



**Billericay Medical Practice
Patient Participation Group
Winter 2021**

Though we have not been able to meet 'live' the Group did have a Zoom session with the Practice Manager recently and here is what we discussed.

Question: Patients are having problems booking appointments by phone.

Answer: Since the pandemic started the volume of calls relating to this has increased. In addition, staff are having to make calls to book both Covid and flu jabs so please be patient. However, you can now book appointments online for both weekdays and Saturdays. There is also an e-consult service that lets you send an email to the practice after you have answered a set of health questions.

HAVE YOU HAD YOUR FLU JAB? IF NOT BOOK IT WITHOUT DELAY

Staff changes: We are fully staffed but Dr. Cockcroft has reduced working from 4 to 2 days a week. Dr. Hopgood started as a new partner in July 2021 and works 3 days a week.

Nurses Jo Restel and Diana Matthews have retired and been replaced by Sadie Frost and Kim Hall.

Face to face appointments: This was 90% before the lockdown. All the practices in Billericay agreed that they would now only be on the basis of clinical need, the exceptions being those with testicular or breast lumps.

DMADS: The CCG has announced that it is reducing the funding for practices helping patients with rheumatoid arthritis. In which case patients will be referred back to secondary care which could mean a private company contracted to the CCG.

Primary Care Network PCN: The website will be published in December for the Billericay PCN Check it out to see what they are doing. We'll give you the contact details when we get them. At the moment, there is no direct patient input to the PCN though we can send comments etc. to their monthly meeting via the practice. Hopefully this will change in the future

**HERE'S HOPING THAT 2022 WILL BRING US BACK TO SOME FORM OF
NORMALITY AND THAT YOU ALL HAVE
A HAPPY AND HEALTHY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR**