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Our Ref: JG/LLPAE

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Dear Mr Koziol

Locum Pharmacist Involved in COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

Thank you for your letter of 10th March 2021 in relation to the rollout and management of the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme and specifically in relation to arrangements for locum pharmacists involved in the delivery of the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. We appreciate that the recent communications did cause some concern and we have further engaged with those affected.

To date we have had an excellent response from a wide range of registered professionals and independent contractors expressing an interest in joining our team to deliver the COVID-19 vaccine across the population of NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, for which we are very grateful. Whilst our programme has recently been impacted by vaccine supply, we have still collectively delivered over 390,000 vaccinations against our target and we do appreciate the support that pharmacists have provided to help with the programme.

As you are aware, following updated guidance from the Scottish Government on 5th March 2021, arrangements regarding community pharmacists have been further clarified. The guidance states that the deployment of locum pharmacists is essential to maintaining the full range of current pharmaceutical care services, such as the dispensing of medicines or the provision of healthcare advice or treatment. To ensure this is the case, the guidance advises that sessional rates can only be offered to the pharmacy contractor, the entity noted within the NHS Board's Pharmaceutical List.

In relation to your specific questions, I hope the following information provides clarity of the position:

1. We have made reference to Scottish Government Letter: Diversifying the COVID-19 Vaccinations Workforce: Terms and Conditions of Employment/Development Addendum dated 5th March 2021. This was issued by the Deputy Director of the Health Workforce Planning and Development Directorate with pay arrangements agreed with Community Pharmacy Scotland.
2. We were not involved in discussions regarding the development of the letter or Addendum and as such cannot comment on what evidence was provided to reach the approach agreed.
3. The letter of the 5th March 2021 confirms that for anyone new joining from this date, the pay arrangements via the pharmacy contractor will apply, and this arrangement has been further clarified. As this was a national decision, any discussion regarding the agreement would take place at this level. There has been no local discussion with the PDA as these have not been collectively agreed and there are no employment contracts in place.

4. Pharmacists will continue to be able to contribute to the COVID-19 vaccination programme. For those engaged post 5th March 2021 this will be through pharmacy contractors, unless individuals wish to directly apply as a vaccinator, at the agreed rates associated with those posts.
5. Following review and further consideration, I can advise that it has been agreed that for those individuals who already have an existing arrangement and agreed Provision of Service Agreement with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, we will continue to honour the contract with those individuals directly at this current time. This will therefore not result in any change to payment arrangements, rates or booking of shifts. For anyone new joining from this date the pay arrangements i.e. via the pharmacy contractor, in the guidance will apply.
6. This has been under significant discussion at Scottish Government level, including input from the Scottish Terms and Conditions Group (STAC) which represents those trade unions and professional organisations affiliated to the STUC and our partnership agreements. Pay rates have been set and agreed in line with national terms and conditions. It was originally intended that a high level of independent contractors be engaged to deliver the vaccination programme to try and alleviate pressures on existing Board workforce, who were working at capacity to respond to the wider COVID and winter challenges. As we proceed with the vaccination programme, our vaccinators will come from a range of existing or new staff.
7. Only pharmacists will be engaged through pharmacy contractor arrangements.
8. The rate has been agreed to allow pharmacy contractors to enter into arrangements with the Health Board to provide support to the programme on a sessional basis. Engagement and rates to locum pharmacists supplied through community pharmacists is a matter for local contractor and locum agreement.

Locally our Pharmacy Team and Human Resources have addressed concerns raised by individuals and pharmacy contractors. Whilst I appreciate all the concerns raised, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde do value the support provided from all our vaccinators and will continue to pay in accordance with any current or future national pay agreements.

I trust that this provides a response to your questions, however, should you have further queries, please do not hesitate to get back in contact with me.

Yours sincerely



Jane Grant
Chief Executive
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde