

Practice Manager's Introduction.

May I offer you a warm welcome to our bi-annual newsletter. As promised, this is the second Newsletter you will receive each year where we update you on practice affairs and initiatives that may directly involve large groups of our patients. As a reminder those of you who are signed up to receive these updates, your contact information is safe. GP surgeries have entered their busiest time of the year where demand for its resources is at its highest over the annual cycle; this will not start to ease until around March next year. We will continue to offer as many services as sustainably possible despite these challenges. On behalf of all of the Partners of Bewick Crescent Surgery I hope you have a well-earned festive break and enjoy spending time with family and/or friends at this special time of year. Until our next newsletter in July/August, take care and look after those who need and rely on support during the colder months.

Yours Aye,

Steve

Staffing Update.

The summer months proved challenging as our workforce lost 6 clinicians in total in a short period. The knock-on effect for staffing issues is the restriction of appointment availability; I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your patience over this period. We have filled all of the vacancies in our surgery despite the challenges the North East possesses for recruitment (especially GPs). We have increased our clinical staff by recruiting an additional GP, an additional Nurse Practitioner and an additional Practice Nurse. Just this month, we welcomed our new GP, Dr. David Evans, who filled the vacancy which has been open since July. The additional GP we are looking to recruit has been interviewed, selected and has provisionally accepted the position but cannot start with us until February/March 2020. Furthermore, in February we will be welcoming a new GP Registrar (a GP at the latter end of their GP specialist training) which means we will be able to offer even more GP appointments to you. As a reminder, Nurse Practitioners can see the same daily case load of patients as a GP; they can prescribe medication and refer for specialist opinion/scans/x-rays/etc. where required. Should a Nurse Practitioner be offered to you due to limited GP appointments that day I recommend you take the opportunity. We now have a total of five Nurse Practitioners who offer same day appointments and carry out home visits. Cath, Katey and Nicole are our new Nurse Practitioners in the surgery. Our intent is to progress them to Advanced Nurse Practitioner status, but, this will take time to achieve and will improve the service you receive. We have a total of five Practice Nurses; two new starters from the summer in Jill and Beverley who have also been welcomed into our team. We have a new staff member, Sam, who has joined our Administration Team. Our staff will always help you where they can and will treat you with respect which is what we expect in return.

From an infrastructure point of view we cannot house anymore clinicians – we are full. Once the additional GP is position is filled we can only replace. We hope you join us by recognising our additional staffing campaigns as a positive sign of our efforts to provide you with the best service possible that is within our resources in challenging times.

eConsult.

We have a new initiative on our website called eConsult. This has been taken on by all GP Surgeries across County Durham and is an online triage and consultation tool that can give patients access to self-help. Should you need a 'sick note' completing you can do this via eConsult too. Should you require liaison or intervention from a GP, you can liaise with them gaining a response with in 48hrs. For more information follow this [link](#).

Patient Survey.

In February/March 2020 we will be carrying out a patient survey. This will give you an opportunity to offer your input on how appointments and services are delivered. One area will be focussing on the appointment model we employ. There is no 'one-size fits all' appointment model due to individual circumstances but we are interested to hear what options you would prefer.

Repeat Prescriptions (RDs).

Those patients who receive RDs should visit our website and read about electronic repeat dispensing (eRD) and the Repeat Prescription Ordering System (RPOS).

Flu Jabs.

You can still get your flu jab if you haven't been vaccinated yet. Please contact the surgery who will be able to advise you on appointment availability.

Bewick's Call Queue.

In November we issued notice on our website that our call queue was being reduced from 50 to 30 callers. This change was made as a result of patient feedback who found it frustrating waiting in a queue for so long, especially when told no appointments were available. You are waiting whilst staff are care navigating other patients; this essentially is ensuring patients are booked in with the appropriate health care professional.

Miscellaneous.

For those who have repeat prescriptions we strongly advise that you visit our website here and read about eRD (electronic repeat dispensing) and RPOS (repeat prescription ordering system); the NHS is changing the way repeat prescriptions are managed.

Contact Us

You can always leave feedback (good or bad) regarding surgery experiences by following this [link here](#).

Surgery Telephone Numbers: [here](#):

Surgery Website: [here](#)