



# Bassett Road Surgery Patient Participation Group

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## Newsletter September 2021

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### Contents:

- Message from Dr Henderson
- Blood tests
- Booking an appointment at the surgery
- Changes to the appointment system from autumn 2021
- 'Ask a question' option
- BRS patient survey 2020
- 2021 National GP survey
- Success of COVID vaccination
- Flu vaccination 2021-22
- Ear wax removal
- BRS staff changes
- New car park at L&D Hospital
- Leighton Buzzard Voluntary Patient Transport
- Flex, connect & share
- Current patient numbers
- Festival for Older People
- Keep updated
- Patient Participation Group

### Message from Dr John Henderson

"I am particularly aware just how difficult the past 18 months have been not just for the practice but especially for you, our patients. I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for your support and cooperation with all the stringent measures we've had to take to ensure everyone's safety. I want to reassure you that the practice is very much 'open for business', but we are not quite out of the woods yet and continue to have to adhere to additional NHS England guidelines. Whilst we are offering face-to-face appointments, we still need to check whether people have a temperature or other COVID symptoms so they may be seen in a different part of the building to manage infection control. This will continue to cause some disruption to our service, but I want you to know that we are very much here for you – we will continue to provide the best possible service we can, within the restrictions we find ourselves working under."

### Blood Tests

Due to the current global shortage of blood bottles, we have been unable to undertake routine blood tests since the middle of August and this is set to continue for some time. We are able to offer urgent bloods directed by the clinician and marked in your clinical notes (e.g. for those undergoing cancer treatment). We apologise for this disruption and will keep you updated as soon as we know more.

### Booking an appointment at the surgery

If you have not been in contact with the surgery since the beginning of the COVID period, please be aware that your initial appointment is likely to be a telephone call.

When you contact the surgery by telephone to book an appointment, you will hear a series of messages that will include a numbered queuing system. You will then be offered a list of options which will direct you to the most appropriate person for assistance. Following this you will receive a call to discuss your case and if you need a face-to-face appointment you will be given a time to attend.

We do still have to manage social distancing and other infection control measures so, when attending the surgery, you are asked to use the rear patient entrance via the car park and wear a face covering whilst in the building.

## Changes to the appointment system from autumn 2021

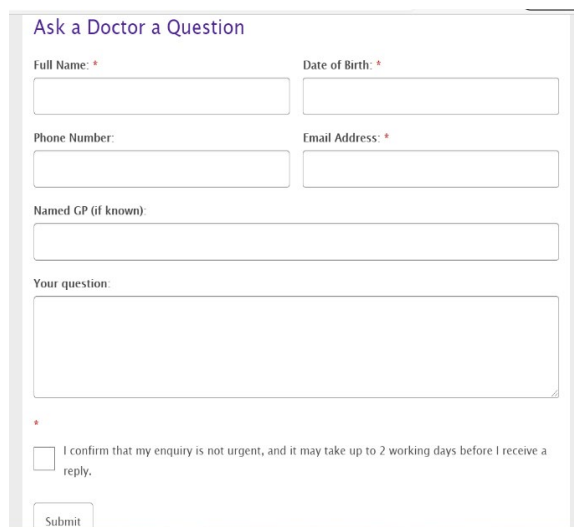
After listening to patient feedback, the surgery will be piloting a new appointment rota system from October. This aims to increase continuity of care with follow-up of those with ongoing medical conditions, whilst improving access for those with urgent/on the day need. The new system will be staffed by 2 teams as follows:

**New – Duty Team:** This will be a new team comprising a Clinical Supervisor (a GP), other doctors, minor illness nurses and pharmacists who will manage urgent, same day problems and undertake urgent home visits. Alongside the Duty Team will be the Clinical Team.

**Clinical Team:** This team will consist of the remaining GPs, nurses and pharmacists working on any given day. These clinicians will have fully pre-bookable appointments and will be available for non-urgent and follow-up visits.

The new system will take some time to 'bed in' but we hope, as we continue to recover from the pandemic, that it will improve access for urgent issues and continuity of care for those with ongoing, long-term conditions.

## 'Ask a question' option on the BRS website



Did you know about this option? You can ask a [Doctor/Nurse/Practice/Reception](#) a question on the BRS website. Just click on 'Online Requests' at the top of the screen and scroll down to 'Contact the Practice', clicking on the option you need.

This is for **non urgent** queries only, as the practice may take up to 2 working days to get back to you. You need to be a BRS patient but do not need to be registered for online services to use this function.

In July, 297 patients used this system to ask for non-urgent advice and the feedback we have received from patients has been very positive.

## BRS Patient Survey 2020 – Thank you



1373 patients responded to our annual patient survey – a record response! Thank you to all those that took part and shared their experience and feedback. The results are available on the BRS website [BRS Patient Survey 2020](#). The PPG will discuss the points raised with the surgery.

## 2021 National GP Patient Survey

The GP Patient Survey is an independent survey run by Ipsos MORI on behalf of NHS England. The survey is sent out to a random selection of over two million people across the UK and the results show how people feel about their GP practice. 250 surveys were sent to BRS patients and 109 were returned. To view results click here [2021 GP Patient Survey](#) and search on postcode LU7 1AR for BRS.

## Success of COVID vaccination campaigns Phases 1&2

Thank you to all volunteers and staff who have worked extra hours to make the local COVID vaccination campaign such a success. With your help we have delivered over 30,000 vaccinations to LB residents. In common with many of our health and social care colleagues, this has taken its toll both professionally and personally, but we have found our involvement in the COVID programme very positive and extremely rewarding. We are now committed to the planning of Phase 3 from early September and hope to turn our backs on the worse pandemic many of us have experienced in our lifetimes. We await updated information from the JCVI (Joint Committee on Vaccination & Immunisation) as to whether we can manage Phase 3 alongside the autumn/winter flu campaign and will update everyone as soon as we know more.

## Flu vaccination in 2021-22



Weekend clinics worked well last year and helped manage social distancing and minimise the impact on Monday to Friday clinic time. We will be running these again this year as well as continuing our usual immunisation in dedicated COPD/Diabetes/Warfarin clinics etc. Flu Vaccination Clinics are due to commence for the over 65 and clinically at risk from Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup> September, bookable online or via reception.

## Ear wax removal

During 2020, ear wax removal was removed from the list of NHS core services which GPs are obliged to provide. Bassett Road Surgery used to offer syringing (the irrigation method) but evidence has shown that syringing is unsafe and it is no longer recommended. Micro suction is now considered safer – below are some options:

Many pharmacies and opticians offer FREE NHS hearing checks but you usually have to pay for any treatment needed, including ear wax removal. Micro suction is offered by Specsavers Audiology at their branches in Milton Keynes, Dunstable and Luton. The Leighton Buzzard store offers hearing tests but not ear wax removal. The following details apply to the other 3 stores where appointments are bookable online.

Milton Keynes: [www.specsavers.co.uk/miltonkeynes](http://www.specsavers.co.uk/miltonkeynes) Tel: (01908) 662116. Audiology is on the first floor; for mobility reasons it would be wise to check the other branches.

Luton: [www.specsavers.co.uk/luton](http://www.specsavers.co.uk/luton) Tel: (01582) 484300.

Dunstable: [www.specsavers.co.uk/dunstable](http://www.specsavers.co.uk/dunstable) Tel: (01582) 475404.

There is also a telephone number for the Specsavers Audiology Service: (01582) 344830.

The cost in all 3 premises above is £55 for both ears. If no wax is found, there is no charge. Patients are instructed to put olive oil in their ears for 3 days before their appointment.

If you need a local store, a patient recommends the [LB Hearing Centre at Kings Opticians & Hearing Care](#), 2 North Street, LB which costs £95 for both ears. Tel: (01525)850312.

There is also a service at the [Hearing Health Hub](#) in MK who charge £70 but £60 if you say you are a BRS patient. A home visiting service is available for an extra charge of £10. Tel: 0800 001 6768 or find out more at: [www.hearinghealthhub.co.uk](http://www.hearinghealthhub.co.uk)

Sham Rashid is a Clinical Ear Care Specialist practising in MK who works at [Leighton Road Surgery](#) on Thursdays and charges £65 for both ears. Tel: 07599 095465 or visit: [www.thehearingclinicmk.co.uk](http://www.thehearingclinicmk.co.uk)

## BRS staff changes over the coming months

- Dr Evans returns from maternity leave working Mon/Tue/Wed.
- Drs Atkinson, Darley & Phang move to pastures new during September of this year.
- Drs Sharma, Rolland & Grama successfully completed their GP training with us and will remain with the practice until the end of March 2022.
- Allana, an additional Diabetes Specialist Nurse' will join our team from mid-September, 3 days a week.
- Additional training for one of our treatment room nurses in the field of minor illness.
- An additional full-time Clinical Pharmacist called Jayeeta to work alongside Clara who now works part-time. They will also be joined by another part-time colleague, Jo, from mid-September.
- We are recruiting Clinical Matron support to assist Jackie who has changed her working days and to provide additional capacity for our growing patient list.
- 2 new receptionists have joined the team and we will be advertising for a 3rd post.
- We have recruited additional secretarial support in order to improve turn-around times for correspondence and paperwork.

## Good news! New car park at L&D Hospital

There is a new multi-storey car park on Lewsey Road opposite the main entrance to the hospital which is 'take a ticket' on entry and pay on leaving. There are 4 levels providing 278 patient and visitor parking spaces. Patients have let us know that there is a lift, plenty of disabled parking and free spaces for blue badge holders. Full details of all the car parks and charges can be found online at: [www.bedfordshirehospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.bedfordshirehospitals.nhs.uk)

## Leighton Buzzard Voluntary Patient Transport



We salute this group of local volunteers who kept their service going throughout lockdown. The PPG has written to thank the drivers and call handlers for their invaluable help which relieves so much anxiety for patients and their families. Call handlers can be contacted on 07873 497633.

## "Flex, Connect & Share" - Message from Leighton Road Surgery

"Flex, Connect & Share", is a virtual coffee morning which aims to connect people using Zoom, from home, and is ideal for anyone who is struggling to get out and about or want to meet others. The sessions take place every Wednesday from 11.30 to 12.30 and will commence on the 8<sup>th</sup> September.

The morning starts with a 20 min armchair-based exercise session, which aims to improve posture, balance and muscle tone for all. This is followed by a fun-filled quiz and speakers have also been invited from health, the police and fire services.

BRS patients can participate - If you are interested or know anyone who would benefit from these sessions, please get in touch with Alex McGarvey, Lead Nurse, via email [alex.mcgarvey@nhs.net](mailto:alex.mcgarvey@nhs.net) or by contacting the Leighton Road surgery.

Current Patient Numbers at BRS – 18,463 (as at 31 August 2021)

## Festival for Older People

Friday 1 October 2021 10am to 2.30pm



The Rufus Centre, Steppingly Rd  
Flitwick MK45 1AH

Advice and information for older people from local organisations, voluntary and community groups.

Wellbeing Room offering complementary therapies and treatments  
Art and Craft stalls

Free entry, lunch, refreshments and entertainment

For further details or if you need help with transport, Tel: 0300 303 8554

## Keep updated

One of our patients has fed back how useful a regular look at the surgery website can be and offers the following rhyme:

Need help?  
Consult a GP or a nurse?  
Are your symptoms getting worse?

Need help?  
We have lots of news to show -  
Extra things you need to know

To find the help for which you seek,  
Consult the website Every Week!  
[www.bassettsurgery.co.uk](http://www.bassettsurgery.co.uk)

You can also follow Bassett Road Surgery on [Facebook](#) for latest updates, such as Flu Clinics and Blood Tests.

## BRS Patient Participation Group (PPG) Do you want to:



- have an input into your health services?
- work together with the surgery towards a positive outcome for patients?
- have a voice in decisions that affect you and your family?
- be an advocate for patient preferences?
- provide a platform to test and modify ideas and plans?
- have the opportunity to get involved and make a difference?

If so, why not join Bassett Road Surgery Patient Participation Group? For more information contact us on [bassettppg@gmail.com](mailto:bassettppg@gmail.com)



### Patient feedback on this newsletter

We would love to hear your feedback on the newsletter. Did you find it useful and informative? Is there something you would like us to cover in future issues? Do you have a non-clinical question that you would like answered? If so, email us at [bassettppg@gmail.com](mailto:bassettppg@gmail.com) or leave a comment in the PPG Comments Box in the Waiting Room – with your contact details and we will get back to you.