

# Falkland PPG Newsletter



Summer 2023

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### Falkland On-line

The surgery has its own Facebook page where you can get up-to-date information as well as post your own comments.

<https://www.facebook.com/falklandsurgerynewbury/>

The surgery website is:

[www.falklandsurgery.co.uk/](http://www.falklandsurgery.co.uk/)

The PPG also has its own website:

[www.falklandppg.org.uk](http://www.falklandppg.org.uk)

### Surgery News

Falkland, like other GP surgeries, is under great pressure at the moment, but is still managing to see 59% of those contacting the surgery on the same day, the April PPG Open Evening heard. Over 27,000 appointments had been offered in the previous three months with nearly 23,000 attendances. Nearly 19,000 of those offered were with GPs. The total number of patients registered with the surgery is 14,000 (some people such as frail elderly and those with long term conditions, need appointments more often).

The next Open Evening (and PPG AGM) is on Monday 13th November 2023.

### Changes to the Appointment System

The Practice’s appointment system changed from 23rd January, to have the bulk of requests going through the e-consult system. Many requests were already going through this route, so patients may not have noticed much of a change.

All of the requests for appointments are reviewed on the same day (if the practice is open) by two doctors. The e-consult form, a national system, asks enough questions to ensure any really serious issues are noted and the patient can be advised to take immediate action such as going to A&E. For all the others, the GP can make a decision on the priority depending on the symptoms. Patients get a call back within 72 hours. Sometimes a telephone conversation is enough, but often they will be called in for an appointment.

## **Staffing Changes**

There are now three prescribing pharmacists. A new care co-ordinator is due to start in May, doing home visits, looking after frail elderly, doing dementia reviews etc.

There are now three days of MSK physio (musculoskeletal physiotherapy) a week, with diagnostics on Tuesdays and Thursdays and treatment on Friday. There are also physio sessions on Monday evenings.

## **New plan to improve access to general practice**

NHS England have published a plan to make it easier for people to contact their GP practice and to know on the same day how their request will be dealt with.

An ageing population has increased demand and the promised increase in the number of GPs has not been forthcoming, though there are now more in training.

The plan has four elements:

1. Helping patients manage their own health, through the NHS app and through more services, including some prescriptions, from community pharmacies.
2. Providing technological and other support to GP practices to help them assess patients at the first point of contact (commonly called 'triage') – Falkland surgery already does this.
3. Making a larger group of staff available of various types. This expands on what has been happening over the last few years, with more pharmacists, physiotherapists, social prescribers and others, alongside GPs and nurses.
4. Reducing the bureaucracy on GP surgeries.

## **Loneliness, and a Local Directory of Services**

Loneliness is not only draining and distressing for those experiencing it, it is also bad for

your health (equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day, according to one study).

Falkland's Dr Berry, is therefore making use of a two-year GP Fellowship scheme to tackle the problem. Her goal is to compile a directory of local services, that can then be published as a leaflet, to help people find places they can go to find companionship.

There is an existing West Berkshire Directory ([directory.westberks.gov.uk](http://directory.westberks.gov.uk)) but this covers the whole of the district and is only available online. Dr Berry has been learning from the experience of other areas that have already published such booklets.

Although it sounds simple, this is a huge undertaking and any help that can be provided by anyone in the area would be gratefully received. Help would be particularly welcome with:

- Compiling a list of services, days, locations, prices and contact details
- Using IT skills to format the above into a booklet, inserting pictures/logos etc.
- Securing funding for printing and researching printers for the best deals and quality

Anyone interested in helping out with this project should email [falklandppg@gmail.com](mailto:falklandppg@gmail.com).

We are always looking for patients to join the Falkland Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG) which acts as the voice of the patients by feeding their views to the doctors and managers and passing on information back to them. If you'd like to receive emails from the PPG, or join the committee, please email: [falklandppg@gmail.com](mailto:falklandppg@gmail.com)