

Falkland PPG Newsletter



Autumn 2022

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We are always looking for volunteers to join the Falkland Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG) which acts as the voice of the patients by feeding people's views to the doctors and managers and passing on information. If you'd like to receive emails from the PPG, or join the committee, please email:

falklandppg@gmail.com

Falkland On-line

Don't forget that the surgery has its own Facebook page where you can get up-to-date information as well as post your own comments

And there's also the website of course:

www.falklandsurgery.co.uk/

Welcome to the latest Patient Participation Group (PPG) Newsletter

Open Evening

Our next Open Evening and PPG AGM is on 24th Oct 2022 at 7pm and is an opportunity to hear the latest surgery news and the world of health, and to give feedback. There will also be sessions on:

'How to get the best out of my surgery' – from getting an appointment to having your queries answered.

Ulcers – how to avoid and manage them. Especially in older people, ulcers, whether from accident or being in one place too long, can be hard to shift. Learn what to do to avoid problems.

It is hoped that this will be held face to face at the surgery. Alternatively, it could be on Zoom or a mix of the two.

Surgery Staffing

Two new health care assistants (HCA's) have been taken on and are able to do things such as health checks for people with serious mental illness or learning disability, supporting people with diabetes and taking blood samples.

Three new 'patient services advisors' have been appointed (*they are called this rather than 'receptionist' because their trained role requires much greater knowledge and skills than just answering the phone and checking people into appointments*). Shift patterns have been changed to ensure there are more people on the phones at any given time.

Surgery Activity

The Practice continues to be very busy. As an indication of how much goes on, there were 65,000 appointments with doctors and nurses in the last year, of which 68% were face-to-face. There were 22,000 appointments with practice staff in the last three months (for 14,000 patients registered with the practice). There are between 100 and 300 prescription requests a day, 75-100 dashboard questions on the website, plus emails and front desk queries

The Falkland Website

The Practice has decided to move to a different website platform from Sept. National conditions regarding online consultation tools and websites means it will not be possible to continue with the current e-consult system on the present website. The PPG has offered to help test the new website.

Medication Reviews

There is currently a backlog of 1500 medication reviews, which could take another couple of months to clear.

These reviews are needed for batch repeat prescriptions, that is multiple medications over a six month period. The reviews make sure that the medications are still the right ones for you, that the combination of drugs work effectively and that account is taken of any changes in your circumstances.

Previously all appointments were released at a given time, but they would all be taken up in about 20 minutes. That system has therefore now been changed. Patients now fill in a form and appointments are allocated either according to need or on a first-come-first-served basis.

While waiting for a review, medications are just prescribed for a month at a time. After the review, you should automatically be moved back to six monthly prescriptions.

Repeat prescriptions should be requested at least three days in advance from the surgery (but no more than 10 days, as the electronic system does not allow it, for safety reasons).

National GP Patients' Survey

This year's results of the national GP Patients' Survey have now been published. (The results for Falkland can be found here: <https://gp-patient.co.uk/patientexperiences?practicecode=K81017>).

The headline summary for the practice compares its results to the 'ICS' (the Integrated Care System, covering Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West) and to national averages.

The three areas where patient experience is highest compared to the ICS are:

- 90% of respondents say they have had enough support from local services or organisations in the last 12 months to help manage their long-term condition(s). (ICS result: 69%. National result: 65%)
- 94% of respondents say the healthcare professional they saw or spoke to was good at treating them with care and concern during their last general practice appointment. (ICS result: 86%. National result: 83%)
- 92% of respondents say the healthcare professional they saw or spoke to was good at listening to them during their last general practice appointment. (ICS result: 87%. National result: 85%)
- And the three areas where patient experience is lowest compared with the ICS result are:

- 38% of respondents describe their experience of making an appointment as good. (ICS result: 59%. National result: 56%)
- 39% of respondents were offered a choice of appointment when they last tried to make a general practice appointment. (ICS result: 59%. National result: 59%)
- 64% of respondents find the receptionists at this GP practice helpful. (ICS result: 82%. National result: 82%)

The website lets you find information from the survey in a number of different ways. You can get more detail on the answers for particular questions; compare Falkland's results with up to two other practices at a time; or cross-tabulate the results of one question against another.

Joint meeting of PPG's with our Primary Care Network

Major changes are underway in how the NHS is organised. As reported in the last newsletter, the former 'clinical commissioning groups' have been replaced by 'Integrated Care Systems', with ours covering the whole of Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and 'Berkshire West' (which is Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire). Locally, GP practices have been encouraged to band together into what is called 'Primary Care Networks', (PCN) with more and more funding passed through that route.

Falkland Surgery belongs to the Kennet PCN, and includes Burdwood Surgery and the Thatcham Medical Practice. Given this increasing importance of Primary Care Networks, the three Patient Participation Groups (PPG's) requested a meeting with our PCN directors.

At that meeting, in June, they discussed the great pressure they are currently under because of increased demand and difficulties recruiting staff. National funding of additional staff such as pharmacists, physios and social prescribers, help ease those pressure.

There are new requirements in the contract for PCN's, one of which is, from 1st October 2022, to provide 'enhanced access' between the hours of 6.30pm and 8pm Mondays to Fridays and between 9am and 5pm on Saturdays. This means providing bookable clinical appointments available to all patients. The PCN is intending to use those slots to provide a variety of services including GP and nurse appointments, vaccinations and specialist clinics, for instance, for people with serious mental illness, long term conditions and dementia.

The three PPG's represented at the meeting all felt that more use could be made of volunteers and the PPG's, and it was hoped this could be progressed in future.

Contact us at: falklandppg@gmail.com

or via our website at: www.falklandppg.org.uk