



Press Release

New management team secures future of Christmas Maltings and Clements Practice, Haverhill

The future of a GP practice in Haverhill has been secured following talks to bring on board a new management team.

Suffolk GP Federation will take on the running of Christmas Maltings and Clements Practice in the near future.

The decision has been made with the support of NHS England and NHS West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

Dr Fiona Andrews, Senior Partner at Christmas Maltings and Clements Practice, said: "In common with other GP surgeries across the country, we have been looking at how we can make positive changes to ensure all patients continue to receive the very best care, both now and in the future.

"Difficulties replacing GPs, a rapid rise in the needs of a growing population and financial constraints at a national level have created a very challenging situation.

"The support of Suffolk GP Federation is a great opportunity to make improvements and ensure the practice is on a strong footing for the future."

Patients have been sent a newsletter informing them of the change in management, while further communications are also planned with key stakeholders including Haverhill Town Council. All staff at Christmas Maltings and Clements have also been consulted.

Dr Paul Driscoll, Medical Director and Chairman of Suffolk GP Federation, said: "The focus is very much on ensuring that Christmas Maltings & Clements remains a sustainable, local practice for the people of Haverhill and surrounding areas.

"The current problems can be overcome. Other surgeries have done so and we have excellent, modern premises and caring, committed clinicians.

“However, it does mean that the way Christmas Maltings & Clements operates will have to change. For example, we will be introducing more staff, such as nurses, paramedics and pharmacists, who will speak to or see patients where appropriate.

“The current way of accessing appointments will also change and patients will now have to book in advance instead of arriving on a ‘first come, first served’ basis as they do now.

“We also hope to make Christmas Maltings and Clements a more attractive place to work, helping with future recruitment and offering more support to members of staff.”

As part of the changes Suffolk GP Federation will establish a Christmas Maltings and Clements Practice Board which will be responsible for the future development of the surgery and include both staff and patient representatives.

Dr Driscoll added: “It will enable patients and staff to be consulted, take a view, have their say and contribute towards a range of decisions. It is the first time an employee and patient board will be responsible for managing a GP practice in Suffolk.”

Kate Vaughton, chief operating officer, NHS West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group, said: “This is a really positive step forward and one that we welcome. This change aims to secure good ongoing delivery of primary care services to people in the town.

“By developing new ways of delivering care and introducing more partnership working we can help address the challenges facing NHS services.”

Suffolk GP Federation is a not-for-profit organisation that represents and is owned by most of the GP surgeries in the county.

It already runs several services in Suffolk, including community based ultrasound, cardiology and urology clinics. It is also responsible for Suffolk GP+, which provides extra doctors’ appointments for patients after work, at weekends and Bank Holidays. Last year it also agreed to manage Walton Surgery in Felixstowe.

Suffolk GP Federation and the Christmas Maltings and Clements Practice Partners will be holding an information evening for patients who would like to know more about the changes. The date is yet to be announced but patients will be updated in the coming weeks.

Ends

About Suffolk GP Federation

1. Suffolk GP Federation is a not for profit Community Interest Company which was formed in 2013.
2. It represents and is owned by 59 independent GP practices covering 540,000 patients in Suffolk.
3. Members remain independent GP practices while collaborating in the further development of local primary care.
4. It employs 150 healthcare and support staff and is growing rapidly.

5. Patient services already being provided include community based ultrasound, cardiology, pain management and diabetes care in North East Essex.
6. It also runs several initiatives to help with GP recruitment, including networking events for newly qualified doctors, leadership programmes for those wanting to advance their careers and advice sessions for GPs thinking of leaving the professions.
7. See www.suffolkfed.org.uk.