



VSG PPG

Village Surgeries Patient Participation Group
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TATTENHALL & FARNDON NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2018 ISSUE 4 - email – vsg.ppg@nhs.net

The core Committee is delighted to welcome to the group –

Julie Carmichael Farndon

'Insider Tips' that we suspect you didn't know about your GPs

Your Doctor would like to give you more time ...

Most GPs provide 10 minute appointments. There is, of course, a balance between the length of an appointment and the number of appointments that are available. It is always a difficult balance – for most patients 10 minutes is sufficient whereas for others it might be inadequate. If you feel you are going to need a longer appointment then have a chat with the receptionist.

Your Doctor likes you to be on time ...

If you arrive 10 minutes (or more) late, then regrettably you are not just late but your appointment slot has come and gone. The next patient is now due. Please remember that the impact of arriving late is not just on your Doctor but on all the other patients who have arrived on time.

Your Doctor does not like lists ...

Please be realistic and prioritise what it is you want from your GP. If you arrive clutching a list of 10 issues and you only have a 10 minute appointment then there is bound to be stress on both sides.

Your Doctor is not telepathic ...

Whilst this might seem obvious, be up-front with your doctor. It is extraordinary how many patients get through an entire consultation and then, at the end, say something like '*whilst I'm here, can I mention this chest pain that I've been having*' or '*I've got this lump which I am worried about*'.

Your Doctor is not a specialist ...

Remember that they are specialised in being a 'generalist'. If you are concerned that you might need to see a specialist, then talk this through with your GP – they are best placed to decide with you if that is what is needed or not.



OPAL (Older People Active Lives)

The mission of **OPAL** is to offer a range of services and activities for older people in rural West Cheshire, which are both accessible and enjoyable, and which help reduce isolation and loneliness in rural areas.

There are 6 **OPAL** Clubs; in Tattenhall, Frodsham, Helsby, Kelsall, Malpas and Tarporley.

Members of **OPAL** Clubs are older people living within the host villages and their surrounding rural areas.

Full information on their services can be found on their website www.opalservices.org.uk

Or call **Jean Toyn** on **07923 425 239** or by email jean.toyn@opalservices.org.uk

Village Surgeries Group Equipment Fund – 100 Club

Started in 1985 to provide additional equipment not normally funded by the NHS, our Surgeries utilise the equipment for the benefit and comfort of patients.

We are pleased to confirm that 'numbers' for the 100 Club draw are now available to purchase and we ask you to contribute to this fabulous community Charity.

You can buy as many 'numbers' as you like!

The draw is made once a year (end of October) with CASH prizes as follows: 2x£75 2x£50 4x£25.

The cost is just £10.00 – simply complete the form on the VSG Website, pay cash or make a cheque payable to VSEF or if you wish to pay online to; Account Number: 96705124, Sort Code: 55-81-42, Account Name: VSEF, Reference: 100 Club.

PRACTICE NEWS

Please note that 'Physio First' appointments are now available to book online via Patient Access.

For more information on this service, or to register for Patient Access to start booking your appointments online, visit our website <http://thevillagesurgeriesgroup.co.uk/>

Think 'Physiotherapy First' – Save the time of your GPs.



You will recall that earlier this year, your PPG conducted a survey to assess patients' views of the services they receive from the VSG and to consider possible improvements that could be made.

These results were presented both in Farndon and Tattenhall in early June. For those that were unable to attend either presentation, summaries can be viewed on the VSG Website.

- 533 responses were received which is nearly 8% of the patient population. This was a terrific response and for that we thank you.
- 65% of our respondents were women and 35% male, with over 79% reporting that they were in either 'Good' to 'Excellent' health. 67% of replies came from people in the age range 45-74.

Our principal findings related to:

MAKING APPOINTMENTS

- 45% of people had attended both surgeries, with 88% having attended a surgery in the last 6 months. Responses, therefore, related to relatively current experiences.
- Over 70% of respondents said they knew about the ability to book appointments on-line or to order repeat prescriptions on-line.
- However, only 25% of people had currently tried to book an appointment on-line; most people (81%) still book appointments by phone with a further 25% booking appointments in person.
- Those that booked on-line found it easier to get appointments at their preferred time whilst those who booked by phone found it harder to get appointments at the preferred time (41%).
- 45% of people reported that it was either hard, or very hard, to get through to the surgery on the phone.
- 62% of people were unaware that non-emergency appointments to see a doctor are available through the 'Extended Hours Service'.

APPOINTMENT EXPERIENCE AT THE SURGERY

- 50% of people had to wait up to 15 minutes to see a doctor whilst this figure was 74% for those waiting to see a practice nurse. Overall, however, very positive feedback was received in the care and consultation experience received from both the doctor and the practice nurse.

WHAT YOU WERE MOST HAPPY ABOUT

- 75% reported that they were satisfied/very satisfied with the overall care they received at the surgery.

WHAT YOU WERE LEAST HAPPY ABOUT

- 45% reported that it was either hard or very hard to get through to the surgery on the phone and 27% were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the standard of the waiting area.
- 59% would recommend the VSG to any new residents in the area. This is a relatively good response but we would like it to be even better ... so what do we need to do?

WHAT IS GOING TO CHANGE?

We analysed the 721 comments in detail together with the responses to survey questions.

Your PPG has requested a series of improvements based upon your principal areas of concern i.e. the appointment system and the standard of the waiting areas. We have discussed our suggestions with the surgery and below are some of the positive outcomes:

- The surgery is investigating the installation of a 'notified' queue system on the phone – this means that you will not just get an engaged tone but you will know your exact place in the queue.
- The number of appointments available to book on-line will be increased in line with those that are registered for 'patient access'. As you would expect, the surgery will monitor carefully the number of 'did not attend' (DNAs) to ensure these do not increase.
- It is now possible to book both a Nurse appointment **and** a GP appointment on-line.
- The staff will support the need for a follow-up appointment with a doctor that needs to be made between 2-4 weeks ahead.
- The PPG will provide guidance on issues that can be dealt with by a nurse and would not need a GP appointment – **see our spotlight on Practice Nurses in the next issue.**
- The 'screen call' system in Farndon has been switched off. Doctors and Nurses in both of our surgeries will now meet and greet individual patients so that our procedures are consistent throughout the practice.
- The reception areas will have double glazed windows installed to improve privacy. The possibility of purchasing a 'white noise' system is also being investigated
- The waiting areas will be re-decorated; Farndon by the end of this year and Tattenhall by the end of next year. The old style seating in Farndon has already been replaced with better chairs.

Your input has already made a difference. Thank you for your support and your PPG will continue to be your voice to support future improvements.

'GP Extended Hours Service'

Need a weekend or evening appointment? The **GP Extended Hours** service is designed to provide patients with appointments outside core general practice hours for routine care and is available :

- Monday to Friday: 6.30pm – 9.30pm, Saturdays & Sundays: 9am – 6pm and Bank Holidays: 9am – 2pm

To book an appointment call: **0300 123 7743** or visit <http://thevillagesurgeriesgroup.co.uk/page1.aspx?p=3&t=3> for more information. Please note this is not a drop-in service and appointment times and availability may vary.