

HOYLAKE & MEOLS MEDICAL CENTRE
PATIENT NEWSLETTER
March 2016

Our last Newsletter advised that following emergency surgery Dr Sarah Perry had taken extended leave. Dr Perry will not be returning to full time work but will still come in as a Locum from time to time. Dr Butterworth joined us in January as her replacement.

As many of you will be only too aware we continue to struggle to meet patient demand for appointments. We are not alone: it is a major issue both locally and nationally. There is a shortage of Doctors being trained and even less opting for General Practice. With a significant percentage of Wirral GPs due to retire over the next few years this pressure will only get worse. We have an ever increasing patient list which we are not permitted to close.

As a surgery our NHS Income, is mainly based on a complex Government formula which favours areas of deprivation and inner cities. With any such system there will always be winners and losers, we have to do the best we can within available resources.

The frustration felt by patients is obvious, with our Reception Team frequently struggling to find available appointment slots. I speak to many patients and read all letters and comments. There are no simple solutions, our Doctors and Nurses are seeing as many patients as possible, but the current NHS policy of transferring services from hospitals to GPs is creating yet more demand.

Although we bring in Locum Doctors where possible to cover holidays and other absences we do not have a magic solution. One disappointing side effect of the ever increasing burden of NHS Bureaucracy is that Dr's Muir and Newbury need to do more administrative work which unfortunately gives them less time to see patients. We are constantly reviewing non patient work, streamlining where possible and adding more appointments.

Our patient catchment area covers an area with a significant elderly population as well as many residential and nursing homes, which necessitates a relatively high number of visits to housebound patients.

We looked at many alternative appointment systems last year including telephone and nurse triage but decided to try a Walk In Surgery to try to alleviate some of the pressure. We started last November and mostly it is working. It is an answer that will not suit everyone, and some patients will not fit in to the fairly rigid access rules. Apart from waiting times the biggest issue for patients has been the inability to choose a specific GP. This is unavoidable although we do try to ensure that a gender appropriate Doctor sees sensitive problems. Although far from perfect it is working and helping to ease demand for appointments.

With any new system we have had teething issues and have gradually refined the process to reduce waiting times and ease the administrative burden. The current guidelines are shown at the end of this Newsletter.

We have also tried to streamline Nurse Appointments, from April we will have set clinics for most chronic diseases as well as for travel assessments and ear syringing.

Finally, can I thank all of our patients for your patience and understanding. We are doing our very best in a very challenging environment.

Open Surgery

- Open Surgery every Thursday with all available Doctors in attendance
- List opens at 8.00 each Monday with a gradual and controlled release of slots each day.
- Please note Reception Staff cannot open slots, they can only allocate patients to available slots.
- The list closes at around 8 30 each Thursday morning depending on demand.
- If you are on the list you will be seen.
- Reason for appointment should be given as GPs need this information to decide which patients to see first! (Where required this can be away from the front desk)
- Strictly ONE problem only; other patients are waiting!
- Doctors will see patients but not in strict order of arrival time. GP's will prioritise patients based on gender and clinical symptoms
- Patients will have no choice of GP, patients called as a Doctor becomes available.
- If patient not in building when called they will not be seen

Income Statement

All GPs practices are required to declare the mean earnings (ie average pay) for GPs working to deliver NHS services to patients at each practice.

The average pay for GPs working in Hoylake and Meols Medical Centre in the last financial year was £66,845 before tax and national insurance. This is for one full time GP, two part time GPs and one salaried GP all of whom worked in the practice for more than six months.

Disclaimer: NHS England require that the net earnings of GPs in practice be published, see above.

However the method of calculating this data does not take into account the time each GP devotes to the practice and therefore should not be used to compare one practice with another or to draw conclusions about GP earnings in general.