



PRIMARY CARE
KNOWSLEY

ASTON Healthcare

PATIENT NEWSLETTER



Written by Communications Lead
B O'Mahony

WELCOME

Firstly, I would like to welcome you all to our brand new quarterly patient newsletter! My name is Brittany and I work as the Communications Lead at Aston Healthcare. You can expect our patient newsletter to be updated every 3 months and will be available through our practice website

www.astonhealth.com and sent to all patients via SMS and Email. Currently we are unable to provide hand out copies within the practice due to Coronavirus infection control. Newsletters will be available to pick up in practice once we are allowed to do so.

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MEET THE TEAM

We are very proud to have a fantastic team of admin, clinical and management staff at Knowsley Village Medical Centre (Aston Healthcare). Here is a list of our current staff working at the practice:

GP

Dr A.Barouni
Dr F.Qedwai

Practice Pharmacist

A.Uhuaba
S.Saleem
M.Lipton

Practice Nurse

F.Comley

Management / Admin Staff

H.Williams - Deputy Practice Manager

Sarah Lesley
Paula Amy Jack



HM Government



NHS

CORONAVIRUS
STAY ALERT TO
THE SYMPTOMS

**HIGH TEMPERATURE OR
NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH OR
LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL?**

Find out how to get a test, and how long to isolate, at nhs.uk/coronavirus

STAY ALERT
CONTROL
THE VIRUS
SAVE LIVES

COVID-19: HOW WE HAVE ADAPTED TO THE CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES

The past few months has been a very challenging time for the NHS. As a GP practice, we have had to adapt quickly to change and adopt new ways of working in line with government guidelines. The recent changes in place have not only affected us and our staff - but our patients too! We thought our patient newsletter would be a good opportunity to highlight the key changes that have taken place since March 2020.

- We now operate a **total triage model of care** which means that all patient requests must come through remotely either via telephone / online / external platforms such as NHS App or Patient Access.
- Patients must only attend the surgery when a prearranged appointment has been made. For all requests patients are asked to either:
 1. complete an online eConsult through our website
 2. call the practice to speak with a member of staff
- Patients aged 65+ are now able to order repeat medication over the phone. All other patients can now order repeat medication via the NHS App. Patients must not attend the practice to collect their prescription as they are now sent electronically to your nominated pharmacy. If you have not yet nominated a preferred pharmacy, please call us and we will be happy to assist.
- All patients and visitors coming into the practice must use a face covering or mask. Face coverings can be made from scarves, bandanas or other cotton fabric items such as T-shirts, so long as they cover the mouth and nose. Patients with breathing difficulties and young children are exempt from wearing a face covering.

PRACTICE UPDATE

What's new?

We now have a brand new practice website! Please visit **www.astonhealth.nhs.uk**

Please note, our old website www.astonhealth.com will be unavailable in the coming days.

Patients of Aston Healthcare are now required to complete an eConsult if an appointment or medical advice is required. eConsult is now available from Monday - Friday only and is CLOSED of a weekend. Our pledge to all patients is to provide a response within 24 hours (or the next working day), however we will aspire to respond much sooner if possible.

We have recently changed our telephone recording message in line with our new total triage model of care. The brand new message explains the new process for accessing appointments and eConsult. To be connected to our reception patients now press OPTION 1. If patient's have received a letter from the practice, OPTION 2 must be selected.

Coronavirus has had an impact on all of us, and we as a GP practice want to understand how our patient's have been feeling since lock-down began. On 16th June Aston Healthcare sent out a survey to our patient population via SMS to identify if and how their physical and/or mental health has been affected during the lock-down period. The survey aimed to find out if patients have been anxious or worried to attend our GP surgery and for what reason and also to ensure patients know we are here to support with any health and well being issues. Over 2,300 patients responded to our survey, and as a result we plan to publish a brief paper to demonstrate the results of the survey. We hope for this paper to be published in numerous medical journals as 'best practice'.

Future Plans?

- Brand new nursing / care home initiative to be launched at Aston Healthcare which will be significant for the practice and support patient care. The initiative will involve our health care assistant's supporting patients within nursing / care homes
- Flu Campaign 20/21 - Plans are underway for this years flu campaign to be rolled out at our practice and we will keep patients updated on the progress of this in coming weeks.

PRACTICE MANAGER UPDATE

Thank you to our patients for staying at home during the Coronavirus pandemic and not attending the practice unless an appointment has been pre-arranged. I would also like to thank patients for adopting the use of eConsult and the NHS app to order repeat prescriptions. We understand there has been a lot of change in recent months and we appreciate your co-operation at this time. I would also like to remind patients about the importance of wearing a face mask when entering the practice. Please only attend the practice if you have an an appointment arranged with us beforehand.

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

The Patient Participation Group is a group of patients from Aston Healthcare and practice employees who meet regularly to:

- Address, and resolve, issues that may have arisen as part of the overall patient experience
- Inform patients of future changes within the practices such as staffing, processes etc.
- Advertise upcoming health campaigns e.g. Flu vaccination, Breast/Cervical screening, COPD Awareness etc.
- Assist in educating patients on topics such as digital access, appointments, prescriptions etc.
- Ultimately - the PPG are the voice of our patients and ensure the practice provides a great experience!

So far, the PPG have:

- Played a key role in providing feedback on planned change to practice processes and procedures
- Contributed to the layout of waiting rooms
- Arranged waiting rooms to have less information on the walls and have more quality, seasonal relative information displayed
- Work closely with the practice on areas such as patient surveys, patient communications and much more

Prior to COVID-19 lockdown, Aston Healthcare PPG met with other Knowsley based PPG's to review all aspects of patient experience in order to explore ways of providing and maintaining an uncomplicated, simple, process for all patients regardless of age, disability and ability. This group was known as a 'Joint PPG'.

The joint PPG created 'Sub Groups' (each group having representatives from different surgeries), which focus on different workstreams, reviewing, exploring and consulting on the areas to improve them. The current work stream's include:

- Prescriptions
- Patient education
- Digital access
- Appointments

The PPG will report back on the future progress of these dedicated sub groups within the quarterly newsletter. In light of COVID-19, local guidelines explain how PPG's are unable to meet face to face at this time in order to control the spread of Coronavirus and it is not a contractual obligation to host PPG meetings until updated guidance is provided. However, we plan to engage our PPG via Zoom virtual meetings whenever possible to keep the momentum we have built in recent months.

If you are interested in volunteering to join our Patient Participation Group please email

MG.Communications@knowsleyccg.nhs.uk

We would be happy to welcome any new members!

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

Care Merseyside is a social prescribing charity which helps the local community to feel empowered to look after their health and well-being. Care Merseyside provides a broad programme of social prescribing initiatives with the support of GP referrals from Cornerways Medical Centre and self referrals from the community or other third sector organisations. Care Merseyside have supported hundreds of people throughout the Coronavirus pandemic through their 'phone a friend' service, helped people get access to food and much more. Please note - Care Merseyside are unable to provide medical support and is solely for welfare and or social support.



Patients are now able to self-refer to Care Merseyside activities through their website.

To make a self referral please visit

www.caremerseyside.org.uk

**FOLLOWING NEWSLETTER TO BE AVAILABLE IN OCTOBER 2020
TO PROVIDE COMMENTS, FEEDBACK OR SUGGESTIONS PLEASE EMAIL
MG.COMMUNICATIONS@KNOWSLEYCCG.NHS.UK**

