

## Joint Review with the BMA

This review is now in the process of detailed scoping and will be conducted jointly by the GPDF and the BMA with close involvement of GPC. This will look at the structure and outputs of each of the GPCs in order to ensure both efficiency and effectiveness. This may result in changes, but we would stress this is not intended to be a ‘money-saving’ exercise but aimed at ensuring the evolution of all GPCs focussed on providing effective representation for ALL GPs across England, Scotland and Wales. Specifically, it will review the areas of the Meldrum report which have not yet been actioned as well as the implications related to the recent Romney report. It is not intended that this review will take a long time or result in a high cost.

We will continue to update you with progress in future Newsletters.

## Message from Norfolk and Waveney LMC

“Norfolk and Waveney LMC applied for GPDF sponsorship to organise a training event on General Practice Estates Regulations for the five East of England LMCs. We found the GPDF Chair and Director of Operations very helpful and timely in their responses, which made the application process quick and straightforward. The East of England LMCs’ would like to thank the GPDF for enabling this event through its sponsorship.” **Naomi Woodhouse, Director of General Practice Contracting & Liaison**

## Contact us

### GPDF engagement

For any matter regarding the role/remit of GPDF or engagement of GPDF with other organisations.

Dougy Moederle-Lumb: Chair of GPDF

[Chair@gpdf.org.uk](mailto:Chair@gpdf.org.uk)

### GPDF policy regarding honoraria payments or expenses payment

For any matter related to GPDF policy regarding honoraria or expenses payment, and issues related to requests for legal support.

John Canning: Director of Operations

[doo@gpdf.org.uk](mailto:doo@gpdf.org.uk)

### GPDF Membership

For any matter related to GPDF Membership, Articles of Association or Governance structure.

Hugh Christie: Company Secretary

[cosec@gpdf.org.uk](mailto:cosec@gpdf.org.uk)