

# Strawberry Hill Medical Centre Patient Group Newsletter February 2023

## Making an Appointment & Face-to-Face Consultations

Feedback from patients told us that face-to-face consultations were generally preferred, and National advice supports this. Additionally, the form requests were causing unnecessary paperwork and impacting on GP time for F2F consultations. For these reasons the surgery returned to telephone booking for appointments. Reception are trained to direct the patient to the most suitable clinician or help. Urgent on-the-day short appointments are available throughout the day.

Routine 10 minute or longer Appointments are currently booking three weeks ahead although these are drip released daily so each day there is additional availability over the following three days.



The GP's are less stressed as they have a planned day even though they have more patient contacts than recommended on each day.

Please see our Satisfaction Survey on the website.

## Number of Calls

November - answered 7082 calls, dialled 4279 over 22 working days. Average 321 answered and 195 made each day. Therefore, 32% of our called, in November alone. This is answered calls and excludes abandoned or missed calls.

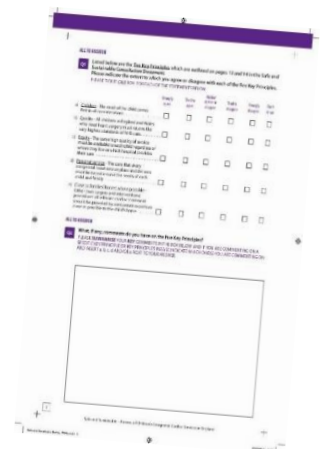
## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A GP

- 11 routine face-to-face consultations
- 10 telephone appointments
- 9 urgent face-to-face
- 5 email clinical responses direct to patients (TOTAL 34 patient contacts) The guidance is 25 - 28 patient contacts a day depending on source.
- Additional patient contacts where care home and home visits requested.
- 18 clinical admin queries; test results; photos sent in for advice; urine dip tests.
- Hospital referrals; completing the patient record; repeat prescription requests; responding to letters from hospital and making any meds changes, requests, or diagnosis (around 20 a day per GP); receiving and looking at test results and making of clinical decisions. Mentoring and debriefing non-GP clinical staff.

## Satisfaction Survey

As part of the aims of the Patient Participation Group to "assist the Practice in continuing to improve provision of healthcare" the PPG created and circulated a questionnaire for the Patients in October and November 2022.

The questionnaire was circulated by hand, in paper in the Surgery, and as an automatic TEXT to every Patient who attended the Surgery during that period.



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Thank you to everyone who participated; your contributions will help the Surgery to continue to deliver healthcare in a way that is most beneficial to us, the Patients.

The full questionnaire results are available on the Strawberry Hill web site.

## Satisfaction Summary

- We received sufficient replies to make the questionnaire statistically valid
- The demographics of the respondents broadly matched the demographics of the Surgery, in age, gender, and race
- Overall SHMC was as good as, or better, in the various measures than the national picture that is now being reported (e.g. The Times Health Commission data)
- The new BOOKING PROCESS was broadly welcomed, and resulted in about 80% of the respondents marking it ACCEPTABLE or better
- SATISFACTION with medical consultations was also uniformly high at around 75%, irrespective of the particular medical practitioner that was seen (own GP, other GP, other medic)
- Satisfaction with SHMC overall was also above the national data, but at 47% the national picture is not great

The Patient Group would like to thank everyone who contributed to this survey, and we would love to get any feedback on it, particularly on how we might circulate it better next time to get a broader sample of the patient population

## The NHS App and Your NHS Records



Did you know that your GP records are available for you to see on the NHS app?

To do this you need to request access via the surgery. But please be patient as the data has to be put in manually by your GP so it will take time.

This also means that your records can be seen at hospital appointments so that information and results can be seen quickly. However, if you have a consultation or treatment through the NHS but in a Private Hospital access won't allow this yet.

The system also allows your data to be used for research, for example to track the incidence of various diseases such as diabetes, COVID, etc. If you do not want your data to be used in this way you can opt out online.

## Diabetes – It's not just sugar!

In recent years there have been big developments in the approach to care of Diabetes. After the pandemic we are keen to get our diabetes screening and recall programmes back on track to optimise care for our patients.

Diabetes can have effects on your eyes, heart, kidneys, brain and blood flow to your legs over time if not well controlled. The good news is that keeping your sugar, cholesterol and blood pressure under control can protect against future complications to these organs, so we are keen to diagnose and treat diabetes as early as possible.



Sometimes people have much milder symptoms such as loss of energy or they recognise they have a family history of diabetes which means they might be more likely to develop it themselves. If any of these things apply to you, please get in touch with your doctor to arrange an appropriate test.

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We hold registers for people with a diagnosis of type 1 or type 2 diabetes as well as people who are found to have PRE-diabetes.

PRE-diabetes means your sugar levels are not yet at diabetic range, but are high enough to put you at risk of developing diabetes in the future.

We are very keen to prevent progression so if we pick up PRE-diabetes, we will offer advice on diet and lifestyle changes and will call you every year for a test to pick up progression to diabetes as early as possible.

If we know you have type 1 or 2 diabetes, you will be invited in to the practice for your annual MOT as well as being called for annual eye screening - this is different from an eye test you have at the opticians. It looks specifically for changes associated with diabetes so you can be referred for treatment as early as possible - please attend if you are invited! Your MOT will involve a blood test as well as some physical checks and a targeted discussion about how we can offer you the best care.

Do you know about diabetes education courses? They are free to access and help you to understand and monitor your targets. Ask your doctor or diabetes nurse when you next see them.

## Big news!

*We will soon be able to prescribe continuous glucose monitors to people with type 1 diabetes. These are plastic discs with a tiny needle stuck onto your arm. You scan them with your phone, and they give an instant sugar reading. We will discuss this at your annual review if you are interested*

Treatments for diabetes have improved dramatically over the last 10 years. We now look more at diet and have options for many more types of oral medication that may have health benefits beyond your diabetes! Injectable therapies have also transformed to be much more user friendly so please don't be scared to come forward to explore your options.

There are lots of good websites out there with excellent information for diabetic patients, here are a few:

[What is diabetes? | Getting to know the basics | Diabetes UK](#)

For Type 2 Diabetics [Healthy Living](#)

For low carb approaches [Freshwell Low Carb Project - Real Food, Low Carb, Good Health \(lowcarbfresh;well.co.uk\)](#)

You may even be directed to some new education if you would like to try a fresh look at diet and lifestyle changes - some people have been able to reverse their diabetes with really targeted diet changes.

## Changes

Dr Norman has retired and her patients are temporarily registered with another GP. Once Dr Chacksfield joins us in July/August, he will take over as the named GP for these patients. Dr Chacksfield has been working in gynaecology, A&E and then another GP surgery so he will be a great asset to our Partnership team.

Dr Waldock starts in May. The plan (which may change) is that Dr Waldock will be the GP for patients in the new development near Vodafone and the Bayer flats next door to us.

In the meantime, we have Locums - Dr Dhesi, Dr Darcy and Dr Rowe. week at the end of February and a second clinical

Dr Balafama continues to run a telephone clinic on alternate Saturdays.

A Mental Health Practitioner starts 4 days a week at the end of February and a second clinical pharmacist starts in March

Recruitment issues are ongoing. We have appointed three new receptionists. A Care Coordinator and Medical Secretary are being recruited. We have also offered to take on an admin apprentice.

We have our share of staff sickness - mostly the same illness as patients.

Our nursing team continue to increase their skills and attend training to improve their clinical range. Two Healthcare Assistants are undertaking the Associate Nursing training. One will finish in May.

## Our Primary Care Network (PCN)

There are still changes to the way the NHS is organised and funded, and the most significant for us is the move to Primary Care Networks.

### A34 PCN

*Strawberry Hill,  
Eastfield and  
Downland surgeries  
working together*

We are part of the A34 Primary Care Network. This brings Eastfield House, Downland Practice and Strawberry

Hill Medical Centre to work closely together to share resources, where appropriate, for example to cut costs. This was the case for Covid Vaccinations and organising Boosters in Care Homes and for patients in their own homes.

The PCN meets monthly and is attended by the Practice Manager and a GP from each of the three practices.

Our Practice Manager also meets with the other West Berkshire practice managers each month and to share good practice.

Dr Irfan attended the Prime Ministers NHS emergency meeting on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> January at 10 Downing Street. Dr Irfan is a GP partner with his clinics at Strawberry Hill on Mondays and Fridays. This direct link to the top of the BOBICB is very useful and gives us a good insight into decisions that affect our patients.

## Other Information

The practice received 40 gifts from patients as Thank You's over Christmas, all of which were very gratefully received. We also received a large selection of cakes from a kind donator.

The number of complaints from patients has decreased - and these are now mainly process related rather than clinical or about individuals. The number of requests to change GP has fallen and is evenly spread across all GP's. This, we think is in part due to the change in how to book appointments and some staff being better than others at directing the patient to the correct person and explaining this to the patients. Training is ongoing. GP's have more time and are less stressed hence complaints decreasing as they can explain clinical decisions and diagnoses without being so rushed.

We have unused flu vaccine for over 65's still available. There will be one final clinic for those who still wish to have it. Many more than in previous years had theirs at a pharmacy hence our left-over stock.

Please note for future reference that the surgery has to estimate the number of vaccines to order. As many patients go to pharmacists, there is now a wastage and less vaccines will therefore be ordered in future years.

## Strawberry Hill Staff

9 partner GPs

2 new locums who are dealing with mainly face to face consultations

15 Receptionists

A new Practice Nurse - a total of 6 nurses

Two new Healthcare Assistants. Training for delivering injections, health checks, dressings etc.

An Extra Administrator joining the team of 13

3 Care Coordinator (PCN role)

2 Physician Associates (PCN role)

A Social Prescriber (PCN role)

A Clinical Pharmacist - to whom reviews on Prescriptions may be referred (PCN role) plus a new one starting in March

Practice Manager and Deputy Practice Manager

A PCN manager coordinating all 3 Practices to share best practice across the PCN roles