

“Every day, more than a million people benefit from the advice and support of primary care professionals – acting as a first point of contact for most people accessing the NHS and also providing an ongoing relationship to those who need it. This enduring connection to people is what makes primary care so valued by the communities it serves. Despite this, there are real signs of genuine and growing discontent with primary care – both from the public who use it and the professionals who work within it. Inadequate access to urgent care is having a direct impact on GPs’ ability to provide continuity of care to those patients who need it most. In large part because of this, patient satisfaction with access to general practice is at an all-time low, despite record numbers of appointments: the 8 am Monday scramble for appointments has now become synonymous with patient frustration.” (Fuller, 2022)

"To provide a safe, efficient service, 56 GPs per 100,000 population are needed, but the reality in LLR [Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland] is that we now only have 41 (down from 42 in the past year). We need 175 additional GPs. In effect, 315,000 people in LLR do not have access to a safe general practice service. This represents 1 in 4 of the population.

General practice is the only part of the NHS which has consistently delivered more appointments than compared to before the pandemic. They are higher than ever and up 7.7%. Every day in LLR, there are now 18,900 appointments in general practices. General practice continues to provide the vast majority of healthcare in the NHS – often quoted as 90%". (LMC, 2022)

Dear patient of Bridge Street Medical Practice,

We can't thank you enough for your support over the past few years. **In 2022, our team provided over 42,000 appointments, with a whopping 75% of them being face-to-face.** We know it's been a tough year for our patients and staff with all the changes in the NHS. But we're delighted that our practice team has developed, and we now have more professionals than ever providing care.

We are keen to introduce our:

- **First Contact Physiotherapists**, ideal for all your muscular problems. You can book appointments with them in advance by calling at any time of the day.
- **Clinical Pharmacists** are also working with us to support medication queries and reviews. They also help with various quality improvement projects designed to keep you safe and our prescribing in keeping with the latest guidance.
- **Social Prescribers** who can help you tackle health-related issues without using medication. For example, carers needing more support, loneliness and support and advice for individuals suffering with debts, unemployment etc.
- **Practice Nurses** who continue to support you with health checks and long-term condition reviews.

We are proud to be part of the **Carillon Primary Care Network (PCN)**, which includes five practices offering a range of virtual and face-to-face appointments outside of the current practice contracted times. These appointments are combined with another PCN (Beacon) and delivered at another site.

Recently, the partners at Bridge Street met with an external review team from the RCGP (Royal College of General Practitioners) to look at the service offered by our practice. We received many positive comments, such as:

- Patient satisfaction with the clinical team's understanding of mental health issues.
- Patients have enough time to discuss their health concerns.

However, we also found areas that need improvement, such as:

- Pre-bookable appointments
- Options to book appointments that avoid the "8 am rush."
- Greater online

We are now offering the following:

- Booking of appointments with partners online.
- Pre-bookable appointments.
- On-the-day appointments provided by other medical professionals, including our Physician Associate, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Junior Doctors, ARRs staff (additional roles), and Community Pharmacy colleagues.

Our reception staff have been trained in patient triage and care navigation. **Please supply as much information about your health/care needs as possible**; so that our team can ensure that you receive the right care at the right time by the right professional and in the right place.

We encourage all our patients to consider using online self-help tools/111 or your community pharmacist for common self-limiting illnesses. While we understand how reassuring it can be to speak to a GP about your concerns, many appointments are still used for conditions that could be managed with other team members. You can request your FITNOTE (the old "sick note") via an online link – please also see this [link](#), as not all patients need a FITNOTE.

We are proud to lead the way with multidisciplinary (MDT) meetings to support patients with complex medical problems. In 2023, GPs and clinical staff will have discussions with NHS consultants about complex Asthma, Diabetes and Kidney conditions. Your GPs already meet with community nurses, palliative care teams, and health visitors, plus ward rounds in care homes to help support some of the community's most vulnerable patients. Working with our PCN staff, we have also increased bowel screening uptake by 15%, increased access to smears for women and improved the number of patients having asthma treatment reviews.

We are a training practice, which means you'll see a range of students and junior clinical staff working within the practice. Please engage with them as they are the future workforce, and your current clinical team are only here because of their training. **If you want to get more involved with your practice, please speak to reception about joining the Patient Participation Group.**

We recently underwent our CQC review and are thrilled to announce that we've received a Good rating in all areas.

Lastly, we ask that you stay up to date with the current changes in the NHS digital programme by updating your practice with your email or mobile number. Please ask at reception about some exciting new projects available via the practice, such as the new digital hub. Occasionally, you may receive an SMS from the practice asking for information. This technology allows the clinical team to keep your records updated. It helps with patient safety work, such as that conducted by our clinical pharmacy team.

Thank you again for your support. While there remain many challenges ahead for the NHS, General Practice and Bridge Street Medical, the partners are looking forward to continuing to support your health and well-being.

Warm regards,

Dr S Eveson (Senior Partner)

Dr L Borrill

Dr A Durrant

and

The Team at Bridge Street Medical Practice