

Alwoodley Medical Centre

Patient Participation Group Newsletter

March 2017

Tel 0113 393 0119

www.Alwoodleymedicalcentre.co.uk

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Contact Us

Contact the surgery

- For appointments
- For any individual queries about your health or care

→Tel 0113 393 0119

Contact the 111 service

- For any urgent queries out of hours ie when the surgery is closed

→Tel 111

Contact the PPG

- For general comments about the service provided by the Practice
- For feedback or queries related to this newsletter

→PPG.AlwoodleyMedicalCentre@outlook.com

1. One year on

There is no doubt that the past year has been challenging for the Practice. They have merged two practices on different IT systems, started working in a completely different building environment, gone through recruitment of doctors, nurses and administration staff and had a very disruptive time with sick leave and absence of a number of staff in the Practice.

Despite all these challenges the Practice has been attractive enough to be able to recruit GPs and nurses when across the country people have had to close lists or hand back their contracts. The practice has grown significantly over this time, however, the number of sessions provided by doctors and nurses in proportion to our patient growth has increased.

The Practice has recently had an inspection by the Care Quality Commission. We expect the report to be published in May.

We are aware of issues being raised by patients following the move, and this newsletter aims to reassure patients and inform them of actions being taken to address concerns.

2. Patient Feedback

One of the things your PPG does is to look at feedback from patients to understand the views and concerns of patients and ensure they are discussed with the practice and dealt with wherever possible. The “Friends and Family” survey is one tool for doing this, which some of you will be familiar with by responding to text messages about whether you would recommend the practice following an appointment there.

Analysis of these results since the merger and new building opening has shown that the vast majority of patients remain happy with the service they receive, with an average of 82% saying they are likely or extremely likely to recommend the practice to family and friends in 2016. However, it is also noted that this figure has reduced from 90% in 2015.

We have looked in more detail at the concerns raised by patients and grouped these issues into six main categories:

ISSUE 1 – Length of time to book appointments and get through on telephone

ISSUE 2 – Waiting times to see doctor or nurse once in waiting room

ISSUE 3 – Experience within Reception area

ISSUE 4 – Car parking and signage

ISSUE 5 – Patients not being aware of existing facilities, names of doctors and nurses, website availability, online booking system etc

ISSUE 6 – Additional services requested

It should be noted that none of these issues relate to the service delivered by doctors and other healthcare professionals at the Practice, with an overwhelming level of positive comments being made about the quality of care received.

The following sections look at each of these issues in detail to show how these may be addressed both by patients and the Practice.

3. Appointments

The biggest issue for patients is the length of time to book a ROUTINE appointment and to get through on the telephone.

The key point for patients to understand here is that anyone needing an **URGENT** appointment will almost always be offered this on the day if necessary.

- Appointments are available to book up to 4 weeks in advance for booking of routine appointments. This can be done online, by telephone, or in person.
- If you think you need to see a Doctor unexpectedly, but there are no appointments available that day – you will be given the option to speak to a Doctor on the telephone. The Doctor will then decide whether you need to be seen urgently, and if so you will be given an appointment for that same day.
- In addition to this we also offer same day routine telephone consultations if you telephone before 11am.

Extended hours' appointments on Mondays both early and late in the day are now in place and Alwoodley is now open from 7am - 8pm, as well as 8am to 6pm on the other weekdays. Appointments for nurses and healthcare assistants are far less strained at present.

We do also need to reiterate again the waste of doctors' time through missed appointments. In the last 6 months there were a massive 727 missed appointments, which amounts to the equivalent of almost 6 weeks of appointments of a full-time GP. Patients are urged to contact the Practice by telephone if they find they are unable to attend an appointment, or this can be done online via the patient access link www.patient.co.uk/access. Patients who miss 3 appointments may be removed from the practice list.

The new telephone system has also gone through some teething problems and we are aware of concerns about the length of wait for this to be answered. We would encourage patients telephoning for a routine appointment to book online wherever possible – the online facility is easy to set up and use and gives patients access to repeat prescription ordering, making and cancelling appointments, updating your contact details and also gives you access to view your summary health record. For more information, please ask at Reception or visit <http://www.alwoodleymedicalcentre.co.uk/doitonline.aspx>

4. Waiting Times

Another issue raised for some patients relates to the amount of time spent waiting in Reception for their appointment. We recognise the difficulty facing doctors and other health professionals trying to keep time with appointments. Individual problems can be difficult to deal with in 10 minute appointment slots, and late running can occur if they have had to spend appropriate time with patients who need it, or deal with multiple issues raised by a patient.

We must reinforce the need for patients to book **one appointment for one issue** wherever possible. It is not felt that increasing the appointment duration to 15 minutes would alleviate the situation. We are also reviewing the accuracy of the log in system which does notify patients, when they log in, of the estimated waiting time, however, this is not felt to be very accurate.

5. Reception Area

Various issues have been raised regarding the Alwoodley Reception area and staff who work within it. These are being tackled as follows:

- Ongoing training is taking place with new and existing administrative staff to reinforce the importance of excellent customer service at all times. We would also ask patients to have respect for staff when dealing with them in this pressurised

situation.

- Seating has been rotated to face the screens which call patients to their appointment
- Ideas for improving privacy at the Reception counter are being discussed, as well as the introduction of a queuing system or rail
- A display is now in place showing photographs of all the doctors, nurses, healthcare assistants and Practice management
- A wheelchair has been made available for patients who need it
- Some patients have asked why we have no play area or magazines – this is because infection control does not encourage these, and so there are no plans at present to offer these
- The out of hours post box is now signposted to the side of the building
- Opening hours are now being shown on the doors
- Wifi is now freely available at Alwoodley Medical Centre for patients to use
- The patient notice board to the right hand side of Reception near to the indoor Pharmacy entrance has been updated with patient information from the PPG

6. Car Parking

We are very lucky to have more extensive car parking space than either surgery had previously, and more than most local practices, however, problems are being caused by some patients not taking heed of the one way parking system. Drivers should NOT turn into the first left turn in the car park as this is NO ENTRY. Please continue straight on as you enter and go around the car park in an anti-clockwise direction to avoid any potential collisions or blockages.

We have previously contacted Leeds City Council to request signage to the Practice, however, this has been refused on the grounds that most existing patients are now familiar with directions, and for new patients, the website is felt to give adequate directions. The Practice is however, investigating new car park signs to make directions clearer. Signage is also being improved at the Adel branch to make it clear it is a branch of Alwoodley Medical Centre.

7. Awareness of facilities and services

It is apparent from comments made that patients are not aware of all the services and facilities available at the Practice, or who does what there. We would encourage patients to visit the Practice website www.AlwoodleyMedicalCentre.co.uk where a wealth of information is available about the practice, the staff and services available to you. Please see section 9 of this newsletter for more information.

This newsletter is also produced at least 3 times a year by the PPG to give patients information about the issues being discussed with the Practice. You can register to have this sent to you by email when it is produced by clicking on [Sign up for our practice newsletter](#) on the web page <http://www.alwoodleymedicalcentre.co.uk/doitonline.aspx>

Patients may also not yet be aware that we have Jane Bradshaw, a wellbeing coordinator with the Connect Well service, at the practice for several sessions a week. Her role is to help deliver a service for patients needing non-clinical support and it aims to connect people to services and activities in our community who may be feeling lonely, stressed or just want to be more active and/or meet new people. Patients may be referred to Jane by a GP or they may self refer. To find out more phone 0113 336 7612, ask at Reception or email connectwell@commlinks.co.uk.

8. Other services requested

There have been requests for a number of additional services to be offered at the Practice. Ones that are being considered include:

- weight loss clinic with exercise and slimming classes
- warfarin clinic
- chiropody & physiotherapy
- diabetes awareness clinic

It is unlikely that the Practice will ever offer a minor injuries unit – this is the role of A&E. Also, homeopathic/complementary treatments are unfortunately unlikely to be offered due to lack of space.

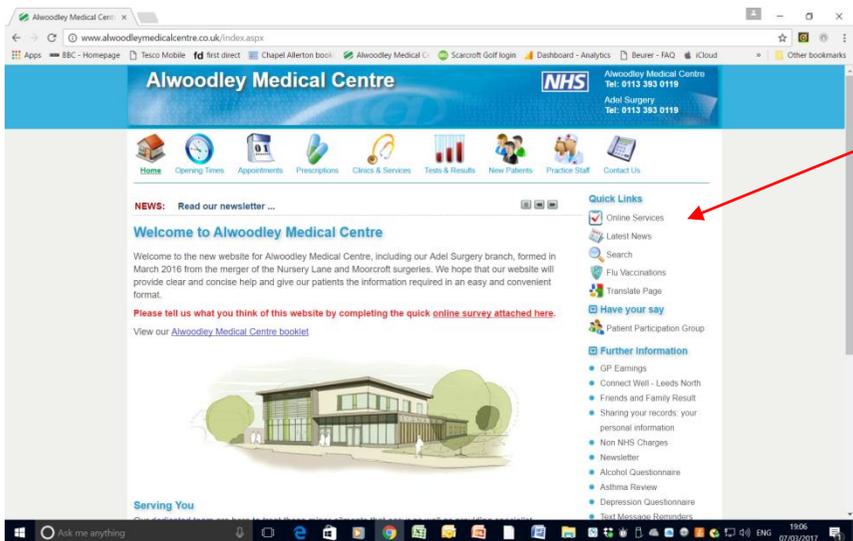
9. Using the Website

The website www.Alwoodleymedicalcentre.co.uk

provides a wide range of information about the practice, as well as allowing patients access to:

- Check on, add to and edit your personal contact details
- Book and cancel appointments
- View prescriptions and order repeat prescriptions
- View your summary patient record

To access this online system, please click on “Online Services” at the top of the “Quick Links” on the right hand side as shown by the arrow.



At the moment there is a survey ongoing to seek patients' views on the usability of the website, so please go on to the website and tell us what improvements you would like to it –the link to the survey is on the Home page as you will see above highlighted in red.

Analysis of patient use of the website since August shows increasing numbers of patients using the website, 62% of whom are female and with a fairly even age distribution from 18-24 year olds through to 65+ age group. Almost half of users are using the website from a desktop, 37% from their mobile and 15% from a tablet.

10. Harrogate District Hospital clinics

Harrogate District Hospital is now providing a range of outpatient services here at Alwoodley Medical Centre. Whilst there was initially some delay in providing x-ray and scan facilities, these are now up and running and our GPs are able to refer patients to this service. You can find more information about this on the website "Clinics and services" section.

11. Patient Participation Group

We are an active patient group formed from representatives from Nursery Lane and Moorcroft surgeries. We produce regular newsletters like this to keep patients informed, and are here to represent patients' views in the wider context, working closely with the Practice staff to do so. If you would like to receive regular newsletters by email, you need to request this by EITHER:

- Completing a form at Reception
OR
- Registering to use the service online via the link
www.patient.co.uk/access

Patients are invited to become involved with the ongoing development of the Practice through a new virtual Patient Reference Group who will act as a wider group from which we seek views to feed into the Patient Participation Group which meets on a regular basis.

For more information, please visit

<http://www.alwoodleymedicalcentre.co.uk/ppg.aspx>

Or you may contact us by email at:

PPG.Alwoodleymedicalcentre@outlook.com