



PPG Newsletter



Hello and a big welcome from all of us at the Buxted, East Hoathly and Manor Oak Patient Participation Group (PPG).

We hope that you will enjoy reading the newsletter and that you will find the information useful to you, your family, and friends.

New readers may wonder who or what the PPG is, so we thought it might be helpful to outline the role of the group.

- The PPG represents the registered patients (approximately 16,000), of the three surgeries within the Buxted, East Hoathly and Manor Oak Medical Centres and is run by a volunteer committee.
- The PPG seeks to help improve the health of patients by ensuring that services are responsive to patients' needs and that they improve over time.
- By working closely with the practice, the PPG can ensure that patients' views are heard.
- Additionally, we promote self-help and health awareness information to patients and conduct patient surveys to help the practice improve services.
- We stay connected with patients through this, our newsletter, and via our Facebook page - Buxted, East Hoathly and Manor Oak Patient Group.

The PPG Committee comprises twelve people, who are drawn from patients at each of the three surgeries. A list of the Committee is available on our PPG Notice Board at each surgery.

The Committee meets every two months and the Practice Director, Charlotte Luck, plus a Partner Doctor attend.

We currently have two vacancies on the Committee and if anyone would be interested in joining us, please contact me, Martin Ensom, Chair, at behmoppg@outlook.com.

We welcome all patients to sign up to the Newsletter by dropping us an e-mail to behmoppg@outlook.com and we will add you to the distribution list. We will also contact you with other relevant information about the practice, the NHS generally and items that you will hopefully find interesting.

We are interested in your feedback about what you would like to see in the Newsletter in the coming months and how the Committee can represent your aspirations for the practice, so please do get in contact at the e-mail address above.

Martin Ensom

PPG COMMITTEE

Martin Ensom, (Chair), Linda Mason, (Vice Chair), Stephanie Newman, (Secretary), Alison Ledward, (Rep on High Weald PPG Forum), Bob Ruthven, Gina Cuthbertson, Jean-Mary Crozier, Lynne Fraser, Mike Batchelor, Sue Ovens.

Dear Patients

First of all, we would like to wish you a Happy and prosperous New Year.

Pressures on our services

The majority of the team have returned to work in January fighting fit. In the weeks before Christmas staff illness meant we had to postpone some appointments which we never like doing. Thank you for your patience with this and our thanks also to other staff members who worked extra hours during this period to limit disruption.

Medical help in difficult times

With the Junior Doctors' strike recently taking place this has placed extra demand for our services, particularly on 'strike days'. We would like to respectfully ask patients to attend the most appropriate healthcare facility when they require medical assistance. A good number of minor ailments including coughs, colds, sore throats, rashes, etc. can often be treated by local community pharmacies. If patients are having chest pain or suffering from shortness of breath, they should attend A&E or call 999 without delay. Should patients experience burns, or suffer other injuries or falls, they should attend a Minor Injury Unit. General information and advice can also be found at the following link: [Get help for your symptoms - NHS 111](#) Your help using the most appropriate service when you need help, means that everyone can get the support and care they need as quickly as possible.

News re Doctors

We are delighted to welcome Dr. Carly Jenkinson to the practice. Dr. Jessie Drake will return from maternity leave in the spring, and she will work two days a week. This should result in an additional 100- 150 GP appointments per week: a welcome addition for patients and team members alike! We have managed to secure the services of Dr Thomas Stewart throughout January up to the end of March, to assist us with our general winter pressures, this is in addition to the frequent locum cover provided by Dr Birtles, Dr Earp and Dr Simmons and our usual team of GPs: Dr's Schippers, Oriola, Costello, Gill, Perry and Wright.

News re other team members

Nurse Layla has recently relocated to Gloucestershire to be with family; we wish her well. You may still see Layla occasionally however, as she will continue to assist us on an ad hoc basis. We have recently welcomed Raine Lacy, Lead Nurse to our team. Raine has over 25 years practice nursing experience and has previously worked in the local area. New Nurse Lara Bevan will be a further addition to our nursing team, and she will be joining us in January, as will new Healthcare Assistant Alison Joslin. Kate Foster who has been undertaking some locum nursing for us at our East Hoathly site in recent months will be reducing her hours from mid-January as she has taken on other commitments outside of the surgery.

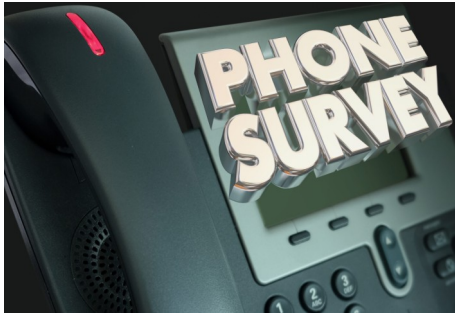
Attracting new staff members

We remain recruiting for doctors, receptionists and a paramedic practitioner or advanced nurse practitioner to support our duty doctor and our wider urgent care team. Recruitment in the NHS remains competitive and speaking positively about the practice including on social media is likely to help us attract new talent to our surgery. If you know any qualified GPs, paramedics, ANPs, or receptionists who may be suitable for a role with us, please do get in touch.

Charlotte Luck, Practice Director



Report on the Phone Survey 2023



The survey was carried out over an eight week period in the summer when the new phone system had been functioning for about six months. Nearly one hundred people completed the survey which comprised ten questions covering things like the day and time patients contacted the surgery, how long did they have to wait for the phone to be answered, if they use the automated call back system and did they get the appointment or service they requested. We also asked about how patients felt being registered with the overall Practice as opposed to individual surgeries plus were they aware of other ways of booking appointments, etc. We also asked a little bit about them in terms of age and where they regarded their nearest surgery to be. They also had the opportunity to add comments and suggestions in answer to some questions.

All the survey questionnaires have been read by members of the management at the Practice and by the PPG Committee. While the survey was taking place, certain changes were made to the way the phone system works, in response to suggestions made. Further changes are also anticipated, partly due to the results of this survey. This survey must be regarded as a snapshot of what was happening then and may well not represent how the system is now working. (Hopefully better for everyone).

Key points:

- 33% of patient's called on a Monday and 64% of those calls were between 8-9am.
- Just over half said they waited over twenty minutes to be answered.
- Of those that tried the automated call back system over half thought it worked well for them.
- Of those that answered the question about whether they received the service they required, just under 75% said they did.
- The majority of patients seemed happy to be registered with the Practice and have all three surgeries available to them for appointments, but a significant proportion, (29%), still needed to be seen at the surgery which is closest to where they live, which the Practice will always try and accommodate, where possible.
- A high proportion of respondents to the question, (91%), said they knew of the NHS App that enabled them to reorder prescriptions online, but clearly there is frustration in the lack of availability to book, online, appointments at the surgeries. This is being looked at.
- Some found the eConsult application was useful.
- Nearly 50% of the surveys were completed by patients in the 60-80 year old age range and well over half the surveys were completed by Buxted patients.

The phone system is constantly being tweaked to better serve the patients and enable to staff to deliver the best possible service. The PPG Committee and the Practice are grateful to all those that took the time to complete the survey and help influence the system.

A FAQ document re phones is currently being worked on by the PPG and Practice and will be circulated soon. It will contain some useful myth busters and clarifications on how the phone system works in practice

Martin Ensom

PPG DISPLAY BOARDS

Each surgery has a PPG Health Awareness display board. This highlights current information and will focus on particular health issues, especially ones the surgery would like to make patients aware of. This will be updated regularly, so if you are in the surgery, please take a look. There are leaflets explaining these issues, so please help yourself to any you might find to be helpful.

After the Christmas season the topic the surgery have highlighted as an important issue is Alcohol Awareness. There are posters and information displayed in each surgery.

Linda Mason

The infographic features a central white silhouette of a human figure against a black background. Various internal organs are highlighted in different colors: brain (purple), mouth/throat (pink), heart (orange), breasts (purple), liver (pink), digestive system (orange), and reproductive systems (purple). Lines connect these organs to text boxes on the left. In the top right, the text 'ALCOHOL CHANGE UK' is written vertically. At the bottom right, a box states '14 units a week'. At the bottom left, there is a URL and a small disclaimer.

Alcohol and your body

Brain:
dementia, alcohol-related brain damage, depression, anxiety.

Mouth and throat:
cancer of the mouth, upper throat, larynx and oesophagus.

Heart:
hypertension and risk of stroke.

Breasts:
breast cancer.

Liver:
fatty liver, hepatitis, cirrhosis, and liver cancer.

Digestive system:
gastritis, stomach ulcers and cancer of the stomach and bowel.

Reproductive systems:
temporary impotence and reduced fertility.

ALCOHOL CHANGE UK

14 units a week

Keep your risks low by drinking no more than

Find out more about alcohol
www.alcoholchange.org.uk

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