



The Maine Messenger Issue 1 - March 2017

Thank-you for reading the first edition of our newsletter. This will become a regular feature and we hope it will be useful in bringing regular updates on practice developments and medical advice. It is also available by email. Please complete a contact details slip at reception if you would like to receive updates.

New appointment system

We are introducing a new approach to accessing GP advice and appointments starting on Monday 27th March. This has already been started in a number of practices across Northern Ireland benefiting around 80,000 patients. Feedback has been positive and encouraging. Surveys have shown that 94% of patients are very satisfied or satisfied with the new service and 80% of staff say life is better with the new service (0% say it is worse).

In the new service, all patients who ask to see a GP will firstly speak to a GP by telephone. The reception will ask for very brief details to direct to the appropriate GP and to help the GP prioritise calls. The GP will then call the patient back for an initial telephone consultation. It may be possible to have the problem resolved there and then, or if necessary, the GP will ask the patient to come for a face-to-face consultation at the practice that same day.

It is anticipated that the average call-back time will be less than an hour and that anyone who needs to be seen will be given an appointment that same day. At busy times call-back may take longer but the receptionist should be able to advise when you initially make contact.

The practice phone messages will be updated to reflect this new approach. Look out also for further information at reception. We are hopeful that this service will be as successful here as it has been in other practices around Northern Ireland and we will be gauging patient experience as part of the role-out.