

BECCLES MEDICAL CENTRE AND PPG NEWSLETTER No 3

Hello again from the PPG at Beccles Medical Centre and our third Newsletter. Since the last one, we have had our AGM and were delighted to invite our neighbours in the Waveney group of medical practices to explore areas where we might share and help each other. Representatives of two attended and we hope that we can include representatives of the others to join our meetings through the year.

Our Comments Box in the Waiting Room area is being positively used and we have either responded directly where possible or passed the issues on to the appropriate department in the practice where necessary. Please do use this quick and easy way to communicate your thoughts and suggestions to us. One comment was about updating the portion of the notice board where Staff are praised for their 'above and beyond' efforts. Another suggested that it is helpful if staff have name badges on at all times – we agree and also pointed out that sometimes Lanyards can get turned around so the name portion is not visible. We trust that staff will take this on board.

In response to the run of rather negative comments we see on social media the PPG & BMC staff have been working hard to bring together information to help with our understanding of how our very battered health service represented by BMC is managing to keep on delivering our healthcare and to bring some balance. Please do take a moment to read the article below and bear this in mind when you are judging either your own, or someone else's experience. I think you will be surprised! In addition, please consider ways in which you might help BMC by keeping your appointments and using PATCHS as it should be to keep the service streamlined to help you as speedily as possible. Malcolm and Adrian our resident IT wizzes are continuing to hold their hugely successful Wednesday afternoon clinic to help anyone who is struggling with PATCHS to learn how to use it

What Beccles Does Well?

One of the biggest attributes to longevity over the last 30 years of medicine has been the focus on preventative medicine. Immunisation and screening are good examples. Press and social media focus is on lack of GP appointments. Beccles Medical Centre (BMC) is one of the biggest practices in East Anglia with over 20,000 patients. GPs 15 years ago had no idea how well they were performing in preventing illness and keeping chronically ill and the vulnerable well. Patients too previously had very little idea how BMC stacks up versus other surgeries. Until now.

There are computer programs run daily to see how the surgery is doing for hundreds of conditions. Surprising it may seem, but BMC is one of the BEST surgeries in Norfolk and Waveney overall for checking on long term conditions. For example mental health and ensuring Lithium blood levels are checked – it is the best. Diabetes, monitoring the use of drugs commonly used in hypertension and heart failure eg Ramipril – unbeaten. BMC for one comparator is second in the country.

This is all good as the Hippocratic oath says 'do no harm', and the backroom admin staff are doing just that. Checking up on the vulnerable needing monitoring for medication prescribed and badgering patients to do screening.

We are hearing a lot about the Measles epidemic and the need to keep immunisation percentage near to 95% to keep us all safe from a big outbreak Beccles achieved 93.4% of children receiving MMR prior to school. This compares to 89.1% in Suffolk.

You rarely meet the team – data and quality who drive this high standard. They are proud of their achievement as it is rarely recognised. So when you get called in for your Long Term Condition appointment review or bloods please keep it to ensure you have a service to be proud of.



The Data Quality Team

DID NOT ATTEND (DNA)	
February 2024 still showed a very high number of hours lost because patents failed to turn up to appointments!	
	Hours Lost
Routine (GP/ANP)	100
Urgent Care (GP/ANP)	2.5
Nurses	31
Pharmacist	0.5
Phlebotomy	2

Did not arrive! (DNAs)

One of the biggest moans on social media platforms is “why can’t I get a GP appointment?”. Given a finite resource the answer is effectively demand vs supply. But just how much supply gets wasted? February 2024 was a bad month at Beccles Medical Centre. Nearly 120 hours of clinical time was lost! That is a phenomenal waste of time. The stand out statistics were staggering. 50 patients didn’t turn up for their GP appointment deemed necessary after triage by a clinician. 82 patients DNAd for nurse appointments in February some of these appointments were 45 minutes long for complex tests. Mental health review appointments were the highest at 20 hours. Some of these patients repeatedly DNA’d . Ironically these are some of the most at risk in society and are dealt with by the most experienced and valuable doctors in the surgery.

The surgery sends reminder texts and emails about pending appointments.

The PPG understands there are mitigating circumstances in some cases. We are here to help improve the service. So we are advertising ways to cancel your appointment and release the slot to patients that can get there.

If its last minute cancellation phone the normal number and speak to someone. The slot is released immediately.

There are three other ways to cancel.

Firstly use the cancellation line dial 712662 and pick the appropriate option leaving a voicemail. These are picked up a couple of times a day.

Use the PATCHs form to cancel if the surgery is closed, or

Use the Beccles Medical Centre website and search cancel an appointment.

Lastly use the NHS App. If you have a pending it can be cancelled here. The electronic cancellations are picked up periodically during the day.

To improve healthcare we need to make efficient use of the resources available. DNAs are so wasteful. It is also demoralising to staff so please do your bit to turn up, and if unable to attend please, cancel. Someone will be very grateful!

BACT Hospital Transport for Patients

BACT community transport works in partnership with East Suffolk Council to provide transport for people living in Waveney and parts of South Norfolk. They can help you get to the shops, train stations, social clubs and more importantly to health appointments.

For those unfortunate enough to have been diagnosed with Cancer and who may be facing a myriad of appointments, transport to and from the Norfolk & Norwich and James Paget Hospitals is available free of charge.

Funding for this comes from a Charitable Trust Fund, kindly supported by the League of Friends of Beccles and District War Memorial Hospital.

If you are seeking transport please contact the BACT office:

Telephone - 01986 896896/895665

Email - info@bactcommunitytransport.org.uk

Message on - www.facebook.com/bactcommunitytransport1

They would also welcome contact from anyone interested in becoming a volunteer driver.