

Dear Members and Friends,

As the COVID-19 public health restrictions begin to ease, some practices will be as busy as ever dealing with the fallout of the pandemic. Some patients may not have sought medical care for their physical or mental health while restrictions were in place. Many patients may present with increased feelings of isolation, mental health symptoms and addiction. Delays in cancer screening and long waiting lists for specialist care will no doubt add to the GP's workload as we enter the new phase. GPs in some parts of the country will also experience new clusters of COVID-19. Against this background, over the coming weeks, we hope that you can prepare to resume a somewhat "normal" practice, with adaptations.

This Medzine includes an article to help with this journey to a "new normal", along with a checklist to assist practices in covering all bases when resuming normal practice. It also includes updates from the Coroner's Society of Ireland on pronouncement of death and from the HSE in relation to end-of-life decision making. Our Clinical Corner includes reminders on childhood vaccinations and exercising care when assessing children remotely, as well as taking care of your own health.

The Medisec team continues to work remotely and is available 24/7 to help members with anything that arises during this journey of change. Understandably, members may be playing "catch-up" as they may not have had time to deal with issues such as records requests or patient complaints in recent months, and should feel free to contact us if we can help ease the burden.

It is an exciting time for us here in Medisec as we prepare for our own journey with new underwriters, MedPro. From 01 July 2020, any new Medisec members will have their insurance underwritten by MedPro and from 25 November 2020, existing GP members will have their cover transitioned to being underwritten by MedPro on their individual renewal dates. Further information on the new business arrangement with MedPro is available on our new website; www.medisec.ie.

Members may be approached by colleagues as they weigh up their options and we hope members can honestly say they are pleased with the service we provide. If you have any feedback on where we can improve our service or if you would like to suggest topics for us to cover in future Medzines or education programmes, please feel free to email us on info@medisec.ie.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, our Medzine has covered issues affecting GPs on the frontline and assistance from our GP Advisory Panel members has been invaluable. We would like to offer our sincere thanks to the members of the GP Advisory Panel: Dr Mary Davin-Power (chair), Prof Walter Cullen, Dr Mary Gray, Dr Karena Hanley, Prof Andrew Murphy and Dr Ray Walley, who continue to engage with prompt and wise enthusiasm.

Another source of up-to-date, reliable information regarding COVID-19 is the ICGP COVID-19 Question and Answer service which now has almost 100 answered and searchable questions. This is available to any GP who is an ICGP member and / or uses the ICGP Professional Competence Scheme.

The service can be accessed here:

https://www.icgp.ie/go/in_the_practice/clinical_hub/covid_19_coronavirus.

We remind you to look after yourself and your loved ones and remember that we are here to look after you.

Take care,

The Medisec Team



Journey to a 'new normal' Preparing for next stages – post COVID-19 lockdown

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in significant changes to all our daily lives, forcing us to make adaptations to our routines and ways of working. No more so than for general practice which, as a service built on important human interactions, was especially challenging. It is commendable that our members and their staff reacted swiftly to change how they provided a service to their patients. This included partly closing the practice doors in order to help prevent the spread of infection, and offering telephone, video and online appointments as alternatives to face-to-face consultations. It also warranted delaying non-essential and non-urgent tasks to focus resources on the current crisis.

The good news is that our lockdown predicament is changing as the first phase of relaxing COVID-19 restrictions came on 18 May 2020, with further restrictions hopefully to be relaxed in the second phase.

So how does this affect our members and general practice?

[Read More](#)

Further Guidance from the Coroner's Society

Following on from our previous Medzine article on Pronouncement and Certification of Death available [here](#), the Coroner's Society published further guidance on 28 April 2020 with the aim of reducing the demands on GPs in their Medical Practice and on Out of Hours Services during the pandemic emergency only.

[Read more for further information.](#)

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Clinical Corner

Doctors can be Patients too!

It is important that now, after months of crisis management and re-imagining of GP services, GPs look after their own health. Look out for the signs of tiredness and stress, make time for some enjoyable non-medical activities and

Resuming Normal Operations- Checklist for General Practice

At Medisec, we are committed to supporting members and we offer guidance and important actions for you to consider 'post-lockdown'.

make sure not to delay in attending one's own GP for any ailments, the management of which might have been put on the long finger while there was no time to think of anything other than COVID-19.

Medisec would recommend that all our members should in turn have their own GP. One cannot be objective when diagnosing and treating oneself or one's loved ones.

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This checklist is not all-inclusive and we appreciate that a "one-size-fits-all" approach will not cover every practice, but hopefully may provide you with some useful tips as you progress to the next stages of delivering patient care during this pandemic.

Read more to view our suggested checklist.

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Remote Assessment of Children

Children can be difficult to assess at the best of times, even when seen face to face. They communicate differently to adults and often do not yet have the language to express to parents and clinicians what their symptoms are.

Medisec would advise GPs to have a low index of suspicion if not fully satisfied with a remote diagnosis, and to promptly refer to paediatrics or arrange a face to face consultation where there is any margin of doubt.

Read more for further guidance.

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Limitations of Covid 19 antibody tests

Medisec would like to draw members' attention to the limitations of COVID-19 antibody tests which are becoming available for purchase.

Unfortunately, many products come to market with limited validation performed by manufacturers, and when independently evaluated, many CE marked lateral flow assay devices have been found to be unfit for purpose.

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HSE Guidance for all Care Environments

The HSE has recently published guidance for healthcare workers on end of life decision-making during the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidance applies to all care environments where services are provided for and on behalf of the HSE including acute hospitals, the ambulance service, community hospitals, residential care settings / nursing homes, general practice and home care.

Read more for a summary of the main issues.

[Read More](#)

Get in touch

Due to Covid 19, our offices are currently closed; please visit our [website](#) for all our contact details and do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any queries.

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