

## DECEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER

### Extended hours

Since the start of the Primary Care Networks in July 2019 and the insistence of NHSE to have extended hours appointments on a set day per week and from a GP premises rather than Albion Street, there has been a marked increase in dissatisfaction regarding access and having to travel to other GP premises. As a result, various practices have pulled out of the current scheme and have chosen to offer the extended hours access 'in-house'. From 5<sup>th</sup> November, we shall be offering extended hours from the practice every Tuesday evening with a plan to review the situation in March 2020. These appointments will not be made bookable on-line and will be a mix of face to face and telephone appointments. Reception will be closed and we will not see any patients without an appointment.

### New Website

We have changed our website provider in November in line with the rest of the CCG practices. The new website is called 'Footfall' and has a navigation screen to help guide patients to the most appropriate person for help. This may not be your GP, depending on your clinical need. The idea is to reduce the 'footfall' into the practice and free up GP time for those that need it. If you still need to see your GP, you still book an appointment. Please have a look at it and see what you think. There is a national shortage of GPs and an increasing demand on GP time (not just from patients but from all the additional meetings we have to attend as part of the re-organisation of the NHS). We are still getting used to the new website ourselves so please bear with us as we try to get it to work the way we want for our patients.

### e-consult

I appreciate I have been saying this for a while but we might nearly have this! Watch this space.

### Open Surgery

We are considering changing the way we do open surgery. The numbers attending are very high and possibly not all need face to face contact. One option would be for you to phone and book a slot but if you don't think you need to be seen, we could phone you at the appointment time. If we then decide you do need to be seen you would be asked to come down for later on in the surgery. Obviously if you have a bad chest, difficulty breathing, a skin rash, chest pain etc a face to face appointment will be necessary. We do not want to start doing telephone triage for all appointments but this might help open surgery. Your feedback would be welcome if we start this.

### Home Visits

We consider this to be a vital part of general practice regardless of the recent vote taken at the LMC conference to separate urgent home visits from our core contract but in order to protect the time we would like to spend with those who are in genuine need of a home visit because of illness, we ask all those who can come or be brought to the surgery to do so. Lack of transport is not in itself a reason to call a doctor out and there are good clinical reasons for preferring to undertake examinations in the surgery setting rather than at home where we do not have access to full facilities. Please make every effort to get to the surgery if you can as we could see 2-3 patients at the surgery for every home visit requested. Your understanding would be appreciated.

### Christmas and the New Year

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and a healthy 2020. Please make sure you have enough medication for the holiday period. Please consider the appropriate use of pharmacies and the Urgent Treatment Centre (formally the Walk-in-Centre). Please only attend A+E if you have an accident or emergency and not for GP problems (use the out-of-hours service).