



PPG Newsletter

Spring 2022

Message from Sarah Needham, Practice Manager at Leighton Road Surgery:

We have seen a vast increase in demand for our services and we are genuinely sorry to hear that some of our patients did not have a positive experience as we would hope when trying to book an appointment. We receive over a thousand calls a day on average, including vaccination (flu and covid), referral, and medication queries, which can take substantially longer than booking appointments. In response to this issue, we have increased the number of staff answering telephone calls in the morning to ensure that calls are answered as quickly and efficiently as possible and waiting times are reduced.

Over the last four weeks, we have offered 9,580 clinical appointments and over 45% of these were offered in person. We are actively working towards our capacity to offer more in-person appointments and our clinical teams will ensure that patients are invited to the surgery if after a telephone consultation they require to see the patient in person. Some of the patients do not need to come in and we are able to serve their needs quicker on phone. This would also allow us to see more people.

I would like to remind you that some of our appointments can also be booked online and are released periodically. We have taken into account that more patients wished to be able to book more appointments online and are currently working towards fastening this process. This means people can book appointments at a time that suits them rather than wait to get through on phone or ring only when the practice is open.

With so many of us worried after the pandemic the demand for appointments is rising fast which often makes it hard despite the large capacity, we provide at LRS. It is no surprise that the demands of delivering high-quality care during a pandemic have led to significant backlogs and longer waits for patients.

We have also trained our receptionists to become care navigators that will ensure they can direct people to the right queue reducing further the need for waiting to be seen by the right clinician.

Please be assured our commitment to high quality care and ensuring you are safe is steadfast. We thank you for your patience and understanding, and I would like to personally reassure you that we continually listen and act on feedback from our patients.

Care Navigation Programme

The PPG is working with the Surgery on a Care Navigation Programme.

The programme is used for reviewing workload within general practice and exploring how things might be managed differently in the future. So far, more than 750 practices have used the tool. Initial results suggested that, on average, 27% of appointments in general practice were potentially avoidable if other services and support were put in place.

The system will enable practice staff to ensure patients are directed to the right clinician.

We will give an update of progress in our summer newsletter.

COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

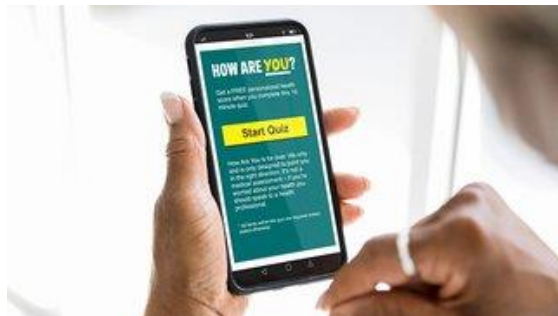
The last few months have seen a huge upheaval and disruption to everyday life due to COVID 19.

The virus has not gone away, and great strides have been made to vaccinate the population. However, the virus is still very much in the community and efforts to reduce the spread need to be ongoing.

The PPG has supported the Surgery in the Covid 19 clinics by checking in patients prior to their jabs.

Get your Health Score

Complete the free NHS quiz using the following link to get your health score, along with personalised advice and simple tips for healthier living.



<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/how-are-you-quiz/>

Falls Prevention Strength and Balance Sessions

Are you over 65? Are you at risk of falling?
Have you had a fall recently?
Are you worried about falling?

The following can help you.
A free 12-week strength and balance programme takes place at the Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre on Tuesdays at 12.30pm.

The programme will improve your strength and balance, avoid slips trips and falls, build your confidence, keep your independence and, live healthier.

To be referred to this programme please speak to your GP. For more information, please email active.lifestyles@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk.

Leighton Buzzard Voluntary Patient Transport

LBVPT was given a 2022 Community Volunteer Awards by Leighton Linlade Town Council.

LBVPT provides transport to L&D, Stoke Mandeville, Milton Keynes, Amersham, Bedford, and High Wycombe hospitals for the elderly and vulnerable who can't get there without assistance and who don't qualify for NHS Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services help. Further details can be found at www.lbvpt.co.uk or by calling 07873 497633.

LBVPT is looking for volunteer drivers and call handlers to assist in this worthwhile venture. Please call 07873 497633 if you can help.

Abuse of Staff

Sadly, there are continuing reports of personal abuse being levelled at both individual staff and practice teams which, when they continue to do their utmost to provide as near a normal service as possible after such a prolonged period, is very unhelpful and cannot be tolerated.

Feedback on the Newsletter

We would like to hear your feedback on the newsletter. Do you find it useful or informative? Is there something you would like us to cover in future? If so,

Email us with your comments or a request to receive the Newsletter by Email to lrspatientrep@nhs.net or leave a note for the PPG at reception.