



Putnoe and Linden Medical Partnership and Walk In Centre Patient Newsletter No 13 April 2021

Welcome to our 13th Patient Newsletter which has been produced, in liaison with our Patient Participation Group.

Since the merger of Putnoe Medical Centre and Linden Road Surgery in October 2016 we have been working to align our Practices over both sites. Our Newsletter is therefore now available to all patients served by our Partnership.

The Partnership consists of 7 GPs – Dr Bharat Mehta, Dr Sudha Elangovan, Dr Amjad Khan, Dr Ankur Khandelwal, Dr Sagar Kanungo, Dr Christopher Haggart and Dr Tajvir Gill. Our managers are Mrs Sam Paul (Practice Manager), Mrs Julie Wilkinson (Quality Manager), Mrs Jane Mason (Deputy Practice Manager at PMC) and Mrs Nicky Pallikarou (Deputy Practice Manager at Linden Road Surgery).

Covid 19

Dr Chris Haggart continues to provide both our Practices with up to date information and changes to processes to ensure we keep our patients and staff safe. This includes new automatic front doors at Putnoe Medical Centre to ensure that patients do not pass each other when entering and leaving the building. Patients can now exit the building whilst other patients are talking to our Reception staff via the intercom.

The post box for prescriptions and letters has moved to the left of the entrance doors leaving space on the right for a new patient information board which will be accessible out of hours. We will display useful information there such as Bank Holiday Pharmacy Opening Hours.

Whilst the efficient Covid vaccination programme in Bedford continues to deliver vaccinations we appreciate that the way we are working is still predominantly telephone triage at the moment. We wish to assure you that our Practice Teams constantly strive to meet your needs and support you, as best we can, with all the restrictions and changes that have been essential to keep everyone safe.

Staff Changes

We are pleased to announce that we have some new members of staff:

Samantha McCarron – new Practice Nurse at PMC who is settling in well and enjoying her new challenge of working in general practice.

Pauline Crouch – Paramedic

eConsult

We will be launching a new online platform called eConsult in April and May. eConsult enables us to offer online consultations to our patients. This allows patients to submit their symptoms or requests to us electronically. We will then contact the patient or arrange an appointment as required. For example, a patient can click on the "headache" tab and enter in all of the history of their headache which will then be forwarded to a GP to read prior to a telephone consultation with the patient.

It also offers automated around the clock NHS self-help information, signposting to services, and a symptom checker.

It will help to reduce waiting times on the telephone and also reduce the mad dash for appointments when the lines open at 8am.

It's more streamlined for administrative queries and is a significant upgrade on the communication portal that our current website offers.

Patients will be able to access it via a dedicated tab on our usual website or via the NHS app and they can login using their existing NHS app credentials.

We will be providing much more information regarding eConsult as it is fully launched. In the meantime, you can watch this brief video which provides a useful summary:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fGEpzrgAJc>

Carers

Please let us know if you are a carer or are cared for. We can then document this on your medical records.

It is helpful for the doctors and nurses at the surgery to know if you are a carer or if you are cared for by someone else. We have an information pack that contains useful information which may be helpful which can be requested from Reception.

Carers in Bedfordshire

This local organisation offers support to carers.

Telephone: 0300 111 1919

Website: www.carersinbeds.org.uk

Address: Carers Centre, Suite K, Sandland Court, The Pilgrim Centre, Brickhill Drive, Bedford MK41 7PZ

Any person caring for a family member or friend can register with Carers in Bedfordshire. This includes access to grants to access a break from your caring role. The person cared for may be living in their own home, living with you, be in residential or nursing care, or be in hospital.

Flu Vaccination Programme

This year saw the largest flu vaccination for general practice as this was also offered to patients aged 50 – 64 years. In total 3056 patients were given their flu vaccination at PMC and 1219 at Linden Road. Thank you to our amazing Patient Support and Practice Nursing Teams to ensure this was delivered.

Pneumococcal Vaccinations

Pneumococcal vaccinations are now available at the surgery for those in a high risk group, for example, if they have a chronic disease. For more information please contact your Practice.

Car Parking at Putnoe Medical Centre

Due to reduced numbers of patients being seen in the Practice and the Walk In Centre there is usually plenty of spaces available in our Patient Car Park. However, if the Car Park is full please do NOT park in the Co-op Car Park. We have received complaints about patient inappropriately parking there so politely ask that you do not do so in the future unless you are a Co-op customer.

Bedford Hospital New Phlebotomy Services at Gilbert Hitchcock House

- Online: Patients are now able to book blood test appointments (available 24/7) by registering at: www.bedford.sangix.co.uk
- By phone: via the automated telephone booking service (available 24/7) 01234 607075

Healthy Walking Group – Putnoe Medical Centre

The popular Tuesday mornings Walking Group remain suspended at the moment but will recommence once Covid restrictions are relaxed.

Patient Participation Groups – Linden Road Surgery and Putnoe Medical Centre

At both Practices we have Patient Participation Groups who meet every 3 months (virtually via Zoom during Covid restrictions) to feedback, shape and influence the services we provide. If you would like more information or would like to join please contact Nicky Pallikarou for Linden Road or Julie Wilkinson for Putnoe Medical Centre.

Telephones

All telephone calls to our Patient Support Team (Receptionists) are now recorded for quality and training purposes. We appreciate the waiting times for calls to be answered has increased in recent months as many more patients are now accessing by a phone call now they cannot attend in person.

If your call is not urgent please do not call us in the mornings which are the busiest times.

Alternatively you can email us via the Practice website:

<https://www.putnoemedicalcentre.co.uk/digitalpractice/reception-and-enquiries/>

then select the relevant option or 'Ask the Practice a Question'.

Your Feedback

During the current restrictions we are not able to undertake our monthly Walk In Centre Patient Satisfaction Survey or have the Friends and Family Test cards in our Practices. However, you can still give us feedback via the Friends and Family section of our websites. Your feedback is valued to help us maintain our high standards of care and look to make improvements where possible.

If you would like to post a message about our Practice this can be done on Google Review.

This can be done by searching for Putnoe Medical Centre or Linden Road Surgery in your browser then selecting Google Review which is on the right side of search results then select Write a Review.

Another option is on the NHS Choices website via:

Putnoe Medical Centre

<https://www.nhs.uk/services/gp-surgery/putnoe-medical-centre-partnership/P43277/ratings-and-reviews>

then select Leave a Review

Linden Road Surgery

<https://www.nhs.uk/services/gp-surgery/linden-road-surgery/P42148/ratings-and-reviews>

Thank you for taking the time to read this.