

British Medical Association  
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TO: All GPs

**General Practitioners  
Committee**

Our Ref: LB/SF/JG

23 November 2009

Dear Colleague

### **Child protection: maintaining your skills**

Following the publication of the Laming Report, we are writing to all NHS GPs on the issue of child protection. Protection of children is a clear duty for all GPs.

There is currently some confusion over what GPs have to do to show that they are trained to undertake their normal child protection role. GPs who are UK-qualified will have undertaken child protection training as part of their training curriculum. No further certification is required, although all GPs have a duty to remain up-to-date with child protection matters. Non-UK trained doctors are likely to be required to demonstrate that they have been appropriately trained in child protection in order to be allowed to join a PCO's performers' list. Thus, additional training and certification may be required for non-UK trained doctors to be able to work as an NHS GP in the UK.

As noted above, all GPs have a duty to remain up-to-date. This is set out in the GMC's *Good Medical Practice*. As a GP's work is likely to include child protection, you must maintain your skills and competence in this area in line with GMC guidance. There are various ways that this can be achieved – for example, by attendance at courses, by distance learning, practice team meetings, etc. To assist GPs and their practice staff (who need to be similarly up-to-date) in this, the English Department of Health will be reminding PCTs of the need to provide protected time for, and access to, training in child protection (which may be in the form of online resources).

We would encourage you to take advantage of this for your own benefit and for the benefit of your patients.

### **Child protection: resourcing and contractual issues**

Child protection work should be resourced by PCOs under the collaborative arrangements. Details of this and the contractual arrangements are available on the BMA website for BMA members at: <http://www.bma.org.uk/employmentandcontracts/fees/medcertsandreports.jsp>. The protection of a child must always take precedence over any resourcing or contractual issues.

Yours faithfully



DR LAURENCE BUCKMAN  
Chairman  
General Practitioners Committee



PROFESSOR STEVE FIELD  
Chairman of Council  
Royal College of General Practitioners

**Chief Executive/Secretary:** Tony Bourne