

GP Direct Patient Newsletter

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OUR appointment system explained

In a recent Patient Participation group meeting we received feedback that our appointment system was not easy to understand. It transpired that not all the group were aware of being able to book appointments in advance. Therefore we want to devote this newsletter to issues relating to our appointment system so that it is better understood by all of our patients. The following are the key points of our appointment system

- Appointments can be booked on the same day or up to two weeks in advance. However it is very important to note that if you want to book an appointment with a specific doctor you may have to wait longer. Therefore we would always recommend that if your medical problem needs to be assessed quickly that you should be willing to see any one of our 10 GPs.
- Telephone consultations are available every day; we have a dedicated GP on triage duty in the morning and afternoon. Additionally doctors have a couple of telephone consultation slots available each day to allow you to speak to a doctor of choice, but please remember if these slots have been taken up you will need to speak to the GP on triage duty.
- Demand for appointments is very variable from day to day, on days where there is great demand you may not initially be offered a face to face appointment, in this case you will be offered a telephone consultation with the GP on triage duty who will decide whether you need to be seen on the day.
- If you have been given an emergency appointment please remember that this should only be used for the immediate problem that you have made an appointment for and any other issues should be addressed at another appointment.
- If your medical problem is of a self limiting condition like a cold or cough that has only been present for a few days in the first instance please seek advice from a pharmacist for over the counter remedies
- The clinicians may run late from time to time as emergencies or very complicated problems may occur at the Practice, if your appointment is delayed it is usually due to a medical necessity.
- Appointments should be booked by telephone or online. Please do not turn up to the Practice for a routine appointment unless you have booked one.

HAY fever seasonal advice

With summer now upon us again we would like to give advice to those who suffer from hay fever.

- If you have been prescribed medication for your hay fever in the past you can request the same medication from the reception desk. Just tell the receptionists that you have been prescribed the medication in the past by GP Direct and the prescription will be issued within 48 hours.
- If you have not been prescribed a medication by GP Direct in the past or if you just prefer to speak to a doctor regarding your condition please call the surgery to book a telephone consultation, the doctor can then issue you a prescription.

MAKING an appointment to see a doctor

If you need to make a routine appointment to see a doctor we would request you to call the Practice or book online. It has been noted that a number of patients are turning up at the Practice demanding to be seen. Unless your problem is of urgent medical matter, such as chest pain or breathing problems please book your appointment before attending the Surgery.

We offer appointments on the same day and up to two weeks in advance, in addition we have a dedicated doctor taking telephone consultations on a daily basis. Why not try and jump the phone queue and book online. We now have close to 800 patients who have requested to join this invaluable service, read more about this below.

MISSED appointments cost us all

If you are unable to attend an appointment for any reason please call the surgery on **020 8515 9328** to cancel your appointment giving at least 1 hours notice. Hundreds of appointments are missed each year, these appointments could have been used by other patients. Repeat non-attenders will be written to as a warning as this has become an increasing problem. If you use EMIS Access you can cancel your appointments online.

THE Surgery Online

gpdirect.co.uk has steadily grown over the past two years and has now become an invaluable source for many patients. One of the key features of the site is the EMIS Access option which allows you to **book appointments, request repeat medication and securely message the Practice online.**

To gain access to this service present to reception with proof of ID (in the form of your passport or driving license) and you will be given an access pin provided you are 16 or over.

PATIENT SURVEY SPECIAL: MORE SATISFIED IN 2008

The results of our 2008 patient survey results are now back and show that patients are more satisfied with the service we offer than in 2007. Overall there was about a 2% rise in patient satisfaction across the whole survey.

Satisfaction with doctors at the point of consultation attracted some of the highest responses. Responding to the question about how healthy you were able to keep after your visit and the ability to speak to a doctor on the phone you graded the Practice highly which was also above the national average performance for GP Practices.

The survey results showed that you were much more satisfied with the continuity of care at the Practice as this saw a 5% increase from the year before taking the average grade in this area to just below 'good,' we feel that this is an acknowledgement of the significant changes we have made to our appointment system which allows for more flexibility when booking in advance with the doctor of your choice, such as being able to book up to two weeks in advance.

Waiting times at the Practice and telephoning through to the Practice both gained a score of between 'fair' and 'good.' However we believe that these areas have greatly improved at the Practice due to improvements we have made in the past year and we are sure you are noticing the improvement.

Key changes we have made in improving the waiting times and telephone access to the Practice are as follows:

1) INSTALLED A STATE OF THE ART TELEPHONE SYSTEM which allows for calls to be more appropriately routed through an auto attendant system, the telephone system also gives the Practice call analysis so that we are aware of the busy times of the day and week and can make provisions to ensure the phones are manned with the appropriate level of staff.

2) CONTINUED TO DEVELOP OUR WEBSITE AND OUR EMIS ACCESS SYSTEM which allows for the booking and canceling of appointments, requesting of repeat prescriptions, securely messaging the Practice and updating your contact details online. The service is now being used by about 500 patients and we strongly recommend it to others who have still not signed up. The service is open to all patients aged 16 and over, all you need to do is provide a form of visual ID (passport or driving license) at reception. It gives you the added advantage of being able to use it any day of the week at anytime in the day also reducing the call volume coming into the Practice.

3) WE HAVE ALSO CONTINUED TO OFFER YOU A MORE COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE from Welbeck Road as we have added three fully refurbished consulting rooms. This can ensure that more services, such as blood tests, baby clinic, antenatal clinics, ECGs, specialist nurse clinics, counseling and a lot more can be offered from under one roof as our resources can be consolidated and these invaluable services can be maintained and built on for years to come.

4) FEEDBACK WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM OUR PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP indicates that we need to keep you better informed about changes in the service we offer, better explanation of our procedures and also more up to date information about developments in the Practice. Therefore in the coming year we hope to be issuing a new up to date Practice brochure, more information on our website and a develop our newsletter to make it more informative especially with regards to our services, and hope to issue a explanation of our appointment system in the upcoming Issues.

Your views are always welcome

Whether you took part in the survey or not we are always keen to hear your views. We are not satisfied at just assessing your views once a year through the patient survey but strive to gauge your satisfaction throughout the year.

Please feel free to email us at info@gpdirect.co.uk or you can always contact Katherine Jhumann, the Practice manager to discuss any suggestions, or concerns about the service that GP Direct offers.