**Balmoral Surgery Newsletter JULY 2024**

**Partnership Changes**

We have some good news to share with all of our patients. Our Salaried GP, Dr Camm has agreed to become a Partner at Balmoral. We are excited about this development and look forward to the valuable contributions Dr Camm will bring to our team.

**Rebuilding General Practice**

The "Rebuilding General Practice" campaign is an initiative by the British Medical Association (BMA) aimed at addressing the significant challenges faced by general practice in the UK. The campaign is also supported by the Local Medical Committees. The campaign seeks to ensure that general practice is safe, stable, and sustainable for both healthcare professionals and patients. Here are some key aspects of the campaign:

**Objectives of the Campaign:**

**Safety**: Ensuring that general practice is a safe environment for both patients and healthcare professionals. This includes addressing issues such as workload pressures, staffing shortages, and the need for adequate resources.

**Stability**: Providing a stable working environment for GPs and practice staff. This involves securing long-term funding, improving working conditions, and ensuring that practices can continue to operate effectively.

**Hope**: Offering a vision for the future of general practice that is positive and sustainable. This includes advocating for policy changes, increased investment, and support for innovation in primary care.

**Key Asks of the Government:**

**Increased Funding**: Securing additional funding to support general practice, including investment in infrastructure, technology, and workforce development.

**Workforce Support**: Addressing the workforce crisis by recruiting and retaining more GPs, practice nurses, and other primary care staff. This includes improving training opportunities and working conditions.

**Reducing Bureaucracy**: Cutting down on unnecessary administrative tasks to allow GPs to focus more on patient care.

**Improving Access**: Ensuring that patients have timely access to GP services, including face-to-face appointments when needed.

**Support for Innovation**: Encouraging the adoption of new technologies and innovative practices to improve patient care and practice efficiency.

**Why is this campaign so important?**

The table below contains data showing the situation in General Practices in Deal and Dover. As you will see, our population has increased by 8.1%, but the number of General Practices has decreased and the number of patients per GP partner has increased by 61.8% in the last ten years.

***Statistics for General Practice in Dover and Deal***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Population Change | 2014  93,401 | 2024  100,937 | Percentage Change  8.1% |
| Number of GP Practices | 2014  14 | 2024  11 | Percentage Change  21.4% |
| Number of qualified GPs | 2014  42.0 | 2024  34.1 | Percentage Change  18.8% |
| Number of GP Partners (FTE) | 2014  37.8 | 2024  25.2 | Percentage Change  33.3% |
| Patients per GP Partner | 2014  2,470.6 | 2024  3,997.7 | Percentage Change  61.8% |
| **Appointments delivered in April 2024** | **Total appointments delivered**  **49,554** | **Appointments per registered Patient**  **0.49** |  |

**How to Get Involved:**

**Patients are encouraged to write to their local MP to inform them about what they value about General Practice and any issues that they have with the current system.**

**Receptionists are now called Care Navigators**

The role of the receptionist has evolved significantly, this change reflects a shift towards a more patient centred approach, emphasising the importance of guiding patients through the complexities of the health system. As care navigators their responsibilities extend beyond traditional administrative tasks. They assist patients in accessing the appropriate care and services within a general practice setting. The role includes linking patients with community resources, support groups and other services that may assist with their health and wellbeing.

**Appointments**

To book you with the appropriate clinician, you may be asked some questions by our trained care navigators so we can make sure you are booked with the most appropriate clinician.

We are lucky to be supported by a Minor Illness Team, who are able to see and treat a number of conditions. We also have access to extra clinicians through the Deal and Sandwich Primary Care Network.

**NHS 111**

At Balmoral Surgery, we are working to the BMA’s Safe Working Guidelines, to protect our GPs from burn out.  This means that once of our appointments have gone, you may be told to call NHS 111.  Whilst it may be frustrating to call 111, the questions that are asked are designed to get you to the best place to get help for your symptoms.  The questions are also designed to flag symptoms that they would consider a medical emergency.

**Pharmacy First**

Community pharmacists are now able supply prescription-only medicines, including antibiotics and antivirals where clinically appropriate, to treat seven common health conditions without the need to visit a GP.

* Sinusitis
* Sore throat
* Earache
* Infected insect bite
* Impetigo (a bacterial skin infection)
* Shingles
* Uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women

You can get treatment for these conditions by walking into the pharmacy or contacting them virtually. GP Care Navigators, NHS 111 and providers of emergency care will also be able to direct patients to pharmacies that offer the service, if contacted.

Patients can still choose to visit a GP if they wish to. Pharmacy First offers alternative access for these seven conditions and we encourage people to make the most of this service and to consult the highly trained professions in their local pharmacy.

**Self-Referrals**

Do you know that you can self-refer to some health care providers?

* Carer’s Support – please ask at reception, they can send you a link
* Podiatry - email: kentchft.podiatryeastkent@nhs.net or ask at reception for a form
* Weight loss: [www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/one-you-kent/one-you-weight-loss/](file:///C:\Users\Paula\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\4B9E1G0E\www.kentcht.nhs.uk\service\one-you-kent\one-you-weight-loss\)
* Physiotherapy – ask reception for a form
* Self-refer to Midwife – [www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/services/maternity-self-referral-form](file:///C:\Users\Paula\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\4B9E1G0E\www.ekhuft.nhs.uk\services\maternity-self-referral-form)
* Sexual Health Clinic for STIs or contraception advice etc: 0300 790 0245 or email [kchft.sexualhealthservice@nhs.net](mailto:kchft.sexualhealthservice@nhs.net)

**Ordering Prescriptions**

Please do not call the surgery for a prescription request, we do not have the capacity to take prescriptions over the telephone. Patients can either drop in their repeat prescription slip, order via the NHS App or Patient Access, or order through their usual chemist.

**Influenza and Covid Vaccines – Protecting yourselves and others**

This year, Balmoral will be administering both the Influenza and Covid vaccines here at the practice. Health care professionals at the surgery are well trained and equipped to administer vaccinations safely and effectively. The advantage of receiving your vaccinations at Balmoral ensures continuity of care, access to medical records and the ability to address any concerns immediately. We hope to offer convenient appointments by offering flexible hours to accommodate patient schedules. We will send invites to our eligible patients in due course and hope to start giving vaccines in September.

**DNAs (did not attend appointment)**

We are having a significant amount of patients not attend their booked appointments. There is always considerable pressure on our nurses and doctors for appointments and missed appointments mean that time is wasted and not available to other patients who may need it. We would be grateful if you could make every effort to attend or let the practice know in advance if you cannot come to your appointments.

**DNAs for last 3 months = 373**

**Patient Forum Group**

Balmoral Surgery has a patient forum which always welcomes new members. The Forum usually meets three times a year and aims to give our patients the opportunity to have their say about the services the surgery provides and to keep members up-to-date with new developments etc. The minutes of the forum meetings are available on our website and if you are interested in joining, please contact the Assistant Practice Manager.  Our next meeting is on **Monday 21.10.24 at 1.15pm**

**Planned Closures**

Please note that Balmoral Surgery is closed from 1pm on some days once a month to allow the doctors and staff to have protected learning time.  These sessions are arranged by the Kent & Medway Clinical Commissioning Group and offer the opportunity for the Surgery teams in our locality to get together for training purposes.  These sessions are on a Wednesday or Thursday afternoon once a month and at present are scheduled to take place as follows:

* ***24/07/2024***
* ***22/08/2024***
* ***26/09/2024***
* ***23/10/2024***