

# HESWALL & PENSBY GROUP PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

**Produced jointly by the Practice & the Patient  
Participation Group (PPG)**



**November 2020**

**Practice & PPG News  
e-Consult  
Vulnerable Patients  
New Staff, New Roles,  
& More Support  
Access to Documents**

## **Heswall & Pensby GP News**

In March we had, overnight, to adopt new ways of working, keeping face-to-face contact with patients to a minimum for the protection of everyone.

Many routine services were suspended as per NHS England's recommendation.

Since then, we have reintroduced many of our services, including annual chronic disease management reviews, joint injection, minor surgery and contraception clinics.

Our annual Flu Campaign began in September. Within the first two weeks of our campaign being live we had administered an excess of 3000 flu vaccinations during our walk-thru weekend clinics.

We were also the only surgery on the Wirral to offer a drive-

thru flu clinic exclusively to our shielding patients.

Since our flu vaccination programme began we have administered over 4500 flu jabs. The next stage is to vaccinate our patients aged 50-64 and we are currently in the process of inviting these patients to book into our clinics.

With the further development of the Healthier West Wirral Primary Care Network (PCN) we have seen the introduction of new non-medical services by way of Social Prescribers and Wellbeing Practitioners.

We are pleased to announce that these staff are now in place and we are hopeful that, especially given the current situation with COVID, the introduction of these services will offer patients alternative ways to manage their health.

**Check out our new  
website:**

**[www.hpgpwirral.nhs.uk](http://www.hpgpwirral.nhs.uk)**

**and our Facebook page:**

**@HPGPWirral**

**We welcome your  
feedback.**

## Patient Participation Group News

Membership of the PPG is open to all patients whatever your age or background. We offer a way to ensure that the patient voice is heard in the Practice. Our common concern is to support the Practice in developing and providing services of the highest quality.

We took a break in March, resuming meetings on-line in July. It quickly became apparent that there were concerns about the new working practices including the number of patients without the technology or the skills to deal with eConsult. We stressed the importance of making it clear to patients that they could still access services by phone.

### eConsult

It was a NHS England national requirement that all patients have access to online consultations from April 2020.

Wirral CCG commissioned a platform called eConsult and after careful consideration of how we could incorporate this new technology into our usual practice, and a 6-week promotional campaign, we successfully went live on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020.

Just weeks later, the nation went into a period of lockdown due to the global Coronavirus pandemic.

During this time, eConsult with its built-in safety netting features enabled us to adequately care navigate patients and assess their clinical urgency to ensure

We raised a number of detailed points about how eConsult worked, eg the route offered when a patient answered positively to the question about mental distress or confirmed they experienced a high degree of pain.

We expressed concern that a consultation with a doctor was difficult to obtain and it was the elderly and vulnerable who found the new system most difficult. We are reassured that a more normal pattern to services has been established. The PPG COVID Champion passes on the latest, local information to the Practice.

**We wish you all a safe Christmas and New Year.**

they are allocated the correct appointment with the most suitable clinician within the appropriate time-frame.

We have found that many conditions can be dealt with by phone/video consultations; however, if a patient requires a face-to-face consultation then this is scheduled accordingly.

We have recently been informed that Wirral is in the top 5 areas across the country in terms of usage of the eConsult platform. Additionally, Heswall and Pensby Group Practice contributes to almost 20% of the combined eConsult submissions for Wirral. This is a fabulous achievement for us all and we couldn't have done it without the support of our patients. **Thank you.**

**We thank all the Practice Team for their commitment to the care of their patients during these difficult times.**

**To share your views about your experience as a patient or if you are interested in knowing more about the PPG email us at:**

**[heswallpensbyppg@gmail.com](mailto:heswallpensbyppg@gmail.com)**

**or leave your details at Reception.**

**Please note we cannot take up individual complaints on your behalf.**

**We still have face-to-face appointments available for those who clinically need it.**

**The NHS App enables patients to request repeat medication and contact the Surgery through eConsult.**

## eConsult some facts and figures

eConsult provides an alternative method for patients to contact the Surgery. It is available 24/7 for health-related self-help. The online consultation section allows patients to submit an online form detailing their query, appointment request or administrative query. The online consultation section is available between **6.30pm Sunday and 6.30pm Friday**.

This helps patients manage their health around their busy lives and also avoids a potentially lengthy wait via telephone at 08:30 each morning to request an appointment.

**If a patient does not have access to the internet then they are encouraged to contact us via telephone where one of our Receptionists will be more than happy to help with their query.**

Be assured an eConsult submission does not replace a consultation with a member of our Clinical Team. It enables us to ensure the patient is being allocated the correct appointment with the most suitable clinician within the appropriate time-frame.

Since we went live, we have received both positive and constructive feedback. We continue to listen and re-assess our in-house processes to ensure all patients receive the best possible experience regardless of how they contact the Surgery.

The most concern we have received is why we have moved from face-to-face consultations to telephone conversations. This is not due to eConsult but to the current pandemic and how we have had to embrace different ways of working safely.

### Available appointments pre and post eConsult

	Pre-eConsult					Post e-Consult							
	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
F2F Appointments Available	2648	2531	2370	2895	2606	428	45	126	421	531	552	565	582
F2F Appointments Used	2635	2512	2336	2877	2592	353	45	124	365	518	534	555	575
F2F Appointments Not Used	13	19	34	18	14	75	0	2	56	13	18	10	7

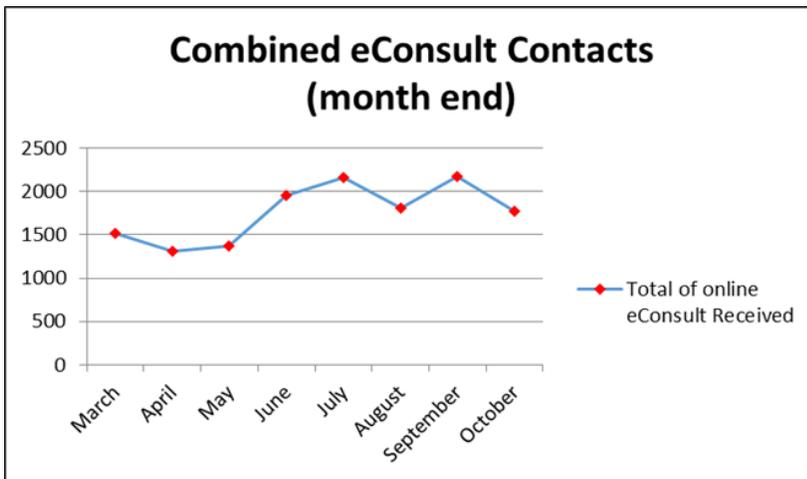
	Pre-eConsult					Post e-Consult							
	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
TEL Appointments Available	315	337	294	364	373	1315	2316	2210	2706	2547	2119	2369	2343
TEL Appointments Used	293	315	285	345	370	1110	1769	2049	2521	2523	2108	2352	2332
TEL Appointments Not Used	22	22	9	19	3	205	547	161	185	24	11	17	11

	Pre-eConsult					Post e-Consult							
	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
Overall Appointments Available	2963	2868	2664	3259	2979	1743	2361	2336	3127	3078	2671	2934	2925
Overall Appointments Used	2928	2827	2621	3222	2962	1463	1814	2173	2886	3041	2642	2907	2907
Overall Appointment Not Used	35	41	43	37	17	280	547	163	241	37	29	27	18
Overall DNA'd Appointments	106	87	82	110	106	16	3	5	7	7	6	17	10
Overall Utilisation	98.8%	98.6%	98.4%	89.9%	99.4%	83.9%	76.8%	93.0%	92.3%	98.8%	98.9%	99.1%	99.4%

Overall, we continue to offer the same number of appointments each month. With the introduction of eConsult there has been a positive impact on utilisation of our available appointments and a reduction in the number who fail to attend (DNA) resulting in more appointments being available.

Please be assured that should a patient be allocated a telephone appointment and then the GP feels it is necessary to bring the patient in for a face to face appointment, this will be scheduled accordingly.

## Combined eConsult Contacts (month end)



eConsult provides the Practice with the means to ensure patients are allocated an appointment based on clinical need rather than first-come-first-served.

### Vulnerable Patients

There is a group of patients with medical conditions that make them particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 and often vulnerability increases with age whether or not there are underlying conditions. There is also concern about the effects of COVID-19 on social isolation and on the mental health of the nation.

The Practice has actively taken steps to support vulnerable groups. The new **Social Prescribers** have been contacting 'shielding' patients and those known to have mental health problems.

The PPG is encouraging the Practice to make information about local support services available on their website and other media channels as well as through the Social Prescribers.

We welcomed **Dr. Hannah Bailey** to our clinical team who joined us in May and has a special interest in Family Planning.

We have sadly seen some long-standing members of our Reception/Admin Team leave due to retirement and also pastures new. We have now welcomed **Lynn, Carolyn, Debbie, Kelsey, Jill, Jennifer and Alice** to our team.

We have been linked to other local GP Practices through the Healthier West Wirral Primary Care Network (PCN) since 2018. Patients are now beginning to see the results as new staff appear at the Surgery.

We have 2 Social Prescribers. **Sue Halsall and Debbie Montgomery**. Their role is non-clinical, non-medical and mainly concerned with mental and social well-being.

### New Staff, New Posts, More Support

Other members of the Practice Team refer patients who may:

- need contact or support from mental health or social care services.
- benefit from community activities and support, or
- have practical needs such as benefits or housing advice.

Contact with those referred is exclusively by phone presently.

Another new role is of our **Wellbeing Practitioners, Jeanette Shaw and Scott Morgans**. They assist patients' well-being in a physical sense with a focus on diet and exercise.

We believe that given the right support patients can often learn to manage their health concerns for themselves, preventing more serious conditions which require attention from specialist and inpatient hospital services.

### Access to Documents

For several years patients have been able to see some details held in their digital patient record eg medications and test results. Wirral CCG has encouraged Practices to provide further access to letters and similar documents from April 2020. The Practice continues to work on this. The PPG recognises the importance of access to Documents to patients and is working with the Practice to test and complete the process.