

## **Burnley Group Practice Patient Newsletter March 2022**

### **Bank Holidays – Easter – Early May and Platinum Jubilee**

Please note the practice will be closed over the forthcoming bank holidays Friday 15<sup>th</sup> and Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April, Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, Thursday and Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> June. If you have a medical emergency whilst we are closed call 111. **ALLOW PLENTY OF TIME TO ORDER REGULAR MEDICATION.**

### **Telephone System**

Those who have been following updates will know that we have been waiting for a replacement telephone system, this has not happened, so we have now signed up to a new system independently, we should have this within 3-4 months and we hope this will help alleviate some of the problems we have all been encountering.

### **Manchester Road Surgery**

Our doors have been closed as this has been our 'hot site' where we see Covid positive patients, subject to staff availability we will be making this building more accessible

### **Partnership Changes**

Dr David White and Dr Nigel Tattersall both retire at the end of March, this will be a huge loss to the practice, but we wish them well in their retirement and hope that they will be able to continue to locum for us. Dr Yaseen Patel who has worked as a locum from Kiddrow Lane for many years will join as a partner in April. Our website has details of all our partners.

### **Pharmacy team and changes to Prescription Ordering**

We are in the process of building up a pharmacy team, this will be headed up by our Practice Pharmacist Khatija Jabeen, with the help of Medicines Managers Karen Robertson and Sonya Turner and several receptionists who are undergoing specialist training. **From 1<sup>st</sup> May we will not be accepting prescription orders from pharmacies, other than for vulnerable patients with prior agreement.** You can order:

- Using our online services – call at the practice in person to register with ID
- Emailing us at [burnley.gp@nhs.net](mailto:burnley.gp@nhs.net)
- Post a request in person at any of our sites where we have dedicated prescription boxes
- Telephone requests are not accepted

Your order you should be clear on what you are ordering, detailing each medication separately with the strength, it is not acceptable to order 'all my medication', 'my blue tablets', 'my brown inhaler' etc.

### **Ongoing pressures**

Please be aware that since the mergers and the pandemic we have continued to struggle with workload and workforce pressures; staff, including GP partners, have left for various reasons; and our demand has soared to unprecedented levels. Despite all this, all three sites have

remained open throughout the pandemic, other than a half day on Christmas Eve at Kiddrow Lane.

### **Appointment system and Care Navigation**

We are working on a project looking at our appointment system – this is proving extremely complex, we have a wide range of clinicians, all with different abilities, all needing different appointment lengths depending on the kind of presentation they are dealing with, at the same time we have to factor in online booking of appointments. Whilst we know that many of you dislike telephone consultations, we also know that many of you prefer them and it is easier for the clinicians to manage their clinics – we need to look into how best to cover all these options. We are retraining our reception staff in Care Navigation – this is so that they can ensure we are only booking patients in appropriately and not wasting valuable appointments; for example, warts and verruca's haven't been treated in general practice for several years now, these patients would be advised to go to a local pharmacy for help; patients with dental problems would need to be seen by a dentist; similarly minor eye conditions by the optician and wounds by the Urgent Care Centre. In addition, a medication review can be done by a pharmacist, a urine infection could be dealt with by a paramedic or Nurse Practitioner, our precious GP appointments need to be free to deal with patients with chronic complex medical conditions. We hope this helps you understand why our receptionists need to ask the reason you need an appointment

### **Annual reviews**

If you have a chronic disease and are due or overdue for your annual review, please contact us to make an appointment, if you email please tell us your availability and preferred site.

### **Zero Tolerance**

We do have a zero-tolerance policy and will not tolerate patients who are aggressive, violent, abusive or swearing, be that in person, on the telephone, on email or on Social Media, such patients will receive a warning and two warnings within a twelve month period may result in removal from the practice list

### **History of the practice**

Some patients have recently asked about the mergers and weren't aware of the reasons why; Burnley Group Practice is a merger of four practices which were previously St Nicholas Group Practice, Rosehill Surgery, Manchester Road Surgery and Kiddrow Medical Practice.

Several years ago, the doctors from the first three of those practices realised that several of them would be due to retire at the same time, in view of the shortage of GPs nationally which showed no sign of improving, they felt it was in the best interests of themselves, their staff and their patients to merge. Smaller practices are less resilient, tend to attract fewer applicants for clinical positions and are not able to give partners a work life balance which they needed to continue working and they thought the merged practice would do. The merger of these practices took place in 2018.

Another local practice, Daneshouse Surgery had fallen into difficulties and BGP took temporary care of their 2000 patients, before taking on some of those patients permanently once the practice list size was dispersed.

Kiddrow Medical Practice was a small 4000 patient practice with 2 full time GP partners and a 1 session partner, in 2019 one of the full time GPs gave 6 month's notice of his intention to leave the practice, several options were considered, potential replacement partners were approached, but the only option available to the practice was to merge with another local practice, and Burnley Group Practice (BGP) was the only available practice. If the merger hadn't taken place the staff would have been at risk and there would have been a chance that the patients would have been dispersed to other local practices which could have put the health centre site at risk. Weighing all this up, a further merger was considered the best option by all parties.

All this was discussed with both Patient Participation Groups (PPG) and communications were made available to patients.