



Central Healthcare Newsletter Summer 2019

The Patient Group and Central Healthcare staff are working together to provide regular updates and improve communication to patients. This is the first of our quarterly newsletters.

Meet the Chairs of our Patient Group



Jack Stephenson



Diane Robinson



Dave Denton



Janet Martin

We are responsible for organising meetings with the Practice staff, raising issues on behalf of patients, working with the Practice to improve services, and improve communication to patients. We each chaired a group for the separate practices prior to the merger. We have enjoyed getting to know each other and learn about the different ways that the Patient Groups worked in each practice. We are focusing on how to bring the groups together and we have agreed our guidelines for running the group and what we see as our purpose. More information about this, how you can join us, minutes from our meetings, and our contact details can be found on the Practice website under the Patient Group section. The main issue we have agreed to focus on this year is communication between the patients and the practice which we see as vital and being in need of improvement.

We meet 4 times a year as the newly formed group. The previous Peasholm and Prospect Road patient groups meet together in between times to help with issues relating to the relocation of Peasholm patients and staff to the Prospect Road site. This has been an upheaval for them all and much support is still required.

There have been some unforeseen problems with the practice amalgamation, some of these have been due to external organisations failing to meet promised targets e.g. the bringing together of the 4 telephone systems. Staff illness and the deteriorating state of the NHS have also impacted heavily on the practice. The staff have been under enormous pressure to work through the many complaints and frustrations raised by patients, at the same time as learning new ways of working and adapting to new surroundings. We hope this newsletter and those that follow will give you useful information and updates on how everything is progressing and how we are trying to help.



Telephone System



The Belgrave and Falsgrave systems have been merged into one at the Lawrence House site (LH), and similarly for the Peasholm and Prospect Road systems on the Prospect Road site (PRS). Unfortunately this process proved more complex and took longer than anticipated for the suppliers to complete. We fully understand and apologise for the frustration this has caused our patients.

There have been no changes to telephone numbers. Merging systems has enabled us to make more staff available to answer the telephones. At PRS we now have 5 staff on the phones rather than 2 as before, and at LH there are now 8 rather than 6 staff answering the telephones.

We are now able to monitor the pressure on the lines and can report that waiting times are currently around 10 to 15 minutes between 8:00 and 8.30, and reduced to around 3 minutes after 8.30. Patients can help improve things further by making non—urgent calls later in the day. In May we dealt with 21,626 calls at PRS, and 19,765 at LH!

Our Patient Services Team work very hard to answer calls as quickly as possible. Waiting times on the lines are being lengthened due to people making complaints about their wait when they get through. We do appreciate the problems and understand the frustration, but this further delays staff and increases the waiting time for the people still waiting on the line.

Our greeting message on the new telephone system explains that calls are recorded for training and monitoring purposes, and also explains why you will be asked for the reason for your call. If you wish to bypass the greeting message you can enter the option you want without listening to it, as follows.

Prospect Road Site (PRS)

Option 1—Appointments, enquiries & home visits

Option 2—Prescriptions (8:30 to 13:30)

Option 3— Referrals & Reports (10:00 to 14:00)

Lawrence House site (LH)

Option 1—Appointments & home visits

Option 2—Prescriptions (8:30 to 12:30)

Option 3— Patient Services Team



Practice Website

www.scarboroughcentralgp.nhs.uk

Work on our website is underway and we have placed an alert on the home page to make patients aware that the site is still under construction. If you search for your previous practice website you'll automatically be diverted to the Central Healthcare home page. We aim to provide useful information on how patients can self refer to some services without the need to wait for a GP appointment, and on the problems that can be treated at home or by visiting a pharmacist. We know that demand for GP appointments is very high and waiting times can be long. We believe that by enabling patients to self care wherever possible this will reduce waiting times for the patients that do need to be seen by their GP. The Patient Group is assisting with the development of the website by giving direction on how user friendly they find it.



Repeat Prescriptions



We now have dedicated staff to answer calls relating to prescriptions. There is no longer an answer phone on which to leave your medication requests. We are confident that speaking to someone to request medication is much safer than leaving an answerphone message. Our Patient Group representatives have reported that patients at the Prospect Road site, previously used to using the answerphone, have said that they are pleased with this change and that they appreciate being able to discuss their medication with an actual person. Option 2 on the telephone system will put you through to the Prescription Team.



Recruitment



We are aware that patients are experiencing long waiting times to see the GP of their choice. Sometimes we hear of patients attributing this to the 'the Merger'. This problem is actually a national issue arising from the difficulty with recruiting new GPs and the pressure that all surgeries have been placed under for several years. Our merger is in fact helping us to work together to improve access to our services.

We are pleased to say that we have successfully recruited 2 new GPs, Dr Lynda Carter, who started working with us in April, and we now have Dr Amy Ramsell who started this month. We have also recruited a new Nurse Practitioner, James Waterhouse, who joined us in March. You can find out more about James below.

For more information on the national GP recruitment crisis please see the Panorama programme, shown on the 11th May, which can be found on BBC iPlayer using the following web reference

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0004wd7

Introducing our new Nurse Practitioner

JAMES WATERHOUSE

We are delighted to have James on board as part of our team. He is proving very popular with patients already thanks to his friendly and warm nature.

Began nursing career in 1992

Qualified as a Nurse Practitioner in 2003

17 years experience of Consulting and treating patients with minor illness in GP Practice

Sees patients with undiagnosed conditions

Orders investigations

Prescribes medication

Refers patients to hospital consultants and others for specialist advice

Liaises with GPs when necessary

