

Autumn—Winter 2018

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

Dear patients,

Welcome to the first PPG newsletter. This is being reintroduced to communicate the aims of the PPG, its objectives for the upcoming months and inform the valued patients of **Highgrove surgery** of changes in healthcare within the Barking and Dagenham area.

HIGHGROVE PPG

Aims:

- Communication between patients and the practice
- Raise patient awareness of local current issues
- Increase patient knowledge on health matters

Objectives:

- Gather patient views on the surgery and its performance
- Highlight areas of excellence of **your** practice
- Moderate discussion on areas for improvement
- Share issues related to changes in local health matters
- Help patients select appropriate services available in Barking and Dagenham
- Support local charities through focused fund raising

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Flu vaccines now available
- Services for self care
- Make the most of your 10min

THE NEXT PPG MEETING WILL BE ON WEDNESDAY 9th JANUARY 2019 @ 6PM AT THE SURGERY. ALL PATIENTS ARE WELCOMED TO ATTEND



FLU VACCINATION

The flu vaccination is available every year on the NHS to help protect adults and children at risk.

Who can have the vaccine?

- Adult 65 and over
- People with chronic conditions
- Pregnant women
- Children age 2 and 3yrs
- School children— given at school
- Family members who are Carers

Types of vaccinations

- Nasal spray: for 2-17yr olds
- Injection: 18-64yr olds
- Injection: over 65yr olds

Reasons for the flu jab:

- Best protection we have
- Reduce risk of serious complications
- Reduce risk of having a stroke

Speak to reception to see if you are eligible for the free flu vaccine

*“Have your flu jab at **your GP surgery**, it helps fund for **your services**”*

CHANGES TO SERVICES IN BARKING

Earlier this year, certain changes were made in the Barking and Dagenham area by the local Clinical Commission Group (CCG).

The set of changes agreed by the governing bodies was termed “*SPENDING NHS MONEY WISELY*”.

This took effect in January 2018 and has been gradually implemented in the practice.

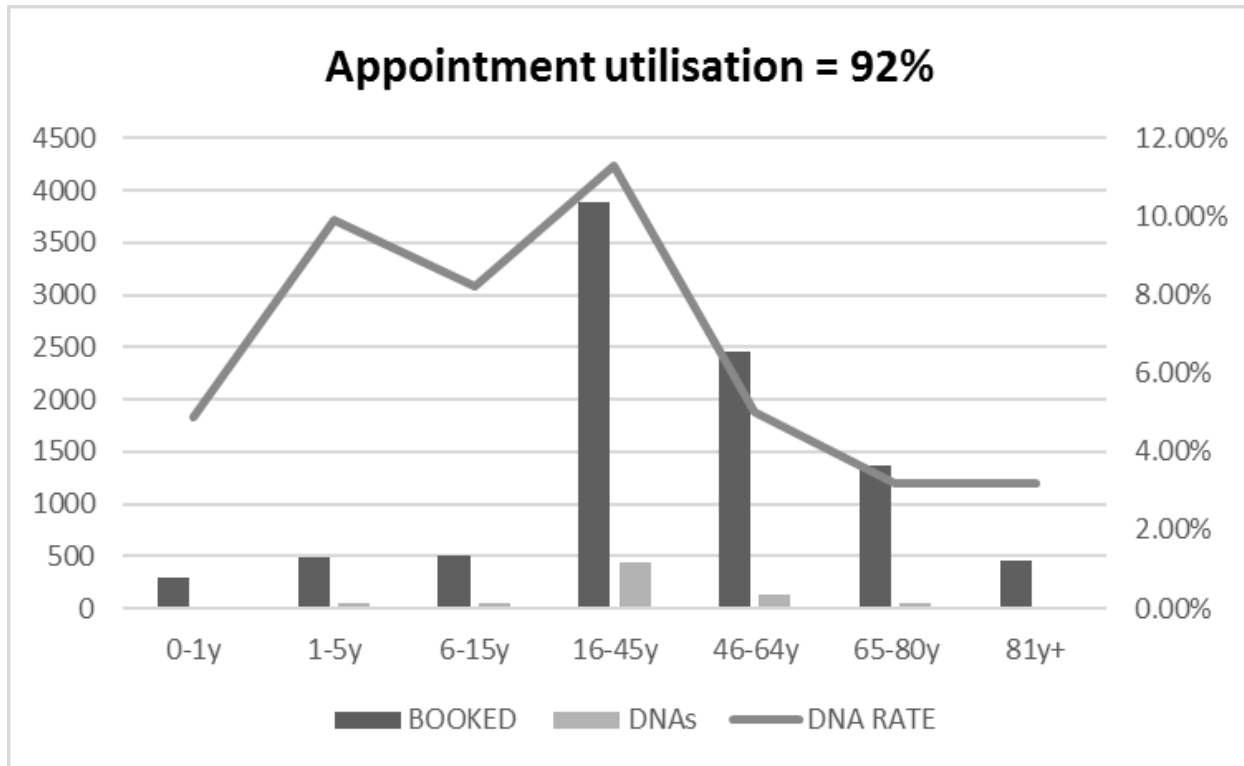
The changes include:

- Stopping prescribing over the counter pain killers (Calpol, ibuprofen, paracetamol), sleeping tablets, sunscreens, anti-malarial medicines, head lice treatment
- Stopping prescriptions for cough mixtures
- Stopping prescriptions for bath oils, shower gels, creams for dry skin conditions
- Stopping prescriptions for muscle rubs and creams
- Restricting who is eligible for cataract surgery and podiatry service

A full list is available online via the CCG site: <http://www.barkingdagenhamccg.nhs.uk>

Please do not be offended when you GP advises some treatments that can be bought from the chemists/supermarket. They are only acting on the recommendations from the CCG

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING DURING THESE CHANGES



FREE AVAILABLE APPOINTMENTS

At Highgrove surgery, we provide doctors, nurses and healthcare assistant appointments from 6.30am to 7pm Monday to Friday. We also provide a Saturday morning clinic. Please check with reception for dates.

This is predominately face to face appointments, covering a mixture of chronic disease reviews, acute problems, vaccinations and immunisations, health-checks and medication reviews. We are trialling telephone appointments for routine things such as follow up results/investigations, medication reviews/requests and appropriate ongoing medical certificates.

This is why it is important that we ask the reason for your appointment as it helps the reception staff advice you on the most appropriate service and person to see so minimising a wasted journey to the surgery

The graph shows that **92% of booked appointments are attended**, which means 8% are wasted. We understand it is not feasible for there to be 100% attendance but aiming for **above 95% attendance** would help minimise wasted appointments. Our 16-45 year olds have the highest non attendance rate closely followed by our toddler age ranges. We understand work commitments and childcare can cause issues. We have early morning appointments as well as telephone appointments for follow up discussions, late evening appointments as well as Saturday morning appointments.

We would also encourage you to cancel your appointment as soon as you know you are not able to attend. This frees up the slot for someone else to use

How to cancel your appointment:

- Call the surgery on **02038174117** and select **option 1 for reception**
- Email the surgery on **HIGHGROVESURGERY@NHS.NET**
- Sign up for **ONLINE ACCESS** and book and cancel appointments as needed

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE LATE ATTENDANCE POLICY IS CHANGING, IF YOU ARE MORE THAN 10MINS LATE FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT, YOU MAY NOT BE SEEN

People in Barking and Dagenham urged to self care this winter

To reduce the number of visits to GPs or A+E with minor illnesses, people are been encouraged to self care with advice from their pharmacist.

Pharmacist can give you expert advice on self care and where appropriate over-the-counter medicines that can help with lots of common illnesses and minor ailments.

Alongside regular medication, a well-stocked medicine cabinet should include the following:

1. A first-aid kit including bandages, plasters, thermometer, antiseptic, eyewash solution, sterile dressings, medical tape for dressings and tweezers
2. Pain relief such as paracetamol and ibuprofen for aches, pains and high temperatures. Including liquid versions for children
3. Oral rehydration salts to replace lost minerals and fluid after a fever or vomiting and diarrhoea
4. Anti-diarrhoea tablets to relieve symptoms of diarrhoea (though these will not help with the underlying cause)

Online advice and local information:

1. General illnesses advice: www.selfcareforum.org/fact-sheets/
2. Essential information for parents with small children: www.whenshouldiworry.com
3. **NHS 111 service** – If you need medical help quickly, but your condition is not life threatening

How to stay well this winter

KEEPING SEASONAL COUGHS AND COLDS AT BAY

Many over-the-counter medicines (including paracetamol and ibuprofen) are available to relieve symptoms of common winter ailments such as cold, sore throat, cough, sinusitis or painful middle ear infection (earache). Always seek advice from your pharmacist at the first sign of a cough or cold before it gets more serious

STAY WARM

It is also important to keep warm in winter – both inside and outdoors. Keeping warm over the winter months can help to prevent colds, flu and more serious problems such as heart attacks, strokes and pneumonia.

STAY ACTIVE

Keep active when you're indoors. Try not to sit still for more than an hour or so. Wear several layers of light clothes. They trap warm air better than one bulky layer

PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST FLU

Flu is very infectious and spread by germs from coughs and sneezes, which can live on hands and surfaces for 24 hours.

To reduce the risk of spreading flu:

- Use tissues to trap germs when you cough or sneeze
- Wash your hands often with warm water and soap
- **HAVE YOUR FLU JAB AT THE PRACTICE**

Self care

is the best choice to treat common ailments
and minor illnesses



If treatment is needed, a wide range of medications can be purchased from community pharmacies and supermarkets. These medications are usually cheaper than a prescription and you can get them without seeing your doctor.



Hay fever

Antihistamine tablets and syrup;
Steroid nasal sprays;
Eye drops;
Decongestants;
Simple pain relief, e.g. paracetamol



Indigestion
or heartburn

Antacid medicines and alginates reduce the symptoms of heartburn and relieve pain.



Pain

Simple pain relief, e.g. paracetamol and anti-inflammatory drugs, e.g. ibuprofen.



Coughs and colds

Simple pain relief, e.g. paracetamol or ibuprofen;
Cough mixtures (may contain paracetamol);
Cold remedies (may contain paracetamol);
Decongestants.



Piles (Haemorrhoids)
and constipation

Creams, ointments or suppositories can help soothe;
Local anaesthetics may relieve pain, burning and itching;
Laxatives can make it easier to go to the toilet and reduce straining.



Pharmacists are an expert source of advice and will use their professional judgement to decide with you what the best course of action is for your condition.
Speak to a local pharmacist to get advice on the best treatment for your symptoms.
Always read the patient information leaflet that is included with the medicine.



TIPS: GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR GP APPOINTMENT

Standing in line to use the post office, ordering a cup of coffee, uploading your latest pictures to snapchat. These things all take around 10 minutes. That's how long your appointment with the GP lasts.

How can you make the most of it?

Turn up on time. GPs run late, but if you are late, then your ten-minute slot has gone

Make sure you are seeing the right person. Can the pharmacist help? Is the practice nurse the best person to deal with your travel vaccine? This is why reception ask "what the problem is". They are not being nosy!

Feel free to bring a friend or relative. There's no need to bring the whole family, but it can be helpful to have someone with you for support. Patients under the age of 14 should be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Get it all out at the start. If you have two items to discuss, list them at the beginning rather than saying, 'Ooh, while I'm here...' If you list them at the start, the GP can plan out the time. Two small items is reasonable, any more and it becomes difficult to cover everything thoroughly.

Get to the point. The quicker you mention why you're there, the more time the GP has to deal with your problem

Be prepared to be examined. If you are coming for knee pain, don't wear your skinny jeans! Please wear clothing that is easy to remove.

Make use of the primary care team. The GP is only a cog in the large well-oiled machine that is a GP surgery. You'll save yourself a lot of time if you pick the right part of that machine. Chasing a referral to the hospital? Ring the secretary. Need a blood pressure check? Maybe you could see the nurse.

Don't expect us to solve everything in one visit. Sometimes, you will need to wait for referrals to a specialist or try a treatment to see how you get on

Don't assume you can have what you want. NHS general practice was set up to deal with people's health care needs. Some patients ask for tests or procedures that aren't clinically necessary or that there isn't enough evidence to support with taxpayers' money.

Don't think that seeing patients is all a GP does. You may find your GP often runs late. This may be because he/she is on the phone to another doctor, admitting someone to hospital, or getting constant interruptions to help the non clinical staff. If the doctor appears a bit browbeaten, it's because she/he is constantly multi-tasking. If you feel you need more time, we are able to offer double appointments.

Finally, please don't ask us about your teeth — we didn't go to dental school...

**Wishing you all a Merry Christmas
and a wonderful 2019**