

Patient Newsletter Summer 2018

Dear patients

The past twelve months have seen a lot of changes in the practice including the retirement in March of Dr Davies, and the appointment of Dr Saadian as a new partner in the practice.

During 2017 we held extensive discussions with our patients due to increasing frustration patients were experiencing with the old drop-in appointment system. There were lengthy delays in the waiting room, often making the visit to the GP stressful. We undertook surveys of our patients and, after consultation with our patient representation group, we were able to implement a change to the morning booking system.

We recently met with our patient representation group to review the system and discussed that it can be difficult to get through on the phone first thing. We understand how this can be frustrating for patients and we are putting in extra measures to try and help with this.

Morning appointments system	You are able to book your appointment on the day. You can phone reception for this, or come in to reception and book. We do not “pre-book” the morning clinics in advance, because we know that some of our patients like to see a doctor “on the day”. This suits patients who are happy to see any available doctor.
Evening appointments system	No change to the evening booking system, which still contains a mix of pre-bookable, routine and urgent appointments with each available GP and some appointments that can be booked via Patient Access. This may be preferred by patients who can plan ahead or prefer to see a specific doctor. We hold a late evening bookable clinic on Wednesdays.
Telephone access	We have four incoming telephone lines, and all phone lines are staffed. When there are four active calls under way – you will get the engaged tone. We hope, in the future, that a new phone system will support a queuing system with hopefully more lines available. This is a priority for us, subject to funding.
Triage ** New **	Wirral-wide, all practice staff have completed training by Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group to undertake triaging of all incoming calls. This means that you will be asked for very brief information about your request. This is not meant to be intrusive nor is the receptionist being “nosy”. NHS staff work with strict confidentiality. The purpose is to help find you the most appropriate appointment, <i>first time</i> , and save wasted appointments and repeated phone calls. You will be aware that sometimes people use a GP appointment for something that should have gone elsewhere – for example some conditions can be dealt with by the community

	<p>pharmacist, nurse practitioner or minor illness service. If you are willing to help our staff to help you, then it will put more appointments in to the system for those who need them. It is a common complaint in the NHS that it is difficult to see a doctor on demand. This is partly because of wasted appointments, increased demand and the shifting of hospital work to general practice, as well as due to the national GP recruitment and retention crisis. Fortunately we have more GP registrars joining in August 2018.</p>
Extended access clinics	<p>Some of the general practice funding has gone in to the Wirral Extended Access scheme which gives access to local GPs – including some of our own - working together on a rota, outside of regular hours. This means you can be offered an appointment in a local practice by GPs who will be able to access your medical records. Some patients who are working find this extra availability very useful at weekends and in the evenings.</p>
On Line Access	<p>Some appointments are available to book On-Line. These are limited so that we do not disadvantage patients who not users of the internet.</p>
Future Developments	<p>We are constantly reviewing how you might be able to access your GP conveniently. One of the options under consideration is e-consultation (an email based system for non-urgent advice). This is soon to be piloted in Wirral and we will let you know if it is rolled out.</p>
What can you do to help your practice?	<p>We are doing our best to meet patient demand, and changing our services to keep pace with modern life.</p> <p>Help us by letting us signpost you to the most appropriate service and by attending or cancelling – in plenty of time – for your booked appointments. We lose several hours of appointments a week due to patients who book and then don't come in.</p> <p>Sign up for Patient Access to manage your records and appointments on line.</p> <p>Finally, you could consider supporting the NHS by speaking to your MP about funding and recruitment and get involved in campaigns to save your NHS services.</p>

Thank you for your continued support of Cavendish Medical Centre.
Drs Cheetham, Clark & Saadian, and practice team.