

Happy New Year!

Time is flying as usual, it's the end of January already and the planning for Christmas and New Year feels like a long time ago.

Sadly, you will have seen that we made the difficult decision to hand back the contracts for Walton Surgery in Felixstowe and Kirkley Mill Surgery in Lowestoft. As we know, GP recruitment is really difficult and this is practical evidence of it.

Thank you to the whole Urgent Care Service for the planning and filling of the shifts in OOH, GP+ and ED Streaming. And a very big thank you to all the clinicians who worked over the holiday period. Your dedication and willingness to delay your sprout consumption is much appreciated. I was the on call clinical manager for the new year period and so I was particularly nervous about my first festive period as Medical Director. Thankfully, due to the preparation done by the team, there were no incidents.

You may have seen my article in the [East Anglian Daily Times](#). "Top doctor" indeed! I have had a lot of ribbing about that headline. I also had the pleasure of being interviewed by Mark Murphy on BBC Radio Suffolk to talk about my priorities in my new role and to discuss the national problems facing GP's. I hope I represented the challenges we face and our efforts in a realistic way.

GP, and wider workforce, retention is very close to my heart and I am working with colleagues from the GP Support Hub, and our partners at the CCG and LMC, to

find local opportunities and support for those affected. The GP Support Hub had nearly 400 contacts last year, supporting dozens of clinicians (99) in various areas such as enquiries about locum work, returning to practice, revalidation, mandatory training as well as GP+ work. This experience of local issues provides a foundation of ideas on which I am planning to build. Although Wise5 issues are high on the agenda, it is apparent that retention and job satisfaction issues run throughout the profession and innovative ideas will be needed.

I am more than happy to have conversations with GPs of all ages and experiences to guide how we proceed with this valuable work. I am preparing a paper for the Board and am working with our partners to arrange an event with speakers in due course.

I look forward to working with you all in the year ahead!

Dr Ruth Bushaway, Medical Director



Fed Twitter account

We have had a revamp of our Twitter account to try and make it more interesting and relevant. If you use Twitter please follow us ([@SuffolkGPFed](#)) and help create a dialogue for Suffolk and North East Essex.



Feedback and comments

If you have any comments on this newsletter, please email jenny.dewey@suffolkfed.org.uk

Walton and Kirkley Mill surgeries

The Board has made the difficult decision to hand back the contracts for both practices. The Fed has managed Walton for three years and Kirkley Mill for two years.

Both are rated 'Good' by the CQC and deliver a high-quality service. However, it has proved increasingly difficult to recruit GPs and clinical leads. This problem is particularly acute for all small practices across Suffolk and nationally. Another complicating factor is that the CCG for Kirkley Mill operates differently to those in Suffolk and refers patients to different hospitals.

We do not yet know how the CCGs plan to meet the needs of patients from Walton and Kirkley Mill. We will of course work closely with our staff to support them and to redeploy them into other roles in the Fed where possible.

We will continue to manage Christmas Maltings & Clements as this has nearly 20,000 patients, making it much easier for us to recruit. We have managed to recruit several new high-quality staff, as well as several new doctors who will be starting soon.

Out of Hours service performance over the festive period

Traditionally Christmas is one of the busiest times for our Out of Hours service. This year, from 23 December to 6 January we saw 3,674 patients, of which 37% needed to be seen within two hours.

Overall we saw 98% of patients within the time allocated (either 6, 12 or 24 hours) and this was the result of a brilliant team effort.

If you have any feedback on our service, either from a patient or a daytime clinician perspective, please email David Pannell (david.pannell@suffolkfed.org.uk). We will act on the feedback, but also use it as part of our CQC inspection in early March.

e-Consult in Haverhill

Within less than a month of its launch at Christmas Maltings and Clements in Haverhill, the practice is already number one nationally for the number of e-Consults received. In the first three weeks it has received 1,943 or mean 648 per week. There are around 1,000 unique users each week or one in twenty of the list.

We expected usage to be high. More surprising is that activity is even more disproportionately focused on Mondays than with a phone based system. 27% of e-Consults come in over the weekend and Monday.

The age of users looks fairly evenly distributed. The oldest e-Consult is from a 90 year old.

A quarter are admin queries. Around 5% are red flagged, thus asking a patient to call the surgery or 111 if out of hours.

So far the feedback from our clinical team is positive.

First New West First5 group meets

This new community interest group met in Bury on 30th Jan 2020 and 25 GPs attended. Topics included opportunities in the CCG, functional medicine, academic GP, aesthetics and a Q&A.

For the New East First5 group we are still looking for a GP from East Suffolk, within five years of qualification, to host a similar group.

The role is to organise a WhatsApp group; The Fed does any room booking or organisation required for meetings. Please email the GP Support Hub if you would be happy to do this (info@thegphub.org).

