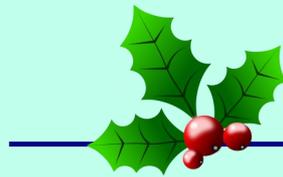


## "Good Practice"

Fleet Medical Centre December 2021  
- Where your health is our business



**TELEPHONE: 01252 613327 or 619000 December 2021**

Hello and welcome to our latest practice newsflash, packed with information and news. Our 100 staff and colleagues at Fleet Medical Centre wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2022.

### Christmas opening times

Monday 27th December **CLOSED**  
Tuesday 28th December **CLOSED**  
Monday 3rd January **CLOSED**

The practice will be open as usual on all other days as per the normal opening hours of the Practice.

**When the Practice is closed, Please contact either 111 for medical advice or call 999 for an emergency service if required.**



### Christmas Prescription Requests

Please ensure you have enough repeat medication ready for the Christmas Break. Please make sure you allow plenty of time to order and collect your prescriptions before Christmas.

Any requests received after

**FRIDAY 10th DECEMBER**

cannot be guaranteed to be ready for collection before Christmas.

**Flu vaccination stocks are VERY limited. We encourage children aged 2 to 3 years to receive a vaccine as soon as possible. Please call the Practice on 01252 619000 to request an appointment.**

### A message from the reception team

Hello - we are the reception team. There are 11 colleagues in this department and we work 350 hours per week between us. We currently have 3 vacancies within our team.

It is our greatest wish that we meet your expectations. We work within strict guidelines from the GP team regarding appointment type and availability and we share your frustrations. We thank you for your gifts, cards, emails and messages of support that we receive every day.

We work in general practice as we believe in the NHS and take pride in the services we offer. We could earn more, work less and probably have more fun working elsewhere; but we don't because we are a team, we truly care about our patients and we want to help you.

Please avoid unkind social media comments and remember we are local residents and have feelings too.

**Thank you!**

# GP Patient Survey results



Thank you to 143 patients who completed the National Patient Survey for Fleet Medical Centre 2021. 298 surveys were sent out at random by the NHS to patients who have used our services at some point during 2021. Our Patient Participation Group has helped us to contextualise and interpret these results and focus on areas to make improvements.

## YOU SAID

We are pleased to report the following excellent response figures (thank you!):

- 87% of respondents said they had enough support from local services to manage their long term conditions
- 89% of respondents felt the healthcare professional recognised or understood mental health needs in their last appointment
- 95% of respondents were involved as much as they wanted to be in decisions about their care and treatment in their last appointment
- Fleet Medical Centre remains the biggest user of e-consultations in our Clinical Commissioning Group representing 20 practices and nearly 250,000 patients across 5 local towns

## WE DID

Things to improve upon have been actioned as follows:

- 52% of respondents were satisfied with the appointment times available  
**We are trying to offer more flexibility in our appointment times and ask for your patience while demand remains so high**
- 60% of respondents describe their experience of making an appointment as good  
**Our telephone lines are very busy and our staff are working within strict guidelines for making appointments; please be aware that a telephone call or e-consultation with your GP in the first instance will remain in place for the foreseeable future**
- 78% of respondents describe their overall experience as good  
**We always strive to ensure our patients have a good experience with us. We request that you respect the limitations of our service which are a direct reflection of demand far higher than funding and resources allow.**

Although these response figures are mostly positive and supportive, this is not reflected in local comments and feedback where far more of our patients feel we offer an excellent service. 143 respondents is very low (1% of our patient population) and indeed our recent practice-level survey had a 10% response rate (1,414 patients) which gave us a much clearer picture on where to concentrate our efforts and resources.

We have therefore summarised the national patient survey to 4 questions and ask that you click on the link below to answer these questions for us again so that we can add further context to the responses and discuss with our staff and GP Partners in more detail the areas on which to focus to improve our standards and to try and meet the expectations of our patient community. **This should take no more than three minutes to complete and we ask that you take part and complete the survey by the 31st of December please. We will publish our responses and actions in the new year. Thank you very much for your ongoing support.**

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/FMC2021DEC>

# General Notices from your GP



Your GP is under great pressure. All NHS services are experiencing demand way beyond their resources. There are some recurring themes being discussed with our GPs during patient appointments and the GP team have asked that we directly communicate some responses to all of our patient community as follows:

1. Consultants and paramedics (among other non-GP practice clinicians) are advising patients that GPs should be booking appointments for hospital follow up care, responding more quickly or booking scans and x-rays; please be advised that GP practices have a very clear contract of work and paramedic and hospital staff should not be forwarding patients to general practice to support their teams
2. General Practice is NO LONGER allowed direct access to MRI or CT scans. These are booked via hospitals only.
3. Not all hospital medications are accessible or funded via resources made available to general practice. Sometimes only hospital consultants are allowed clinically and financially to prescribe some medications - this may cause delays and we ask for your patience in such circumstances or advise you keep an open communication link with your consultant or their secretary in these circumstances
4. If you have chosen to be a private patient then that care continues until you are formally discharged back to NHS care and the GP is advised in writing accordingly.

**THANK YOU!**

**Do you want to help your GP practice be as good as it can be?**

**Our Patient Participation Group is recruiting NOW!**



We are looking for dynamic and energetic members to join our PPG. We currently meet regularly at lunchtimes every 4 to 6 weeks with an ethos of positive feedback and sharing ideas to make the patient journey and use of resources to the maximum benefit of our patients and for the practice. There are members from each department within the practice as well as from our patient community; and we are hoping to recruit new members of any age or background and hope to encourage a patient aged 16 to 25 to join us so that we can have representation from this previously under-represented age group. All members are interviewed by the PPG and elected onto the committee via a review process.

**For more information or to request a call with our current chairman please contact the practice in writing via our main reception, addressed to "PPG Chairman".**

**Many thanks indeed and we look forward to hearing from you soon!**



## **Message from the GP Partners and staff at Fleet Medical Centre**

GP Practices and their staff have recently been heavily criticised across the UK fuelled by the media and sustained by social media. Despite this, throughout the pandemic we have been open, complying with the terms of our NHS contract by offering patient access to the practice via telephone as well as online, and offering face to face appointments based on clinical need. At times we too have had staff shortages due to shielding or sickness but we have continued to serve our community under exceptionally difficult circumstances. We are concerned to hear that some of our patients feel that the COVID-19 situation has passed; please be aware that the situation is far from over including rising patient infections, the vaccination program which is ongoing, the winter months ahead and a backlog of hospital care that potentially may take years to correct. Many of the changes to general practice are now permanent under NHS guidance and we ask our patients to engage with this.

The demand on General Practice has greatly increased. GPs consulted more patients in March than in any other month since records began and we are supporting the backlog of patients on waiting lists for other NHS services. We have been advised to brace ourselves for an unprecedented demand throughout the winter.

Please be aware that as of mid-November, after a referral has been made to Frimley Health Foundation Trust, **there is an average 44 week wait for treatment from the Orthopaedic Department** and currently over 60 weeks treatment from General Surgery. Patients referred for treatment are deteriorating when having to wait this long for hospital care and are returning to see their GP adding further pressure on our resources. General Practice is trying to support our colleagues at the hospitals who are under tremendous strain of resources, staff and finance but our service is simply not funded or designed to undertake this challenge indefinitely.

We truly understand patient frustrations and we are constantly looking at ways to rectify this. Patient care is our priority. However, like the general population our staff have been scared, suffered with Covid-19 and missed seeing our friends and families and the accusations and abuse we are receiving is demoralising and recruitment and staff retention problems are reaching worrying levels. We thank those who send us messages and treats offering their support. The increased workload we are faced with has led to an increase in our working day hours. We are exhausted, our staff's mental wellbeing is being affected, and some are close to burnout. To offer a good service we need to manage expectations and keep them realistic. Our staff chose to work in healthcare to help others, but we need you to support us also. The NHS has many resources for self-care for common illnesses and ailments, including NHS 111 online help and pharmacies – please use these where you can before contacting your GP. The BMA has begun a campaign to support the sustainability of GP practices. For more details see:

<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/covid-19/gp-practices/support-your-surgery>

**With immediate effect, the practice will only respond to complaints regarding cases where a patient has come to clinical harm or where medical treatment decisions have given cause for concern. All complaints will be read and reviewed by our management team but you may not receive a reply.** As per the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman website, please do not submit a complaint to us if it is about:

- Delays with complaint responses
- Matters which are likely to rectify themselves in the next few weeks/months
- Delay in service delivery which are non-critical and are the result of an organisation coping with COVID-19

**Thank you for your continued kindness, patience and understanding whilst we work through this together.**

***The GP Partners and Staff of Fleet Medical Centre***