

Waterside Medical Centre
Mumby Road
Gosport
Hampshire
PO12 1BA

Tel: 023 8231 1034

Dear Patient,

I am writing to inform you about changes we are making at Stoke Road Medical Centre, one of the Willow Group's four GP surgeries.

As you will be aware, Gosport has faced challenges recruiting and retaining our GP workforce. The Willow Group was formed in an effort to make primary care services in Gosport more sustainable, alongside our colleagues in the town's other GP surgeries. Over the past three years we have worked hard to develop a clinical service that combines our different skills and resources so patients are seen by the right person at the right time.

Sadly, due to unforeseen circumstances, we have now experienced a further reduction in our GP workforce at Stoke Road surgery and it is currently no longer possible to continue running the service five days per week.

As a result, we have made the difficult decision to close our Stoke Road branch on a Monday, Thursday and Friday, effective from 2 March. On these days, all patients will continue to have full access to the Willow Group via phone, email and e-consult, as well as being able to attend face to face appointments at all of our other sites.

We know that many of our patients are able and willing to visit any of the Willow sites. However, for those who would have found appointments on a Monday, Thursday or Friday at Stoke Road most convenient for them - we apologise for this inconvenience.

This decision has been approved by our Commissioners, NHS Fareham and Gosport Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Our Commissioners and fellow Primary Care colleagues in surgeries across Gosport recognise this is a result of the continuing problems around GP recruitment and retention in the area that affects us all. This is a major issue nationally, but has hit our town particularly hard, not just The Willow Group.

We have already informed patient representatives on the Patient Participation Group about this change, and will be communicating to patients on our website and social media channels.

We would also like to take this opportunity to reassure you that every effort continues to be made to recruit new GPs to The Willow Group; including international recruitment options – just as we know that others are working equally hard to increase the number of GPs in Gosport. For example, the CCG is supporting a GP recruitment fair and is looking to support general practice in a number of other ways to ensure a 'Gosport-wide' approach to the long-term sustainability of primary care services across the town.

In light of these efforts, we will review the arrangements at Stoke Road in due course and work with the CCG to ensure we continue to offer the best possible service within our available resources.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

With best wishes,



Dr Robin Harlow
Clinical Director
The Willow Group