

News from Kirkley Mill Surgery

Providing safe, appropriate and sustainable care

Our surgery, like many others in Lowestoft, operates under great pressure.

You will have read of the shortage of GPs in Suffolk with recruitment being particularly difficult in Lowestoft. We currently have one and a half full-time permanent GPs but are unlikely to recruit additional permanent doctors.

As a result, it's important that we maintain a manageable workload for our clinicians – otherwise they will become ill and leave – making the situation worse.

To ensure safe, appropriate and sustainable care we must make changes to the way the practice operates.

Our staff have been trained as 'Care Navigators' so they can direct you to the most appropriate clinician to meet your needs. This could be a nurse, physiotherapist or pharmacist, all of whom are supervised by a doctor. This will free up doctors' time for more complex cases.

Most appointments will only be available on the day.

When we are busy only patients determined as clinically urgent will be given priority.

We recognise that this is a challenging time for the practice and would like to thank you for your continued co-operation and support.

Should you have any questions about the changes – or anything else covered in this newsletter – please **email info@suffolkfed.org.uk** and we will respond as soon as we can.

How the practice will operate from Wed 2 January

- Other than nurse or healthcare assistant clinics (e.g. blood tests or routine clinics for long term conditions such as diabetes), appointments will only be available on the day that you call.
- Appointments will be released at 8am and 1pm.
- When you contact the practice you will speak to a Care Navigator who will treat your call with the same level of confidentiality as our clinicians.
- The Care Navigator will direct you to the most appropriate specialist clinician to meet your needs, which may not necessarily be a GP. You will be offered two alternative appointment times to choose from.
- On busy days we will prioritise appointments for those patients who we have determined as clinically urgent.
- When no appointments are available, you will be directed to other sources of advice (such as NHS 111 or the NHS Choices website) or asked to phone back the next day.
- Patients who believe they need a home visit are asked to request this before 10am.
- The practice is no longer able to provide certain services such as routine ear syringing.

Staff changes

Dr Nancy Loader has joined the practice as a permanent GP.

Maxine Hunt has been appointed as Operations Manager and is responsible for managing the practice.

Threatening and abusive behaviour

We have had a number of incidents in which patients have threatened our staff/other patients or used abusive language.

Kirkley Mill does not tolerate threatening or abusive behaviour. This is in line with the NHSE Zero Tolerance policy. In this situation:

- We send a final warning letter.
- We immediately remove from our list any patient who is a repeat offender, is violent or if the police are called.

When our staff feel threatened they will call the police immediately.

Our team

Our practice team includes

- Nurse Practitioners – who provide treatment and advice for many problems which may have previously been treated by a doctor.
- Pharmacists – who answer medication queries, review and re-authorise prescriptions and hold face to face clinics.
- Healthcare Assistants – who offer blood tests, check blood pressures and provide advice on weight loss and how to stop smoking.

Care Quality Commission

We were inspected in the summer and were found to have made great progress. The practice is now officially rated as Requires Improvement which is one up from Inadequate.

We have a plan to tackle the remaining issues over the next 18 months and achieve our target which is Good.



Contact us: If you have questions about any of the content in this newsletter, please email info@suffolkfed.org.uk.



To keep up to date with our news, visit www.kirkleymillsurgery.co.uk or search for 'Kirkley Mill Practice' on Facebook.

You can also share feedback on the changes with Healthwatch Suffolk. Call **01449 703949** or email info@healthwatchesuffolk.co.uk.

Our Patient Participation Group

Your practice has a group of volunteer patients who meet regularly to discuss services and how improvements can be made.

If you are interested in joining or attending a meeting please email Maxine Hunt (maxine.hunt@nhs.net).

Are you a carer?

If so, please let reception know so it can be recorded on your notes and the person you care for.

This winter

Your family doctors and nurses are working very hard. Winter is always more difficult, particularly when we have staff sickness.

Our clinicians have a fixed number of appointments each day. There are less if any staff are sick. We cannot increase the number of appointments.

When we have staff sickness we will cancel all routine appointments and only see patients we assess as clinically urgent. You will need to tell our receptionist the reason for your call.

News on our building

We are really proud to occupy a purpose built surgery. The main drawback is the layout which is not ideal as we are spread across two floors.

In 2019 we hope to move the whole surgery up to the first floor. This will mean our clinical teams can work much more closely.