

## Patient Information- Answers to the Questions Raised by our Patients in Our 2016 Patient Survey

### **1. Continuity of Care - Your Named GP – Why This is Important for YOU**

We believe that for most issues it is important to have continuity of care and to see your named GP for a ten-minute routine appointment. This is because they build up a picture of you and your medical needs.

Should you need an appointment to see a GP the same day and if your named GP is already booked up, we can book you a five-minute emergency Duty GP appointment. The duty GP may prescribe you medication, will update your medical records, and may ask you to visit your named GP for a follow up.

### **2. Why Do We Ask You for a Reason for Your Appointment When You Book?**

The GP Partners have asked our Receptionists to ask you for a reason for your appointment. Getting this information enables the Receptionists to make sure that you have the **right type of appointment, with the right clinician, at the right time**. This avoids unnecessary delays and wasted appointments for all.

For example, say a patient arrived for a GP appointment requiring a wound dressing but had not given any reason to Reception at the time of booking. Wound dressing is not part of a GPs work. The Patient's appointment would be completely wasted as they would not receive treatment from the GP and would need to book another appointment for another day with a Nurse or HCA.

### **3. Home Visits – How These are Defined?**

Home visits are intended for patients who **cannot** get to the surgery even with assistance from friends and family. This could be due to an acute illness which makes them temporarily housebound or because they are permanently housebound (meaning that they are unable to leave their place of residence without special equipment, transport, and assistance *for any reason*). A GP Home visit can take between twenty minutes and an hour with the travel involved, which equates to the GP potentially seeing between two to six patients at the surgery. Unless you are housebound, please make an appointment at the surgery to see a GP. This includes residents in Nursing and Rest Homes.

### **4. Nurse and Health Care Assistant (HCA) Appointments**

Nurse and HCA appointments all need to be booked in advance. The Practice initiates many, to deal with on-going issues for things like chronic diseases. This forms part of NHS Guidelines which means that we must provide specific types of appointments - such as the annual diabetic checks. The Nursing team also deal with minor injuries and do a lot of disease prevention work, including childhood immunisations, smears, flu, and travel vaccinations.

The Nurses and HCAs therefore run lots of different types of clinics, and as a result we set up a variety of appointments to accommodate the different times needed for each type. For example, Smear appointments require a twenty-minute appointment, but a blood test or blood pressure test (both only carried out on the request of a GP or Nurse), will only require five minutes. Our Nurse and HCA Clinics are set up to match our nursing skills, as not all our Nurses and HCAs can carry out every procedure. Diabetic checks for example, require a specially trained Nurse. You can book some types of Nurse and HCA appointments online but only if you have had a direct request in a letter or from a Nurse or GP.

### **5. Why a GP, Nurse or HCA Appointment Will Sometimes Be Late Starting**

This usually happens where an earlier appointment has taken longer.

This can be because the reason for the appointment was not made known at the time of booking (see Q&A 2 above) and therefore the five or ten-minute appointment booked was not long enough for the needs of the patient.

However, it could be because an emergency situation has occurred at the Practice which needs to take precedence. It is not uncommon for a routine appointment to develop into an emergency

or for a GP to have to attend an emergency home visit or have an urgent telephone discussion with Paramedics. In these situations, Reception will keep you informed and either ask you if you can wait, transfer your appointment to another GP, or rebook an appointment for you.

#### **6. When You Are Late - Why it is Not Always Possible to See You**

Should you arrive over five minutes late for your appointment you will not be able to book-in via the self-check touchscreen service. You will need to speak to a Receptionist to see if it is possible for you to be fitted in for your appointment with the GP, Nurse, or HCA.

The decision as to whether you can be fitted in is made by the Clinician and depends on several factors such as whether the next patient has arrived early and could be seen in your place, or if the Clinician's room has already been set up for a new Clinic or patient.

We appreciate you telephoning the surgery to advise us you are going to be late, although if you are over five minutes late it is unlikely that we can rearrange things to fit you in.

#### **7. When You Ask to Speak to a GP - Why a Member of the Administration Team May Telephone You Instead?**

All requests to speak to a GP are communicated from Reception to the GP but it is not always necessary for the GP to call you back in person. The GP is the only person who can make this decision. For example, say you call to request a discussion of a change of medication that is not working for you. The GP may alter your medication and ask our Prescribing Clerk to call you with the information ensuring that your query gets dealt with quickly and efficiently.

#### **8. Music and Radio – Why We Play Music and the Choice of Music**

When new GP Practices are built today they must reach a lot of building standards. These include soundproofing for reasons of confidentiality. Any GP Practice that is in an older building (both our sites), will not be adequately sound-proofed and the only way to cover this is to have a radio/music playing. We get constant complaints from patients wanting classical music, hating classical music, requesting a radio station, not wanting a radio station. **We do listen, we do** change stations, but we are never going to please everyone. Sorry!

#### **9. Parking – What Can We do?**

At the College Road site the Council will only let us pay for limited GP parking and we must keep a space free directly outside the door for an ambulance or taxi patient drop-off. We have tried to ask for more space but being in a residential area the council will not budge. At the Ian Gow site we have limited GP parking and no control over the parking outside the building. We struggle with parents at the school parking in the car park and although we regularly complain to the school we have been told that they can't control the parents. The Patient Forum are continually trying to help us secure extra parking.

#### **10. Why Did We Change the College Road Reception Desk and Upstairs Waiting Room?**

The biggest problem in both our buildings is the lack of space. It was vital to have more clinical staff, appointments, more clinical consulting rooms, and to install a lift. Sadly, to satisfy and improve some things, others things had to be compromised. The only place that our architects could put the lift was next to the Reception, which subsequently had to move and reduce to a single desk. We continue to look at measures to utilise our space as well as we can.

*Other Useful Leaflets available include: Appointments Information.*