

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Helping Medical Students learn Medicine at the Practice

This Practice is a teaching centre for Imperial College London and medical students come here to join the practice team as part of their training to be doctors.

Whilst you are at the practice, you may be asked whether you would be willing to see a medical student(s) as well as the healthcare professional you have an appointment with. We would be grateful if you would consider this. By doing so you are contributing to the training of the next generation of doctors.

Code of practice for medical students

A medical student should **always**:

- tell you their name
- inform you that they are a medical student
- ask your permission before taking medical details or conducting a physical examination
- Keep information you have given them confidential and share it only with other members of the practice team involved in your care
- ask your permission to do common procedures, such as taking blood samples

Talking to you about your medical details: your medical history

The most important thing a doctor does to find out what is wrong with a patient is to listen to the patient describing their health problem and explore their story in greater depth. It is therefore one of the most important things for medical students to master.

The student needs firstly to listen to your account of events and then through careful questioning, explore what your symptoms mean in more detail and how this is affecting you.

We expect our students:

- To listen to your story without interrupting
- To ask questions sensitively and clearly without using technical medical language
- To respond sensitively to your feelings

Being examined by a medical student

Medical students need to learn how to carry out medical examinations so that they become skilled at recognising physical abnormalities that may indicate illness.

They need to know:

- What normal is like and how it changes with age
- To identify abnormalities which may indicate underlying medical problems

Students particularly need to learn to examine:

- the nervous system
- the heart and blood vessels
- the lungs and breathing
- the abdomen (tummy)

The GP tutor will explain exactly what is involved for you as a patient when you are seeing a student. If for any reason you are unhappy about taking part, just let us know.

Discussing your diagnosis and treatment

Students in the later stages of their training will often be asked by the GP tutor to suggest a diagnosis and discuss treatment. We may ask the student to discuss his or her plans directly with you. This allows them to practise making medical decisions, to communicate clearly and to talk about the treatment required.

Please be assured that advice and treatment will only be given by the GP or other qualified healthcare professional. We will listen to the student's recommendations, but the final decisions are between you and the practitioner. Students are not allowed to sign prescriptions.

Giving feedback

We often invite patients to give comments to the students about your experience with them. This lets students see how well they have communicated with you and supported you with your problem.

Thank you

Students speak very highly of their experiences at the Practice.

We'd like to warmly thank all those patients who have taken part in medical student training.

How to get involved

Your doctor may contact you directly to ask if you would be prepared to help.

You can also volunteer by letting your doctor, nurse or other members of the practice team know that you are willing to help.

The GP will contact you when a suitable opportunity arises and explain what this would involve. You can withdraw your consent at any time and for any reason and this will not affect your care in any way.

If you have any questions or concerns now, or at any time, please let us know straight away.