

ST CATHERINE'S SURGERY

<https://www.stcatherinessurgery-wirral.nhs.uk/>



Practice Manager Update

By Janine Clarke

Welcome to the Spring edition of our patient newsletter. The main focus of this newsletter is to update patients with the results of the survey we sent out asking for feedback on our appointment system and PATCHS. I would like to thank all patients who provided feedback.

More information in regards to the feedback we received, and some feedback from us in relation to common concerns can be found later on in the newsletter.

2025 Spring COVID Vaccination

By Andrew Gibbard

We will run a clinic on Saturday 26th April and will invite eligible patients nearer the time.

Eligible Patients:

- aged 75 years and over
- in care homes
- aged 6 months and over with a weakened immune system are being offered a spring dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

Are you a carer?

By Andrew Gibbard

Are you an unpaid carer? If so please click on the link below to register as a carer with the practice and with "Wired Carers Health + Wellbeing Service" to find out what support is available to carers. <https://bit.ly/3NbxTfi> If you want to register as a carer + can't use the link, please contact us by phone to let us know.

If you or a family member or friend is a carer that is under 18, support is available from Barnardo's. Please contact the practice to let us know that you have caring responsibilities.

Friends & Family Test

By Andrew Gibbard

The NHS Friends and Family Test allows GP surgeries to gather valuable feedback that help to improve services for patients while enabling the surgery to identify areas for enhancement. We now send an email or text message to patient's after every appointment asking if they would be kind enough to provide feedback about their experience.

You can read more about the Friends and family test [here](#).

St Catherine's Surgery in Focus

Clinical updates

- In January we welcomed Dr Monzoor and Dr Okonkwo to our clinical team.
- The BP monitor we introduced to the 1st floor waiting area over 1 year ago has been a huge success. This facility is available for all patients if they wish to check their blood pressure. The machine will print the reading and we ask that patients write their details on the back of the printed result and put the reading in the pink box located at 1st floor reception so that it can be checked by a Clinician.

Over the last 3 months the surgery has handled:

- Handled 25,943 prescription requests.
- Handled 10,717 Patches requests.
- Delivered 926 GP Tele consults.
- Delivered 4,553 GP Face-to-face consultations
- Delivered 3,879 Nurse appointments
- Delivered 3,583 Phlebotomy appointments.

What is a DNA?

The reason we are so passionate about reducing the rate of appointments that aren't attended is because it means we can offer that appointment to another patient. In the last quarter the number of DNA's cost 59 hours of GP appointments and 360 hours of Nurse appointments that could have been offered to other patients.

If you are unable to attend please either reply to the text "cancel" to the reminder message that we send, or call the surgery on 0151 643 6700.

Support For Armed Forces Veterans

By Dr Caroline Prior - Clinical Veteran Lead

Our practice is accredited as a 'veteran friendly' practice – our aim is to deliver the best possible care and treatment for patients who have served in the armed forces. A veteran is anyone who has served for at least one day in the British Armed Forces, whether as a Regular or Reservist (previously known as the Territorial Army). It means the same as 'ex service personnel' or 'ex forces,' although not all veterans know the term or choose to associate with the term 'veteran.' Younger veterans might refer to themselves as 'ex-forces,' in the belief that a veteran is someone who fought in the First or Second World War. Veterans include those who were Merchant Navy seafarers or fisherman who served in a vessel used to support the UK's armed forces at any time.

If this applies to you then it would be helpful if you could let us know so we can record your 'military veteran' status so all practice staff are aware. Knowing this information can allow us to signpost you to specialist veteran healthcare support and faster access to priority services where appropriate.

In addition to recognising and supporting our own veterans - the Veterans charity is our chosen fundraising charity of choice for 2025 and we recently contributed our Christmas raffle takings to their 'Be a Christmas Hero' campaign.

If you are a veteran and feel we can further support you in anyway please contact the practice through the usual methods

Patient Reference Group

By Andrew Gibbard

The Practice is keen to engage with patients who can represent and reflect the thoughts of patients and give us constructive feedback that enables us to continuously improve the service we provide.

To help us with this, we are setting up a virtual patient representation group so that you can have your say. We will ask the members of this representative group some questions from time to time, such as what you think about the quality of the care or service you received, and ideas you may have to improve the surgery or the services that are provided. We will contact you via email and keep our surveys succinct so it shouldn't take too much of your time.

We aim to gather patients from as broad a spectrum as possible to get a truly representative sample of our patient population.

If you are interested in joining the group, please fill out the sign-up form [here](#).

PATCHS Feedback

By Janine Clarke

We would like to thank patients who completed our PATCHS questionnaire in October 2024; we value your feedback which has helped us to review and improve our access.

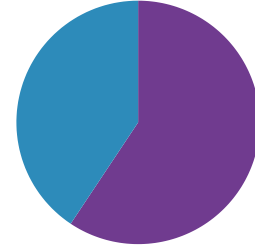
We are also pleased to note the results demonstrate a clear improvement since our initial survey in April 2024, but we know there is still work to do.....

PATCHS Questionnaire Responses

Question 1 - How have you found the process for booking an appointment since we changed the system in October 2023?

Better – 473 (59.35%)

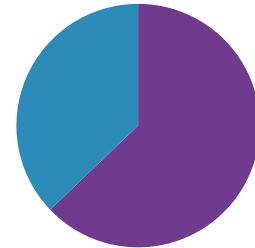
Worse – 324 (40.65%)



Question 2 - Did you get the outcome you hoped for when using PATCHS?

Yes – 501 (62.86%)

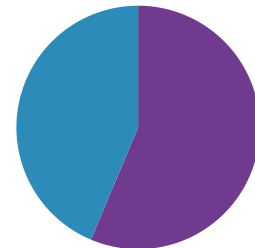
No – 296 (37.14%)



Question 3 - Do you agree that PATCHS is a more convenient way to request an appointment?

Yes – 449 (56.34%)

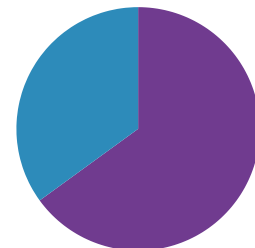
No – 348 (43.66%)



Question 4 - Would you agree that since we introduced the new appointment system, it has reduced the waiting time to contact the practice on the phone?

Yes – 518 (64.99%)

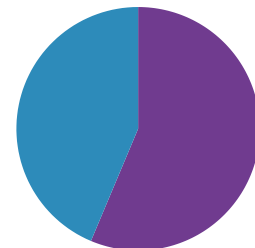
No – 279 (35.01%)



Question 5 - Do you find PATCHS user friendly?

Yes – 449 (56.34%)

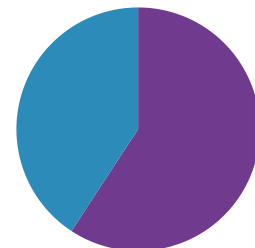
No – 348 (43.66%)



Question 6 - Do you find our new website useful and easy to navigate?

Yes – 472 (59.22%)

No – 325 (40.78%)



We've identified some common themes from your feedback, and created the attached Question and Answer template which we will update on a regular basis

“I am struggling to log on to PATCHS .”

If you are struggling to create an account or to log in to your account, we have created a step-by-step instruction on our website which will hopefully help. Please visit <https://stcatherinessurgery-wirral.nhs.uk/patchs-support-video/> If you find that you still need help, we are happy to help you over the phone or at the reception desk.

“Older patients can find it difficult to understand or learn how to use PATCHS. ”

If anyone is struggling to use PATCHS, we are here to help, either on the telephone or at the front desk. We have also created a video on our website that explains the process step by step. If you can't use it, our receptionists can help you to set up your account or complete the PATCHS on your behalf if needed. Completing a PATCHS request on your behalf over the telephone or at the front desk can be time consuming and may not be convenient for you, which is why we encourage you to complete the request yourself, where possible.

“I prefer speaking to a human rather than an online form and I think this is quicker ”

PATCHS is designed to collect the information needed to effectively triage all appointment requests. If an appointment is deemed clinically appropriate, you will receive an appointment or signposted to a more appropriate service. Triageing appointments in this way ensures appointments are appropriate and reduces waiting times for routine appointments.

“Submitting a PATCHS request is a lengthy process ”

We understand that you may feel that it takes time to complete a PATCHS request properly but the more information you provide the easier it will be to triage your request appropriately. You may be asked to complete a questionnaire, if your request relates to certain condition such as back pain/rash etc. Again, completing the questionnaire helps the GP understand the problem and assess the best course of action. We have received positive feedback from patients about PATCHS including; the convenience, that it's user-friendly, it facilitates a quick response from the practice and, where appropriate, results in a same day appointment.

“I never get to speak to a doctor, it's always the receptionist ”

Our receptionists are trained in care navigation, you may receive a message from them if it is appropriate to navigate you to a local service for treatment or advice. Requests to see a clinician are reviewed by a GP and an appointment will be booked when clinically appropriate. Alternatively, the GP may communicate directly with you via PATCHS if they need more information, or if your problem doesn't require an appointment.


“Is my personal data protected? .”

All requests are subject to clinical triage, this may result in a patient being sent advice from the GP, being booked for an appointment with an appropriate health professional, or navigation to a community service according to clinical need. If you haven't had a response from us after 2 working days, or sooner if it is an urgent problem, please contact our team so that we can check the progress for you.

“I am concerned that the advice given was not suitable for my condition, and it is hard to explain the problem in PATCHS.”

All appointment requests are subject to clinical triage. This enables us to give the most appropriate advice/appointment in accordance with clinical need. This may not always result in an appointment with the GP. We must ensure that NHS services are used appropriately to enable the services to be available for those that need them.

Changes to your Enhanced Access service



✔ Evenings ✔ Weekends ✔ Bank holidays

The practices of Brighter Birkenhead Primary Care Network are working together to improve access to primary care appointments above normal core hours.

What is Enhanced Access?

Enhanced Access offers pre bookable appointment on the weekend as well as increasing the number of urgent on the day appointments.

Extended Access to primary care was introduced by NHS England in 2016 to ensure everyone has easier and more convenient access to GP services. Including physical and digital appointments at evenings and weekends

What can I expect from the Service?

Patients can expect an enhanced access service that is run by a team of dedicated professional staff ranging from experienced local clinicians such as GPs, Advanced Nurse Practitioners, Practice Nurses, and Clinical Pharmacists through to our helpful administration team. Furthermore, patients can expect a mixture of face-to-face and remote consultations ensuring the service is accessible to all.

What is Changing?

Currently Extended Access appointments are delivered at your practice. The new model will see appointments from our designated Hub (St Catherine's Surgery). Patients will be able to book appointments the usual way via their GP Practice and, if they meet the criteria, will be offered an appointment.

What are the hours?

Urgent on the day appointments:

Monday to Friday – 2pm to 8pm

Routine Appointments

Saturday – 9am to 5pm





Armed Forces veteran friendly accredited GP practice

We are an Armed Forces veteran friendly accredited GP practice.

This means that, as part of the health commitments of the Armed Forces Covenant, we have a dedicated clinician who has a specialist knowledge of military related health conditions and veteran specific health services. This is important in helping ex-forces to get the best care and treatment.

**If you are ex-forces, please
let your GP know to help
ensure you are getting the
best possible care.**

**To find out
more, ask your
nurse or GP.**