

## **MYTH BUSTING**

Clarification on some myths about the surgery which are causing concern are:

1. Problems getting an appointment with a doctor has led to the belief that the surgery has too many patients. This is incorrect as the surgery has the same number of patients it had 20 years ago.
2. Lots of patients comment that the receptionists have to book people in and deal with queries on the reception desk whilst answering all the incoming calls. There is a call centre upstairs where all the calls between 8.30 – 5.30 are answered so reception can focus on dealing with patients queries. At the end of this newsletter we have included a sneak peek behind the scenes with a photo of the team in action.

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## **IMPORTANT REMINDERS**

- \* A machine for 24 hour blood pressure monitoring is now available.
- \* Patients who do not attend appointments on four occasions may be removed from the surgery list as this is seen as wasting doctors time and prevents others from getting appointments they may need.

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## **Improvements to the buildings**

New boilers to replace the very old ones!  
New front door  
New cleaning contractors  
Use of a ground maintenance team.

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## **Telephone System**

The present system is being reviewed to find a system that is cost effective and will improve patient access.

*The first meeting of our face-to-face Patient Participation Group (PPG) was held on 12 February 2016 and was attended by 3 members of the surgery staff: Rob Shuter, Dr Clarke and Joanne Goodwin secretary, as well as 9 patient representatives.*

Rob outlined changes that had taken place since he became the Practice Manager 14 months ago and this was followed by a very interactive discussion around the services offered by the doctors, nurses and support staff.

It was agreed that the PPG would produce a newsletter to inform other patients of the achievements of the staff towards better service delivery and what patient representatives identified as possible issues or improvements seen from a patient and carers viewpoint.

Rob advised the group of the changes made to improve the patient experience. We were then able to comment on and discuss other ideas put forward to further help both patients and the practice and these included the following:

### **On-line service**

The website has been up-dated and prescriptions and appointments are available online. From April this year there will be a new facility allowing patients to gain access to their records.

### **Recruitment**

Recruitment is ongoing. A new Practice Nurse will be joining the practice soon and a new Health Care Assistant is being recruited.

### **Plasma Screens**

If you have attended the surgery recently you will have noticed that there are now plasma screens that show short health education/information videos. They also indicate when the doctor or nurse is ready for you.

In the future it is hoped that these screens will show information specifically about our surgery.

## **Appointment System**

- \* All appointments for morning, afternoon and evening will be offered from 8.30pm each day which removes the need for patients to have to call back later in the day.
- \* A limited number of urgent appointments will also be released each day only for patients who feel they must be seen that day.
- \* If all the urgent appointments have been filled the Duty Doctor will have appointments available from 1pm for urgent cases that cannot wait until the next day.
- \* If all appointments are then filled patients will be directed to alternative providers such as the Walk-in centres or Accident and Emergency Department, except on Wednesday and Thursday afternoon the Badger Service covers for the surgery from 1pm on 0121 766 2100.
- \* At present there is no Saturday morning clinic at the Surgery.

## **Text reminders**

Patients who have given the surgery their mobile phone number now receive a text message to remind them of when their appointment is. This is the day before the appointment on Monday to Friday and on a Friday for appointments due the following Monday and this is proving very successful. So if you would like to be reminded in this way please let the surgery know your mobile phone number.

## **Birmingham Healthy Minds (BHM)**

Birmingham Healthy Minds is an NHS primary care psychological therapies service that works closely with Birmingham GPs. BHM offers advice, information and brief psychological talking therapies for people aged 16 and over, who are often feeling anxious, low in mood or depressed. This counselling service is holding clinics at the surgery on a Tuesday morning but is strictly by appointment only via a doctor.



A behind the scenes photo showing where surgery staff answers calls to the practice.

If you have any queries or feedback from the newsletter please speak to member of the team at the Surgery.

Newsletter written by Sheila Try, member of the Patient Participation Group.

