BACON LANE SURGERY NEWSLETTER
Produced in co-operation with PPG Group
https://www.baconlanesurgery.co.uk/

Feb/March 2021

Issue 1:

Covid 19:

The BLS surgery home page is updated regularly as new information is shared by the Government. As this information changes from day to day, the surgery updates its website in order to keep its patients informed. These changes happen too rapidly for a quarterly newsletter so please log onto the surgery website for the latest updates and advice on the Covid 19 situation.

ALWAYS CONTACT THE SURGERY BEFORE COMING INTO THE PRACTICE: (All GP appointments now are telephone consultations unless otherwise advised. Nurse/phlebotomy/HCA appointment's will continue to be face to face unless the consultation can be done over the telephone and only once a Covid questionnaire has been completed by the patient to confirm the patient has no Covid symptoms)

If you have a query or need to see/speak to a doctor, call the surgery on 0208 952 5073 or go onto the BLS website and **complete an E consult form**. You will be booked an appointment for a telephone consultation.

If you are hard of hearing, or deaf, please check the surgery website for assistance in making appointments, or email**: baconlane.surgery@nhs.net**

Abuse towards BLS receptionists*:*

It is understandable, particularly when so many people are under pressure currently, that patients sometimes experience frustration when trying to communicate with the surgery. The receptionists endeavour to deal with difficult situations constructively. Recently, however, they have been subjected to abuse on a number of occasions which is unpleasant and delays resolution of the problem.

In the event that a problem is not resolved satisfactorily or if patients wish to make a complaint, they should contact the practice manager via: **baconlane.surgery@nhs.net or telephone 0208 952 5073.**

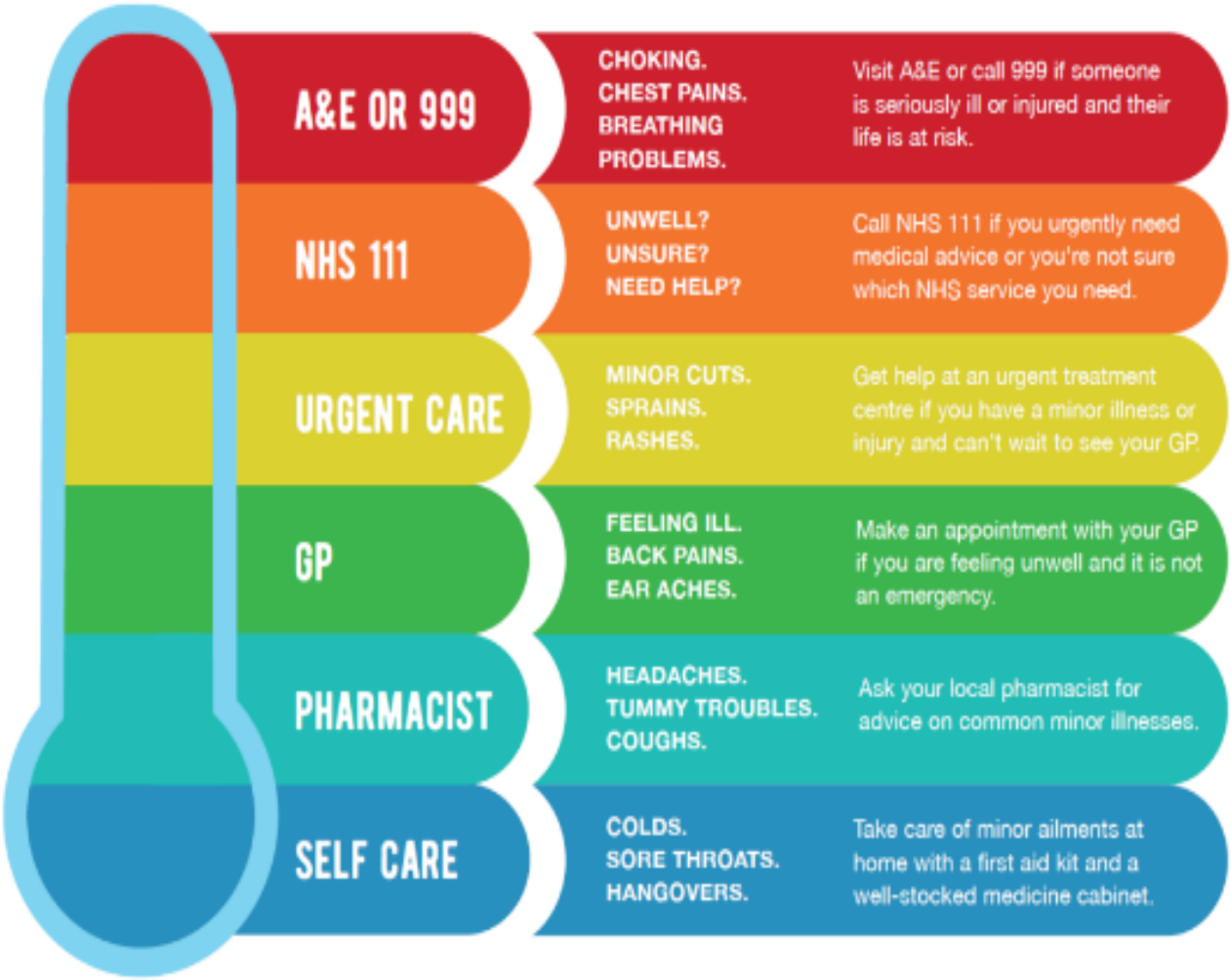
Blind patients can ask a nominated family member/carer to e mail/phone the practice on their behalf.

Patients Participation Group PPG

This group consists of patients who provide feedback to the surgery raised by patients or members of the group. Such groups exist in more than two thirds of G.P surgeries. Most of these belong to the national group the National Association of Patients Participation. Our meetings are held about 6 times per year .In current circumstances they are online via Zoom. If you are interested you may join in if you request details from the surgery. Any concerns raised are followed up by the surgery & monitored by the group.

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS & ANY INTERESTED PATIENTS MAY CONTACT DAVID BATEMAN FOR DETAILS – PLEASE TELEPHONE 0208 951 1784

Health and Wellbeing



What is the best place to go to for help?
However, during the Covid 19 Pandemic please dial 111 before you attend urgent care

Keeping well this Winter

Keep moving:

Try not to sit still for more than one hour at a time. You might not think it, but even a little bit of activity can help you to keep strength and mobility.

Get your free flu jab – even if you're fighting fit:

Everyone aged 65 and over, and anyone who cares for a friend or family member, is entitled to a free flu jab from the doctor or pharmacist.

When you get your flu jab check if you're eligible for the pneumo- vaccine, which helps protect you from pneumonia.

To protect the most vulnerable during the coronavirus pandemic, there are additional groups who can get the jab free this year, including personal assistants and people who live with someone who was asked to shield during spring lockdown.

The vaccines for over 65s have an agent in which helps to boost your immune system's response to the vaccine. Even if you're fit and healthy, it's a great idea to get the jab to help protect yourself and others.

Eat well:

Spending more time indoors more and doing less of the things we enjoy means it can be difficult to keep up the motivation to prepare meals. Try to keep a bit of a routine and eat what you can.

Make sure your home is warm enough:

Try to heat your home to a steady and comfortable temperature throughout the day. It's also a good idea to keep your bedroom window closed at night when the weather is coldest and close the curtains at dusk to keep the heat in

Wash your hands regularly:

This is important now more than ever. It's simple but effective – washing your hands helps stop germs spreading and can help you stay well.

Wrap up well and stay stocked up:

Layering's the best way to keep warm in winter. If you're heading out, don't forget the temperature can drop drastically as the sun goes down so take woollies out with you, even if you don't need them immediately. It could be a good idea to stock up on cold and sore throat remedies. Your pharmacist can give you advice if you're feeling under the weather about what might help.

For further information go to the Age UK website: https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/keep-well-this-winter/stay-healthy-in-winter/

Local Contact Information Which May Be Of Interest to You:

Northwick Park Hospital & St. Marks Tel: 0208 864 3232

Urgent Care Centre (NPH) Tel: 0208 869 3743

Edgware Community Hospital Tel: 0208 952 2381

Barnet General Hospital Tel: 0208 216 4600

Royal Orthopaedic Hospital Stanmore Tel: 0203 947 0100.

University College Hospital Tel: 0203 456 7890

Royal Free Hospital Tel: 0207 794 0500

Bushey Spire Hospital Tel: 0208 901 5555.

Clementine Churchill Hospital Tel: 0208 872 3872

BMI Hendon Hospital Tel: 0208 457 4500

Boots in Edgware Tel: 0208 952 1014

Harrow Civic Centre Tel: 0208 863 5611

Harrow Carers Tel: 0208 868 5224

Citizens Advice:

Citizens Advice Bureau: Harrow: Tel 0208 427 9477

Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/harrow

Citizens Advice Bureau: Barnet: Tel: 0300 456 8365

Website: Citizens Advice Barnet - The charity for your community (barnetcab.org.uk)

Mental Health:

The Covid 19 Pandemic has resulted in a hard year both physically and emotionally. Mental health is becoming an even bigger concern now that we have longer evenings.

Recognising the signs of winter depression:

If you recognise any of the following signs, it may be worth considering taking some action in order to help bring some balance back to your mood.

- *Having low energy.*
- *Finding it difficult to concentrate.*
- *Not wanting to speak, see or spend time with others.*
- *Changes in appetite (often feeling more hungry than usual, or wanting snacks is linked to seasonal low mood).*
- *Feeling sad or low, or becoming more tearful than usual.*
- *Being more likely to get physical health problems, such as having a cold.*
- *Loss of interest in things.*
- *Suicidal feelings or thoughts*

Among the varied support groups suggested below, you may find one to help you:

NHS One You – 'Every mind matters' www.nhs.uk/oneyou then click on "Every Mind Matters"

Samaritans: www.samaritans.org Tel: 116 123 (24 hours) Text: 'Shout' to 85258

Mental Health Helpline: NHS 111 - Website111.nhs.uk

Mind in Harrow: Tel: 0208 426 0929 (M-F 9am-5pm) info@mindinharrow.org.uk

Mind: www.mind.org.uk Tel: 0300 123 3393 (Mon-Fri 9am-6pm)

Young Minds: https//youngminds.org.uk

A simplified guide for 'nervous' users of the e-consult system at Bacon Lane, from Roy Poulter, PPG Member, Bacon Lane Surgery:

The 'new normal' is that rather than ringing or visiting the surgery for an appointment, you contact your GP online. Once you have gone through the simple questions and submitted them, you will get a telephone call by the end of the next day. This is how you do it:

Go to the Bacon Lane Surgery website (www.baconlanesurgery.co.uk), or you can use Google to find it.

A big blue box will come up on the home page saying ‘contact your doctors online’

Choose one of the 4 options e.g. ‘ask about common problems’

From the list that comes up pick your problem (or type it into the search box)

When you’ve chosen it you’ll get the option on the next page to say ‘I want treatment and advice from my GP’ (there are self-help and pharmacy advice options too)

You’ll get an online form to work through, very simple questions and your chance to say what’s wrong, and at the end just press ‘submit’ and sit back for someone to ring you.

It’s only strange the first time you use it, then it’s great not to wait on hold or find the telephone number engaged. It also really helps the surgery to reduce the number of calls, freeing the lines for others especially during the current Covid pandemic.

ONLINE SERVICES - What is Patient Access?

With Patient Access, you can now access your GP services at home, work or on the move — wherever you can connect to the internet. What's more, because Patient Access is a 24 hour online service you can do this in your own time, day or night. **Also available on your mobile: Android and IOS.**

- **Book/Cancel an appointment (Once we revert back to normal after the lockdown)**
- **Order repeat prescriptions.**
- **Change your address details.**
- **Send secure messages to your practice.**
- **View your medical record (Medications/Immunisations and Allergies)**

NHS Choices comments and reviews:

Dear Patients,

Why not give us your views on health services received by our Practice.

Please visit NHS choices website www.nhs.uk to write your review today. Thank you, Bacon Lane Surgery

DNA – Missed Appointments From Jeffrey Austin, PPG Member:

Missed appointments are a big waste of doctors, clinicians and reception/admin staff’s time, also, a huge cost to the 'cash strapped' NHS. If you unable to keep an appointment for any reason, please contact the surgery to cancel your appointment as soon as possible, thus enabling another patient to have the appointment instead.

This especially applies to HCA missed appointments which rate is continually the highest amount of missed/cancelled appointments. **Remember that doctors/clinicians need these results from the HCA to diagnose patients' conditions."**

January DNA rate for BLS is at an historic low of **1.30 %** ...percentage of DNA against Booked Appointments since 2013 - arguably one of the best rates in the whole of the UK!

A huge thank you to our patients for making this happen ☺

DNA figures for Jan 2021:

	BOOKED	DNA
DOCTORS	1473	2
HCA	367	21
MSK	56	3
NURSE	208	3
DIETITIAN	13	0
PHARMACIST	342	3

Practice starters and leavers:

New starters:

Tracey Forbes – Practice Manager
Gaverett Smith – Receptionist/Administrator
Tara Smith – Receptionist/Administrator
Sana Al-Nowfal – Clinical Pharmacist
Tamkin Abas – GP registrar
Fatemah Al-Ansare PCN Clinical Coordinator
Dr Tamkin Abas – Registrar

Leavers:

Dr Kerian Wilson – GP Registrar

Prime Minister's recent visit to The Hive from Henry Wyatt our roving reporter at the Hive and PPG member

The Prime Minister attended the vaccination service at the Hive on the 27th January, from 9-10.30am. He spoke with many patients, staff and volunteers. There was coverage on BBC News at Ten and a photograph in The Times the next day.

Staff at the Hive and volunteers made an early start to clear the ice and a team from Harrow Council gritted the site. There was a steady stream of patients throughout the day and all went well throughout the day with no difficulties. Our local M.P. Bob Blackman was also in attendance.

E Consult – the patients' view by Jeffrey Austin, PPG member, Bacon Lane Surgery:

At the beginning: Bacon Lane Surgery implemented this system, I believe, in late April or early May this year. At first some patients were apprehensive at using it, especially the elderly who were bewildered; of course, this was probably to be expected.

The Main Problem: Regarding using the e-Consult system from a patient's point of view it appears that although the system was explained to clinicians and probably staff in surgeries, no one thought to pass on this information to the patients, who after all, would be one of the main users.

Comments heard from patients included: "I was thrown in at the deep end" "I have to use the system without a sat nav" "I have to ask my 5 -year -old how to use the system!" However, it is very understandable that surgeries have been under immense pressure due to the virus.

Patients concerns: "Unable to get through to the surgery e-Consult website" "Why do I have to insert information that the surgery already has on my record" The main complaint was that many patients believed, incorrectly, that they could book appointments using the e-Consult system (first time use)

At the present time: However, now that the system has bedded 'down' more patients are using the system and comments are more positive: "I was texted by the surgery requesting that I use the system regarding my annual review. Having input all the relevant details, taking about 15 minutes, later that day I received confirmation from the surgery and a reply before 6.30pm of the next day and gave me an e-Consult reference number. Do not reply to this email. Early the next day I received an appointment for a blood test." "I was satisfied! Well done the e Consult system!!" I understand that many patients have received answers by the next working day and the Practice Manager informs me that some answers are sent on the same day. Patients are able to use the system even when the surgery is closed.

Conclusions: The system is an excellent device that will benefit patients and clinicians. But surgeries must be fully aware and make allowances for some patients, possibly elderly amongst others that are unfamiliar with modern technology.

Benefits for patients: Able to use the system, I believe, 365 days • Improved waiting times • For patients who are unable to use the technology or if their symptoms worsen they can telephone the surgery or 111 For surgeries • Clinicians able to utilise their time in an economical way, benefitting patients Of course, the systems represent a new challenge to surgery staff Actual system could be described as 'Triage by Technology' except that it does not allow patients to book appointments using e-Consult.

Appointment system: It was inevitable due to the clinician's heavy workload; a change to the GP appointment system was urgently required. The advent of Covid 19 only brought this change forward (at a loss of continuity of care). Finally, good news!! The product is initially paid for out of some money provided by NHS England for General Practice to use new digital software.

The editors and surgery would welcome any comments regarding this newsletter, including contributions to be considered for future publications.