



Highland

Local Medical Committee

Origin and Role of Highland Local Medical Committee

Unlike LMCs in England, Scottish LMCs are not formally recognised by the NHS. AMC (Area Medical Committees), and their GP Subcommittees, are the recognised statutory bodies representing medical practitioners at local level. Principally, the regulations governing AMCs are set out in the NHS (Scotland) Act 1978 (Part 1 Section 9) which establishes local advisory committees to advise health boards on the provision of services. GP subcommittees may advise on GP services but cannot concern themselves with practitioner remuneration and conditions of service. NHS reorganisation in 1974 introduced unitary service arrangements under 15 area health boards. This in turn led to integration of the medical advisory structure which took in the statutory functions of the LMC. The Area Medical Committee was established to represent all doctors working in the Health Board area and the Board was required to consult with the AMC “on such occasions and to such extent as prescribed”. All the functions and powers of the AMC in relation to the GP contract were formally delegated to the elected GP subcommittee. The statutory work previously carried out by the LMC transferred to the GP subcommittee, but the same people retaining the LMC title, continued to exercise the remaining medico-political functions, including matters relating to remuneration and conditions of service which were expressly excluded from the remit of the AMC. HSCPs take both their authority and responsibilities from their parent organisations (Health Boards and Local Authorities) which includes the medical advisory structure and therefore the GP Subcommittee role.

Although the Trade Union and Industrial Relations Act of 1974 led to the BMA being recognised as the Trade Union representing the Medical Profession, LMCs are not Trade Unions.

National Representation

Highland LMC elects 2 members to serve on the BMA Scottish General Practitioners Committee (SGPC) each year to contribute to the development of national Policy.

What we do

As the local elected body representing General Practitioners, the LMC continues to strive to provide support and leadership as a committed partner in the delivery of Primary Care.

GP representatives are elected by their peers on a rotational basis and according to patient population numbers. They meet regularly and work along with the Office bearers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Medical Director, Treasurer, Fifth Person) to address the many areas concerning the delivery of Primary Care in Highland. In Highland, the membership of the Local Medical Committee and GP Subcommittee are made up of the same individuals and are served by the same group of elected Office Bearers.

The GP Subcommittee has two main statutory functions:

- To provide advice on the operation of general medical services;
- To advise the Area Medical Committee. (The general function of the AMC is to advise the Health Board on the provision of NHS services).

The Highland Local Medical Committee deals with matters relating to the remuneration and conditions of service of doctors. Health Boards have a responsibility to consult with LMCs on a number of key issues, including GMS Regulations, Pharmaceutical Regulations, Statement of fees and allowances etc. LMCs have a right to consult with Boards to advise them on a variety of concerns to GPs.

LMCs represent the core values of the profession and strive to ensure the highest standards of equity and fairness; democracy and professionalism. The LMC will represent and advise on all matters concerning GPs as independent contractors providing Primary Care clinical services as professionals.

These may include:

- Administration and development of Contracts and enhanced services
- The Primary-Secondary Care Interface
- NHS Highland complaints procedure and performance issues
- Liaison with secondary care colleagues
- Co-operation with professional bodies: e.g. British Medical Association, Royal College of General Practitioners
- Occupational Health advice
- Signposting to, and support via the GP counseling service
- Liaison with other professions allied to medicine
- Representing local GPs' views nationally to the Scottish General Practitioners' Committee and by submitting proposals to the annual conference of LMCs
- Mediation and Pastoral Care

The activities and views of the BMA's General Practitioners Committee are communicated to the profession through the BMA Website, newsletters, policy documents and general advisory statements.

Highland LMC regards communication with constituent GPs as essential. We do our utmost to inform and listen to GPs, their practice staff and the organisations with whom we all work, in various ways including:

- Website/SharePoint development to provide ease of access to information, news, local and national guidance notes, media coverage, and a document library
- Information bulletins and summaries of national guidance
- Meetings
- Consultation with specific GPs on issues
- Telephone, email and mail

The LMC maintains an extensive network of formal and informal contacts and liaison on behalf of GPs with bodies influencing the planning and delivery of Primary Care. Members of the LMC Committee as elected GP representatives attend a wide range of meetings with colleagues to ensure the voice of General Practice remains influential.

Highland LMC provides help to all GPs, whatever their contractual status, on all matters relating to General Practice (see Pastoral Support Network, also), including:

- GPs' remuneration
- GPs' Terms and conditions of service
- Complaints
- Premises
- Partnership and practice management issues
- Any disputes which may occur between GPs and Primary Care Organisations

Dr Al Miles (Chair)

Dr Paul McMullan (Medical Director)

23rd August 2024