

# Your committee

## Public health medicine committee

Committees play an important role at the BMA. They represent members' views across branches of practice, specialisms, and professional activities and provide expert views and opinions to shape our strategies and policies.

2018-19

The BMA functions best with the contributions of those members who seek election as representatives. Thank you for making the commitment to help represent your colleagues. In order that elected BMA representatives can work together effectively the following principles are important.

- When you are speaking to or communicating in the broadcast, print or social media as an elected BMA representative, or are identified as such, you should honestly represent the views of the BMA
- When speaking in a personal capacity you should explicitly ask not to be identified as an elected BMA representative
- Committee officers should coordinate media engagements with the press office
- You should declare conflicts of interest to your committee chair/committee secretary as appropriate
- You should uphold the confidentiality of your committee when requested. If in doubt, ask the chair of committee

You should uphold the confidentiality of your committee at all times. As a member of the medical profession and as an elected representative, you should behave in a professional manner at all times. You should always treat patients, colleagues and staff with respect. If you have a concern, raise it straight away with the chair of committee or with the committee secretary.

**In standing for election you agree to uphold these principles.**

## About the committee

The public health medicine committee (PHMC) represents the interest of public health doctors in the UK. The committee has representatives from the various regions of England as well as from the other nations of the UK. It has a subcommittee representing public health trainees and jointly leads the public health medicine consultative committee with the Faculty of Public Health.

You can find out more about the PHMC on the BMA website [bma.org.uk/collective-voice/committees/public-health-medicine-committee](https://www.bma.org.uk/collective-voice/committees/public-health-medicine-committee)

The committee also has a subcommittee representing medical trained in Public Health, the public health medicine registrar subcommittee (PHRS), which had its own regional and national elections and own chair and deputy chair.

## Remit of the committee

The BMA's Articles and Bye-laws state that the committee was established:

*'To deal with all matters affecting public health medicine and public health physicians in the established and training grades. To advise and, when so empowered by the BMA council, to act for the council in matters specifically referred to public health.*

*With the consent of council, to initiate studies and to report with recommendations in matters of medical concern to the community or to the medical profession, including medical education.'*

Responsibility for the PHMC sits within the policy directorate. It is supported by the committee services team.

All committee will have a chair (or co-chairs) and members, and will be supported by designated BMA staff.

## Terms of reference

The body entitled to appoint one or more representatives to the committee shall be entitled to appoint an additional representative to be a member of the committee during any period for which a representative appointed by such body shall hold office as chairman of the committee.

To deal with all matters affecting public health medicine and public health physicians in the established and training grades, and clinical and senior clinical medical officers employed in community health services and family planning doctors formerly employed by the Family Planning Association and transferred to the National Health Service, including matters arising under the National Health Service, Public Health, Local Government or Education Acts (or any Act amending or consolidating the same) or other relevant legislation. The committee shall have power to co-opt up to four additional members without voting rights.

Doctors from each of the British overseas territories and Crown dependencies shall be allocated by PHMC(UK) to an appropriate regional or national constituency.

## Constitution

There are several types of members serving on BMA committees: members representing branch of practice committees, appointed by council or elected by the Representative Body. Most have the right to vote.

There are nine members of the committee elected by and from public health doctors in each of the regions of England. There are also three representatives elected by the public health doctors in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. There are also three representatives elected by the BMA's annual representative meeting held each year at the end of June.

If there are no representatives elected who work in a local authority or for Public Health England, then the committee has the right to co-opt someone to the role.

In addition, there is one representative from each of the following: public health medicine registrars subcommittee (PHMRS); by the board of science, and the other BMA branches of practice who are non-voting. The medical academic staff committee is specifically asked to appoint an academic consultant in public health medicine.

There are also a number of ex officio members who hold positions on the PHMC by virtue of their office within the BMA. They do not have voting rights.

These are:

The committee may co-opt up to three additional members without voting rights. Co-optees can be BMA members or non-members, and are selected on the basis of providing broad experience on public health policy, or to support a specific project.

Any member of the PHMRS may attend a meeting of the committee as an observer provided they are already taking part in other BMA business on the day of the meeting.

- The chairs of the Welsh and Northern Ireland committees or public health medicine
- A representative of public health medicine in Scotland appointed by Scottish council
- The chair of the conference of public health medicine
- The chair (or their representative) of the local negotiating committee of Public Health England
- Members of BMA council in public health medicine and community health if not otherwise elected to the committee
- The chair of the PHMRS

## Your role as a committee member

There are a number of roles on committees with varying responsibilities depending on the position and the work of the committee. To find out more, please see our standard committee role profiles:

[bma.org.uk/collective-voice/committees/joining-a-committee/role-profiles-for-bma-committees](https://bma.org.uk/collective-voice/committees/joining-a-committee/role-profiles-for-bma-committees)

### Code of conduct

Members are required to familiarise themselves with the BMA's constitution as set out in the memorandum and articles of association and bye-laws of the association. The code of conduct provides guidance on expected behaviour and sets out the standards of conduct that support BMA's values in the work it does.

### Our values

Values are at the heart of an organisation and help to distinguish it from others. They guide an organisation's conduct, and its relationship with its stakeholders and the outside world. They guide us in our thinking and our actions, and enable us to set standards of behaviour against which we can assess ourselves. The BMA values underpin policies, objectives, procedures and strategies and provide an anchor and reference point for all things that happen, and express how we look, speak and act.

## Our behaviours

We have taken the BMA's values – expert, leading, challenging, committed and reliable – and with your help, turned them into behaviours to provide clarity on what we expect from each other as we go about our work and provide a consistent approach for discussing behaviour. They describe what we expect of each other, and what we don't, as well as what is considered above and beyond. Our behaviours form part of our culture change to become a better BMA. Our aim is to adopt them in all we do.

It is our responsibility as BMA members to role model and promote positive behaviours and to challenge poor behaviours.

Behaviour principles are:

- **Be professional**
- **Respect others**
- **Be representative**
- **Be kind**
- **Be accountable**

Members must act within the memorandum and articles of the association and bye-laws of the BMA and to promote the success of the association for the benefit of its members, and exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence in all their duties.

**Attendance:** Members should be able to allocate sufficient time to the association to enable them to discharge their responsibilities effectively. Member role profiles provide further detail.

**Personal conduct:** Members are expected to maintain a high standard of personal conduct and to treat staff and other members with respect. In particular, members are required to promote and role model the behaviour principles outlined in this code of conduct. Doctors should display the same duty of care towards one another as they would towards patients and in the workplace.

**Election behaviour:** The BMA can only function with the contributions of those members who seek election as representatives. In order that elected representatives work together effectively, on standing for election, members agree to uphold the principles outlined in this code of conduct. Candidates will abide by electoral bylaws and respect other candidates. Members will not put undue pressure on other members, or staff to favour a particular candidate.

**Members are recommended to read the complete BMA code of conduct.**

## GDPR

The GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) came into force from 25 May 2018. It introduced wide-ranging and significant changes to UK data protection legislation.

The BMA will be open and transparent when processing and using personal information by following 6 principles as set out in the new GDPR/ DPA act:

**Principle 1:** Personal data shall be obtained and processed fairly, lawfully and transparent.

**Principle 2:** Personal data shall be obtained only for the specified and lawful purposes and shall be processed for limited purposes.

**Principle 3:** Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose for which it is obtained.

**Principle 4:** Personal data shall be accurate and kept up to date.

**Principle 5:** Personal data shall not be kept for longer than necessary.

**Principle 6:** Handled in a way that ensures appropriate security, including protection against unlawful or unauthorised processing, access, loss, destruction or damage

The GDPR will increase the penalties for transgressions from a maximum of £500k under the previous law to up to £17m or 4 per cent of turnover, whichever is higher. It strengthens existing requirements, and places greater emphasis on demonstrating compliance, as well as introducing a number of new concepts.

Due to the complex nature of the new regime for data protection laws, the BMA cannot offer comprehensive legal advice on GDPR, but rather it help you navigate the legislation and point you in the right direction for guidance on the questions you may have. For further information please visit the BMA website on the following links:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=uE3aLeBEAxI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uE3aLeBEAxI)

[bma.org.uk/collective-voice/committees/committee-policies/committees-technology-tcs](https://bma.org.uk/collective-voice/committees/committee-policies/committees-technology-tcs)

[bma.org.uk/advice/employment/ethics/confidentiality-and-health-records/general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr](https://bma.org.uk/advice/employment/ethics/confidentiality-and-health-records/general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr)

## Key committee dates

The PHMC meetings for the session will be held on:

- 4 September 2018
- 17 January 2019
- 16 April 2019

The PHMRS meetings for the session will be held on:

- 4 September 2018
- Further dates (tbc)

Meetings are usually held at BMA House and will usually commence at 10.30am and finish by 4.00pm. On days when the committee and subcommittee meet on the same day the subcommittee will meet first and have an earlier start.

## Apologies for absence

It is very important that you advise the secretariat in advance if you are unable to attend a meeting. Please also try and identify a deputy if you can.

## PHMC objectives 2018-19

The committee's key priorities for the session were discussed and agreed at the first meeting of the 2018-19 session.

- Defend pay and terms and conditions of service and highlight it as the unique role of the BMA
  - Provide support for members and public health services in response to Brexit
  - Connect with the Public Health membership of the BMA and public health doctors beyond
  - Ensure that the wider determinants of health remain an over-riding principle of the Committee's and the BMA's consideration of public health policy
  - Improve relations with stakeholders and partner organisations
  - Reflect and encourage the diverse public health medical profession, aiming for gender balance on the committee and at the conference
  - Change the way that the committee does business, aiming to be more participatory and action orientated and upskilling the members of the committee
  - Participate effectively in the BMA's wider public health work
- Learn from one another across the nations and their health systems
  - Support the development and realisation of the BMA strategic policy priorities by providing the public health perspective where appropriate and incorporating relevant priorities (or aspects of them) into the committee's own work
  - Take forward the resolutions from the Public Health Medicine Conference not covered above as PHMC business as usual

## Helping you participate

### Role of committee services

Committee services provides support for all the committees and conferences for which the policy directorate is responsible, including all the branch of practice committees and a wide range of other committees from medical managers to the patient liaison group.

Committee secretaries work directly with the committees and their chairs providing high level support, maintaining an overview of the committee's work and taking forward policy work not covered elsewhere.

Your committee secretary is responsible for:

- helping you develop your work plans, working with policy colleagues to ensure that these plans fit with BMA policy priorities
- commissioning work to support those priorities
- making sure that you have the opportunity to contribute to relevant policy development and
- preparing for meetings making sure that they are effective, run smoothly and that agreed actions are progressed.

Our committee support team undertakes all the associated committee administration, for example preparing agendas and action notes, diary management, room bookings and maintaining committee listservers.

We also have an equality, inclusion and culture team which partly works with our team and partly with professionalism and guidance. Within the committee services function, the purpose of the equality, inclusion and culture team is to ensure the BMA's democratic structures are transparent, fair and increasingly reflective of equality and inclusion principles.

## Key contacts

Committee services within the policy directorate provides support for the medical academic staff committee. Get in touch with members of the unit if you have any questions or queries.

### David Cloke

#### Committee secretary

T: 020 7383 6615

E: [dcloke@bma.org.uk](mailto:dcloke@bma.org.uk)

### Alex Young

#### Committee advice & support officer

T: 020 7383 6380

E: [ayoung@bma.org.uk](mailto:ayoung@bma.org.uk)

### Angela Kyle

#### Head of committee services

T: 0207 383 6842

E: [akyle@bma.org.uk](mailto:akyle@bma.org.uk)

### Kim Fowler

#### Committee support manager

Policy directorate

T: 020 7383 6140

E: [kfowler@bma.org.uk](mailto:kfowler@bma.org.uk)

## Going paperless

We recognise that we have a responsibility to promote and adopt organisational policies that support sustainable practices and improve health. We would be grateful for your support in supporting these environmentally friendly practices. All meeting papers will now be available electronically. Hard copies will be available (and posted out) on request.

## Video conferencing facilities

For some meetings you may find it easier to join via video conference from your home or workplace. Video-conferencing and webcam facilities are available at BMA House, regional centres, and in the Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland offices. For more details about how to connect, see the *In your area* section in your pack. If you would like to video conference into a meeting, please talk to your committee secretariat or staff contact.

## Skype for Business – video conferencing facilities

For some meetings you may find it easier to join via Skype for Business video conference from your home or workplace. Video-conferencing and webcam facilities are available at BMA house, regional centres, and in the Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland offices.

For more details about how to connect, see the In your area section in your pack. If you would like to video conference into a meeting, please talk to your committee secretariat or staff contact.

Skype for Business:

- lets you connect with co-workers or business partners
- start conversations with IM, voice or video calls
- see when your contacts are available online, in a meeting, or presenting
- Skype for Business is industrial- strength security for meetings
- broadcast online to a large audience
- present your screen during meetings or give control to others
- use Skype for Business in other Office programs to chat, call, or join a meeting with a click.

## Childcare

We have a family-friendly fund to help all our members participate fully in current expenses-qualifying activities. We can provide care facilities for children under 14 years and adults and children requiring care. If you require care for a dependent you must request this four weeks before the event or meeting.

For more information or for an application form contact [committeesupport@bma.org.uk](mailto:committeesupport@bma.org.uk).

See [bma.org.uk/about-the-bma/equality-and-diversity/care-guidelines](https://bma.org.uk/about-the-bma/equality-and-diversity/care-guidelines) for the full guidelines and conditions.

### Prayer room

A prayer room is available at BMA House and the national offices. If you would like access to the prayer room please ask your committee secretariat or staff contact who can provide you with further details.

### Catering

Please let us know your dietary requirements and what we can do to make our meeting fully accessible to you. You can email [committeesupport@bma.org.uk](mailto:committeesupport@bma.org.uk).

## How to claim expenses and honoraria

### Expenses

You are eligible to claim expenses incurred when attending committee meetings. This includes costs of travel, subsistence and accommodation. You are eligible to claim expenses incurred when attending committee meetings. This includes costs of travel, subsistence and accommodation. We do however ask that you buy advance tickets whenever possible and make hotel arrangements in advance when it can be lower.

We have a web-based expenses system called Concur, which members use to claim all committee expenditure from. The website can be used on all current web browsers and is also available on most smart phones and tablet devices. Payments are made directly into your bank or building society accounts.

We do not provide mobile telephones or land lines, but if you incur significant call costs on BMA business, you can submit a copy of your itemised phone bill highlighting the costs incurred on our behalf of and we will reimburse you.

Please contact David Cloke at [dcloke@bma.org.uk](mailto:dcloke@bma.org.uk) or on 020 7383 6615 in advance of a meeting to get approval for expenses for other committee related activities, such as attendance at conferences or stakeholder meetings. You can find more information about how to claim expenses on our website.

### **Concur quick reference guide**

[bma.org.uk/connecting-doctors/search?q=concur](https://bma.org.uk/connecting-doctors/search?q=concur)

### **Reimbursement of locum costs**

We will reimburse locum costs on production of receipted invoices, in line with the maximum level which is set annually by the finance committee (currently £550 per day), and where the expense would otherwise be payable by you. Locum reimbursement is available from the first meeting. If you have to pay above the level set for the year by the finance committee, you can make a claim to the remuneration committee at the end of each session showing evidence of your loss by means of receipted invoices from your locums. You'll also need to give details of the work undertaken for us during the period of the claim.

### **Honoraria**

Our members are entitled to claim honoraria for attendance at committee meetings or on business on behalf of the committee (including participation by video or telephone conference).

An honorarium is only payable to members who have completed twelve meeting days without payment and will not be eligible to claim an honorarium until their thirteenth attendance. This restriction underlines the fact that members are not employed by us. The rate of the honorarium will continue to be set annually by the finance committee (currently £250 per day).

You should ensure that you indicate on the meeting attendance form that you wish to claim an honorarium for that meeting. Payments will be made directly into your bank or building society accounts. You can find more information about how to claim honoraria on our website.

### **BMA listserver guidance and terms and conditions of use**

Each BMA committee has a listserver, an email function that distributes an email to each contact registered with it. Examples of what is appropriate to use the listserver for include circulating documents or drafts for comments, while inappropriate use would include complaints about services to members or the actions of BMA departments. In cases where the listserver is judged to have been used inappropriately the committee chair has the right to remove access to the listserver.

### **BMA committee expenses and honoraria business rules**

You can claim back expenses you may incur in order to attend BMA committee meetings. You are entitled to claim up to £35 for dinner expenses and up to £205 for accommodation, per night. You can also reclaim locum costs at a limit of £550 per day.

Honoraria payments are payments made by the BMA to members for their voluntary services. You qualify for honoraria payments for each BMA meeting you attend once you have attended 12 meetings in a session. Payments are £250 per day, and you can claim by making sure that you sign and tick the relevant column on the committee attendance sheet from your thirteenth meeting onwards.

### **Preferential hotel rates**

We have negotiated special discounts at hotels near regional headquarters in London, Scotland and Northern Ireland for use by BMA members, BMA and BMJ staff. You can see the list of hotels available for each region and details on how to book on the BMA website.

## Key links and other useful information

### Committee webpages

[bma.org.uk/about-the-bma/how-we-work/negotiating-committees/public-health-medicincommittee](https://bma.org.uk/about-the-bma/how-we-work/negotiating-committees/public-health-medicincommittee)

[bma.org.uk/how-we-work-negotiatingcommittees/public-health-medicine-committee](https://bma.org.uk/how-we-work-negotiatingcommittees/public-health-medicine-committee)

### Listserver addresses

[phmc-l@listserv.bma.org.uk](mailto:phmc-l@listserv.bma.org.uk)

[phregsub-l@listserv.bma.org.uk](mailto:phregsub-l@listserv.bma.org.uk)

## Key policies

### Dignity at work policy

We try to ensure that all members of staff have a safe, healthy and fair working environment. We do not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind. Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, unfairly criticise or injure the recipient.

Harassment includes unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic, conduct of a sexual nature, or less favourable treatment for rejecting or submitting to unwanted conduct. You can read further details online, including what to do if a complaint is made against you and contact details for confidential support.

## Defamation statement

There are two types of defamation – libel and slander. Libel is the publication in permanent form of a defamatory statement, such as written form and electronic communications, whereas slander is its publication in transitory form, such as spoken, unrecorded word. Defamation works in the same way online, and website hosts can also be held responsible for hosting defamatory statements. When making any reference to an individual or organisation the BMA legal department should be consulted.

## Conflict of interest

### What is a conflict of interest?

A conflict of interest can be defined as a 'set of circumstances that creates a risk that an individual's ability to apply objective judgement or act in one role is, or could be, impaired or influenced by a secondary interest.' (National Audit Office 'Conflicts of interest', 27 January 2015).

Conflicts of interests occur where a person acting in a representative capacity (in this case, elected and appointed members, BMA directors and representatives<sup>1</sup> (hereafter referred to in the collective 'member/s'), could be unfairly influenced by financial or other commitments into failing to represent his or her constituency adequately, or adequately discharge their responsibilities in their appointed position.

It is appropriate, therefore, that there is openness and transparency about other commitments that Members may hold. By ensuring that any potential conflicts of interest are disclosed and known to others, they are less likely to influence debates/votes in meetings etc.

The information provided by Members will be processed in accordance with data protection

principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. Data will be processed only for the purposes set out in this policy and not for any other purpose.

### **What type of information should I declare?**

All Members must complete and return to the committee secretary a 'Declaration of Interest' form as soon as possible. Members will be responsible for notifying any changes in their registrable interests within fourteen (14) days of the change occurring to ensure that the register is kept updated.

Some guidance on the type of information which Members should consider declaring as potential conflicts of interest is set out below. It is important to note that this list is not exhaustive and it is impossible to list every potential situation or circumstance that could give rise to a conflict of interests. Members should therefore use their judgment to decide whether any of their interests should be disclosed.

**Directorships and committee appointments:** Both paid and unpaid directorships (including non-executive directors or senior employees) of any public or private company or other body, together with any roles or positions with other committees.

**Alternative trade union membership external to the BMA:** any membership of another trade union must be disclosed.

**Other remunerated work:** Any paid employment or other sources of income outside their normal medical work. Examples might be paid consultancy or advisory positions with government departments, pharmaceutical companies or the medical press, articles sold to the paramedical press, or remunerated speaking engagements. Also included should be work for companies active in other healthcare fields, NHS Trusts, health authorities, any NHS commissioning body or health boards and endorsements or appointments which could be used by other organisations for marketing purposes.

**Gifts, benefits and hospitality:** This includes any substantial gift or material advantage received by a member which in any way relates to his/her membership of BMA committees. This would include trips or visits arising out of membership, where the cost has not been wholly borne by the member or the BMA. Gifts of less than £500 in value and other benefits of less than £500 in value would be exempt, as would events to which all members are invited.

**Shareholdings or other positions:** Declaration of the name of any public or private company (including any not-for-profit), business, partnership or consultancy active in the field of healthcare or certain other sectors where a conflict of interest might arise (eg retail financial services, STM publishing) in which the member holds significant shareholdings, interests or control. Significant in the context of shareholdings is defined as either (a) greater than 1 per cent of the issued share capital of the company or body, or (b) less than 1 per cent of the issued share capital but more than £25,000.

**Indirect social/business relationships and family interests:** These would include any close association with an individual who has a financial interest, a non-financial professional interest or a non-financial personal interest (and any other interests) of close family members/friends/business partners that might be considered relevant to an individual's position as a member of any BMA committee.

Appointments which could lead to a commercial conflict of interests.

Potential conflicts arising from the possession of confidential information.

**Miscellaneous and unremunerated interests:**

This includes other interests which do not fall clearly within any of the above categories, for example, an active role within a political party, membership of societies such as the Freemasons or of other organisations. Membership of, or work for, other bodies such as charities or trusts which could possibly influence a member's position with regard to his/her BMA associated activities should also be included, as well as membership of UK Governments or Department of Health committees/working groups (or their equivalents in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland) on which the member is not a designated BMA representative.

**Members are recommended to read the complete BMA conflicts of interest policy.****Internet postings**

There is a common misconception that because of the informal and accessible nature of the Internet, different rules apply. The position is, quite simply, that the author of material posted over the Internet is every bit as liable in defamation as the author of off-line material.

Publication of defamatory material takes place once it has been posted on the Internet. It is not necessary for an aggrieved person to prove that anyone has actually read the material. There is the added danger that the material can be accessed anywhere in the world enabling anybody who is aggrieved to sue in that country as well as here.

Website hosts may also be liable, along with the author, for publishing defamatory material if they have been made aware of its presence on a website and have failed to remove it within a reasonable period of time. People who hide behind anonymous postings will find that the website hosts can be required to disclose the identity of the author. If in doubt the BMA's Legal Department or other professional lawyers should be contacted for advice.

### **Electronic communications**

Under the current Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA), which has been replaced by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018), data subjects are entitled to request the disclosure of information held on them by the BMA. The DPA, GDPR and DPA 2018 extends not only to electronic files (including external and internal email correspondence and including activity tracking) but to manual files as well. Subject to exemptions, the BMA is legally obliged to provide the information requested. To avoid the risk of a claim for defamation, it is extremely important that all recorded information relating to individuals is accurately and properly expressed. Anything which could be regarded as offensive, insulting and defamatory must be avoided unless approved by the BMA's Legal Department or other professional lawyers.

The best practical advice is that any reference to an individual or an organisation should be made in measured terms after a careful appraisal of the evidence available with legal advice being sought where appropriate. If this advice is followed there should be no difficulties with respect to defamation.

### **Anti-corruption and anti-bribery policy**

We take a zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption, and do not make or accept facilitation payments, also known as 'kickbacks', of any kind in return for a business advantage. Corruption is dishonest and fraudulent conduct, which often involves bribery. Bribery is the inducement or reward offered, promised or provided in order to gain any commercial, contractual, regulatory or personal advantage.

### **Time off for trade union duties and activities**

Employees who are representatives of a recognised trade union have the legal right to be permitted a reasonable amount of paid time off work to enable them to carry out trade union duties. The code of practice for trade union duties is different in Northern Ireland than the rest of the UK. Further details, including a list of key documents that you may need to secure paid time off work, are available online.

### **Whistleblowing guidance**

Whistleblowing is a term applied to a situation where an employee, former employee or member of an organisation raises concerns to people who have the power and presumed willingness to take corrective action. You are protected in law from harassment and bullying when you raise a concern, and we can support you in addition to local support structures. A more detailed guide to whistleblowing, including case studies, is available online.

### **Equal opportunities policy**

We are committed to equality in the provision of services to our members and stakeholders. This ensures that all members, those applying for membership, and other service users will receive the highest possible standards of service from us, irrespective of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, civil partnership status, age, disability, chronic illness, religion or belief. You can read further details on our equal opportunities policy online.

### **Co-chair guidelines**

Co-chairing of committees can be an effective way of sharing a heavy workload and harnessing the strengths and expertise of two people. In the event of a co-chairship both chairs should only attend committee meetings and negotiation meetings of the committee they are chairing. Attendance at other committees, external meetings and conferences, both internal and external, should be shared unless they sufficiently important to merit both chairs. You can read more detailed guidance on co-chairship online.

### **Care guidelines for BMA members**

We can provide care for under 5s, 5-14 year olds, and dependants (adults and 14-18 year olds requiring care) through the BMA family friendly fund. With a minimum of four weeks' notice care can be provided for approved BMA meetings, either at BMA House, or elsewhere to minimise disruption. In order to apply for care you must complete a copy of the care requirements form, which will be available from committee staff or the BMA conference unit.

### **Baby friendly policy**

Breastfeeding is supported at BMA House and other BMA offices, including in the public areas of BMA House and during meetings. There are also private areas available that include appropriate facilities that you are able to request. Additional breaks are also available during meetings if you are breastfeeding.

**Public health medicine committee**  
British Medical Association, BMA House,  
Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP  
[bma.org.uk](http://bma.org.uk)