



**FOREST HEALTH GROUP  
PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP  
NEWSLETTER  
SPRING 2018**

The Patient Participation Group (P.P.G) works on your behalf to improve services and access for all patients. If you would like to help us in any way, please contact Mrs. Isabel Mattick 01344 420997 or Mrs Melanie Brown, Practice Manager, 01344 421364 or via email at [forestendpatientgroup@aol.co.uk](mailto:forestendpatientgroup@aol.co.uk)

**Summary of feedback from patients regarding merger  
with Boundary House surgery**

There were two comments which recurred in the feedback from patients regarding the merger.

These were both regarding the current CQC ratings of both practices. Both are currently rated as 'Good' however surgeries with similar names on the CQC website have caused confusion regarding our current surgery CQC ratings. We hope this allays any concerns regarding these comments.

## **Merger with Boundary House Surgery**

The Forest Health Group and Boundary House surgery will merge in April 2018 in name only, the name of the new practice will be Forest Health Group and we will be retaining all of our current sites, this will be phase one of the merger.

Phase two of the merger will take some time and in due course patients will be able to book appointments across all three sites. We will of course keep regular updates of the merger and any developments.

Patients in Forest Health Group and Boundary House will get a greater choice of appointments and services, it will also provide greater resilience against any future NHS changes. The priority of the merged practice will be to provide high quality, accessible healthcare.

If you would like to provide any feedback please click on the link below:

<https://minorsurgery.co.uk/machform/view.php?id=35571>

Frequently asked questions

### **Will I still be able to see my own GP?**

Yes - your usual GP will continue to work across the sites.

### **Will there be any staff changes?**

No – there are no anticipated staff changes in the near future.

### **Will there be any changes to the surgeries opening hours?**

No - the practices will remain open for core opening of 8:00am till 6:30pm, Monday to Friday. However the timings for extended hours (early morning and evenings) could change so patients will be able to access a wider range of extended hour's appointments.

### **Will the system for making appointments change?**

No - You will still be able to make appointments in the same way as now, in advance, on the same day and on-line. In addition to this, there will be more choice for patients as there will be a wider range of appointment times and choice of sites.

### **Will you be cutting any services?**

No - existing services will remain the same, however patients will hopefully benefit from being able to access extra services in the new merged practice.



Our next educational half day will be on Thursday 12 April

## **Training Days**

Do you ever wonder why we close in the afternoon once a month (except in August) Our GPs and other clinicians attend Educational afternoon sessions. These afternoons are important in making sure our surgery staff can do their jobs as effectively as possible, this is in line with government guidelines and goes towards their revalidation, without this they would be unable to practice. The sessions are very well attended by surgery staff as they find it useful to set aside dedicated time to work with their colleagues from other practices. When the surgery is closed for training you can still seek medical advice by dialling 111 or the Out-of-hours service.

By taking part in a half day education sessions our GPs and Practice Nurses can:

- Learn new skills which they can then use back in the surgery
- Learn about new treatments and approaches to care
- Work more closely with the hospitals and other care providers to make your care better
- Share their thoughts and ideas with each other to improve services

## **We have Health Coaches available at the surgery.**

Forest Group Practice is always thinking about how they can better support our patients. As a result we're getting in contact to let you know about a service we have available at your Surgery. We're pleased to have Health Coaches from Talking Health from the NHS join our team who will be providing support to patients of the surgery who are living with a long term health condition including Diabetes type 2, respiratory difficulties or cardiovascular disease and who are worried about their health.

We know that sometimes having such a long term condition and concerns about our health can add to life's struggles, feel very stressful or result in down days, can feel overwhelming and in the end get in the way of looking after ourselves. Patients using this new service will have access to their own Health Coach to help you be in a better position to take care of yourself, and focus on what is important to you.

The service is made up of a team of trained clinicians who you can talk to about the challenges you face, and who can work with you on ways to cope, as well as improve your quality of life. You'll be able to meet with your Health Coach at the Surgery where you can find out more about how they could support you. If you are interested in finding out more all you need to do is tell us you would be interested and one of our Health Coaches can get in touch with you.



## **Evening and Weekend appointments – six day access to Routine Primary Care**

Routine evening and Saturday appointments are available with GPs and Practice Nurses in Bracknell and Ascot.

Appointments are available 6:30pm – 8:30pm Monday to Friday (latest appointment is 8pm) and 8:00am – 2:00pm on Saturday (latest appointment 1:30pm).

You can book these by calling our surgery on 01344 421364. Please note this is not a walk-in service you need to book through your usual GP surgery.

**Please note these appointments are only hosted at the Boundary House Surgery, Mount Lane and are not part of the Boundary House surgery.**



## **Zero Tolerance**

We provide general medical services for just under 12,000 patients and our receptionists receive over 800 telephone calls a day. To enable the system to work as efficiently as possible for ALL our patients, we would ask you to observe the following guidelines:

1. Be polite to our staff at all times. Verbal or physical abuse will not be tolerated and is likely to lead to the patient being removed from our list.
2. Use the appointment system reasonably and fairly to the benefit of all. Please do not ask for an emergency appointment when a routine appointment would suffice. Please endeavour to attend the surgery rather than request a home visit. Remember, three or four patients can be seen in the surgery in the time that it takes to do one home visit.
3. If you are unable to keep your appointment please cancel as soon as possible so someone else can take your place.
4. If you feel a home visit is necessary, please make the request before 10.30am. Patients who make late requests are unlikely to be seen until later in the day. Emergency visits will, of course, be dealt with by the duty doctor.

## Reviews

If you are on regular medication you need to have a MEDICATION REVIEW with your GP at least every 12mths, even if you are being seen regularly by the hospital. If we are providing the prescriptions for your medication the GP needs to review you as part of his duty of care.

If reviews are overdue your medication may be reduced to a weekly supply until you are seen.

If you have a specific condition such as ASTHMA, COPD, and DIABETES you will also need regular reviews with the practice nurse who specialises in the monitoring of these conditions. CHECK YOU ARE UP TO DATE WITH ALL YOUR REVIEWS—this will ensure you are on the best medication for your conditions. The date is on your repeat prescription slips.



## Inoculations

**PNEUMONIA** - Over 65, book in for your pneumonia vaccine, you will only need this once.

**SHINGLES** - Over 70, check your eligibility for the shingles vaccination.



## Travel

Please complete our travel questionnaire forms at least 8 weeks before your travel date. These are available via our website or you can collect the form from either of our surgery sites. If you are travelling within 6 weeks and have not made an appointment you may be advised that it is too late to see the practice nurse – you will be given the details of a travel clinic where you will be able to receive the vaccinations.

## **Do you know about our online services?**

We are always looking for new ways to make our service to our patients more effective. One of the biggest changes we have made in the last two years is the introduction of new technology.

The first of these is “electronic prescribing”. This means that however you request your prescription (in person, by post, fax or online), the GP no longer has to print out a green paper prescription. Instead, the GP “signs” the prescription electronically and sends it direct to the patient’s chosen pharmacy. This means we are able to issue prescriptions more quickly and instead of the patient having to wait at the pharmacy whilst the prescription is dispensed, the pharmacist will receive it earlier and thus save waiting times.

It also means that patients can have their prescription sent direct to a pharmacy close to their place of work. We have even used electronic prescriptions to get repeat drugs to a patient who has forgotten to take their tablets on holiday elsewhere in the UK.

Another benefit is that the GP can issue the prescription with better access to a patient’s medical records. This improves the safety of prescribing as it is very easy to check if a patient is up to date with any blood tests or monitoring that might be needed with the drug they are taking. If the patient is a bit behind in their monitoring of the drug it is easy for the GP to remind them through the electronic process, thus making sure they are getting the safest care.

About 80% of our prescriptions now happen electronically. We would like to increase this percentage, so if you have a pharmacy that you would like to use, either speak to your pharmacy or to our reception staff and this can be set up easily and quickly for you.

*Speak to reception for more information or see our website at <http://www.foresthealthgroup.co.uk/online-services/> for more information.*

## **Are you a carer for someone else?**

SIGNAL the new carers support service for all unpaid carers in Bracknell Forest was set up earlier this year.

It offers Signposting, Information, Guidance, Networking, Advice & Learning for carers.

More information can be found at their website at [www.signal4carers.org.uk](http://www.signal4carers.org.uk) or by telephoning 01344 266088.

There is also more information available in the practice waiting rooms or please speak to a member of staff.

## **Are you living with a health condition?**

## **Would you like to learn how to self - manage your condition better?**

Free NHS Self- Management Courses are available to people living in Bracknell.

For more information or details of upcoming course dates visit: -

[www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/healthmakers](http://www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/healthmakers)

or email [healthmakers@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:healthmakers@berkshire.nhs.uk) or phone 01344 415947

## **Surgery Pod – D.I.Y. blood pressure etc!**

Reminder - the practice has a “Surgery Pod” installed at the Bagshot Road (Sainsbury’s) surgery site.

This equipment allows patients to take their own blood pressure, weight, height, BMI etc. and this information is automatically added to the patient’s medical records. Patients can also complete a pill check questionnaire and asthma check on the system.

This means you may not need to book an appointment to see a GP or nurse and can do it at a time to suit you.

It will also be useful to patients who are attending for an appointment which will include a blood pressure check as patients can complete this part of the consultation before seeing the doctor, thus allowing more time in the consultation.

Patients can access the surgery pod at any time the practice is open – no appointment is necessary. Just walk in!

Please take a minute to look at the surgery pod next time you are in the surgery or speak to a member of staff for more information / assistance.

## **Your email address can be useful to us!**

We are sending general practice information to patients via email. If you would like to receive this information and haven’t yet provided us with your email address, please give the information to a receptionist or upload it via our website – [www.foresthealthgroup.co.uk](http://www.foresthealthgroup.co.uk) – “Joining Us Online”.

Information will include newsletters and general information about the practice / practice events / opening times, etc. You can unsubscribe at any time.

## **Practice Website - [www.foresthealthgroup.co.uk](http://www.foresthealthgroup.co.uk)**

More information about the practice can be found at our website – [www.foresthealthgroup.co.uk](http://www.foresthealthgroup.co.uk)

## **Practice Twitter feed**

Please take a look at our practice twitter feed – [www.twitter.com/ForestHealthGP](http://www.twitter.com/ForestHealthGP)

## **Have your say – Join our Patient Group**

The practice has had a patient group (PPG) since 2007 with the aim of helping communication between the practice and the patients.

The group meet approximately once every two months and would welcome new members who feel they can offer some particular help or support to the group. There is minimal commitment – i.e. you do not have to commit to coming to every meeting - and the PPG would be pleased to discuss how you can help them. The group do need patients who have access to the internet as they regularly communicate via email.

However the group is also seeking to extend its activities and consultations with patients who do not have access to a computer. If you would like to become involved, please let us know. We are currently looking to seeking ideas for future Information events.

You can contact the PPG by telephoning Mrs. Isabel Mattick on 01344 420997 or via email at [forestendpatientgroup@aol.co.uk](mailto:forestendpatientgroup@aol.co.uk)