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Dear Patient,

We'd like to ask for your help

As a valued patient, we wanted to share our current position, and ask for your understanding as we head into winter.

The NHS is struggling to cope with demand throughout the UK, we're seeing more patients than ever before, and often with fewer staff. We're also unable to recruit and retain into certain positions due to workload pressures and increasing patient demands. Ongoing and increasing verbal and physical abuse from patients is driving staff to leave primary care completely.

It's been widely reported in the media that access to healthcare services is difficult. Sadly, it is likely that this will be increasingly challenging during the winter months. We just want to explain our position to you and reassure you that we're doing all we can to support our patients.

Hawthorn Surgery promise that our clinical and administrative teams will:

- Continue to support your needs as promptly and safely as we can while providing the highest-quality care
- Understand that many of our patients are now suffering with more healthcare-related problems and have had these longer due to the NHS backlog
- Promote efficiency and try to recruit where there are any staffing gaps
- Play our part in ensuring we're here for you and the community

However, we also ask that you please help us by showing our staff respect.

Recent statistics from the Institute of General Practice Managers (IGPM) show that there has been a huge surge in primary care staff receiving abuse, and we need to highlight our concerns to you. Please note:

- 78% of staff have reported that they have received either threatening behaviour or racist or sexist abuse from patients
- 83% of all GP practices have needed to call the police because of a patient's unwarranted behaviour; in some extreme cases, staff have been hospitalised

We're heading into the busiest time of the year, and we're all here to ensure that our patients are the priority.

Thank you for working with us to create a safe, respectful healthcare environment.

Yours faithfully

The Doctors and Staff
Hawthorn Surgery