



North & South Essex
Local Medical Committees

Contract Changes from 1 October 2025

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Overview

GPC England has prepared guidance to assist preparations for the changes to the GP practice contract from 1 October 2025, and will be producing more in due course.

Guidance explaining the regulatory changes for 2025/26

GPC England has published guidance to explain the regulatory changes for 2025/26 and considers what these mean for your practice and the patient contact clauses which were imposed in 2023/24. They also set out advice for exactly how to remain compliant in relation to the three modes of access, i.e. walk-in attendance at the practice, contact via telephone, and contact via online consultation. [Read the guidance here.](#)

Guidance on how to manage patient care safely post 1 October 2025

This provides practical advice on [how to manage patient care safely from 1 October](#). It contains advice on reviewing practice's workflow and triaging arrangements; considerations regarding the introduction of waiting lists for routine care; and reminders of how to revisit and use the BMA safe working guidance handbook. [Read the guidance here](#)

Regulatory changes for 2025/26 guidance

This guidance explains the 2025/26 regulatory changes and the patient contact clauses from 2023/24. In this guidance, the BMA provide advice on how to remain compliant in relation to the three modes of access:

- **walk-ins**
- **telephone contact**
- **online consultations**

The guidance reviews the regulatory/contractual changes coming into force from 1st October 2025 regarding patients contacting their practice and the corresponding obligations of practices in England in terms of how they respond.

This is an area of great concern to practices. As such, the guidance has been prepared after extensive internal BMA and external leading Counsel's advice. First highlighted is the contractual changes that were imposed, without GPCE's agreement in 2023, and then an explanation of the additional changes that are coming into force this year, 2025. Also clarified is that the forthcoming changes to the regulations and standard GMS contract/PMS contract do not affect existing legally compliant subcontracting arrangements, but future subcontracting arrangements may need to be updated to incorporate all three stated modes of patient access. At the end of the guidance, frequently asked questions are addressed.

To read this guidance, please click [here](#).

Managing patient care safely from 1 October 2025

This guidance provides practical advice on managing patient care safely, including workflow and triage review; considerations on the waiting lists for routine care; and reminders from the BMA safe working guidance handbook. As part of the government's GMS Contract changes for 2025/26, practices will be contractually required to ensure that patients can access services via online consultation software, throughout core hours (8am-6.30pm), when requesting non-urgent or routine appointments, medication requests and admin requests, e.g. fit notes.

GPCE continues to have ongoing discussions with the DHSC (Department of Health and Social Care), NHSE (NHS England) and online consultation software providers to ensure every practice is supported to safely manage demand and capacity.

In March 2025, these changes were agreed on the proviso of necessary safeguards being secured, given GPC England's significant concerns about these changes and patient and staff safety. NHSE say they have made/will make webinars, case studies, and FAQs available to practices, but these do not go far enough and do not amount to the 'necessary safeguards' agreed in the 2025/26 GP contract negotiations conclusion letter. GPCE strongly advise, therefore, that practices start reviewing their workflow and triaging arrangements. This will ensure that staff can continue to manage patient care safely and that staff wellbeing is not adversely impacted from 1st October 2025.

GPCE officers have repeatedly warned DHSC and NHS England of the significant anxiety that these contractual changes are creating given the lack of necessary safeguards. Their focus is to secure those safeguards.

To read the guidance, please click [here](#).

Safe working in general practice in England

The BMA's **safe working guidance** remains in place and will be updated with contractual changes. Requirements like e-consultations, fit notes, or medication queries do not oblige GPs to offer unlimited capacity that compromises safe patient care.

A reminder of what is available on the BMA website for safe working:

- Safe working guidance handbook ([full version](#))
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- Safe working guidance handbook ([summarised version](#))
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- Template letters for [practice use](#)

Further Information

The below documents provide further information, including a poster that practices may wish to display either in surgery or on your website:

- [GP Connect: Update Record](#)
- [Choosing an online GP consultation platform](#)
- [Setting up your online consultations and appointments](#)
- [Template Letter from GP practices to ICBs regarding 1st October changes to contract on online consultations and or GP Connect](#)
- [General practice: demand and capacity and the importance of communicating operational pressures](#)
- [Waiting lists in general practice](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions on contract changes 1 October 2025 and the dispute](#)
- [Your Practice Charter](#)
- [Online Patient Consultation Poster \(PDF\)](#)



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