

# Whitemoor Newsletter



Contact details: 01773 880099  
[www.whitemoormedicalcentre-belper.co.uk](http://www.whitemoormedicalcentre-belper.co.uk)

## View from the inside: Why do GPs run late?

There is nothing more frustrating than sitting in the waiting room 20 or 30 minutes after your appointment time and the doctor still has not called you in. After all we all have busy lives with a million and one other things to do that won't wait so what is the doctor playing at? Surely it can't be that difficult to see patients at the exact time of their appointment can it?

Well here is the inside view from GPs; it does not make a wait to be called in any less frustrating but hopefully it will help patient's understanding of why doctors can run late and how they can help them run to time.

### Your Doctor would like to give you more time

Most GPs provide just 10 minutes for an appointment. Although this might not seem very long you must remember that this has increased over the past 20 years from a typical 7.5 mins per appointment, and from even shorter appointments before then. GPs can choose to offer longer appointment times, but there is a balance between length of appointment and how many appointments they make available. This is obvious when you think about it – do you offer fewer, longer slots, or more, shorter ones? What would you do? Depending upon your reason for attending, 10 minutes might be more than enough time, or woefully inadequate. Got a sore throat? You might be in and out in 5 minutes. Hearing voices and suicidal? You might be in there for half an hour, or probably longer. Your doctor will rely on a variety of problems presenting to balance these demands on their time, and hopefully will run roughly to schedule. Often they will run late.

### Your Doctor does not like lists

Well, let me clarify this. Your Doctor would advocate you knowing what you are coming for, and if writing this down in advance will help you, then I would suggest you do so. However, bearing in mind point one above, if you only have 10 minutes and if you pull out a list of 5 problems this is pretty stressful for your GP. Were you expecting 2 minutes per problem? Be realistic. Prioritise what you want from your doctor.

### If you arrive 10 minutes late, you have missed your appointment.

What I mean is that if you are 10 minutes late (or more), then you are not just late, but your appointment slot has come and gone. The next patient is now due. Remember that the impact of being late is not just on your doctor. They may be prepared to finish their surgery late in order to see you, but what about all the other patients who have booked in and arrived on time? If you arrive late, this is who you are causing hassle for, all the people around you in the waiting room. I guess I'm just asking you to think – is this fair?

### How can patients help?

Your Doctor is not telepathic. Pretty obvious, right? Yet it seems that people think their GP will know what they are worried about, which of their problems a priority is for them and what their hidden fears are. A good doctor will no doubt explore all of this with you, but you can short-cut this. Be up front about what is on your mind. If you are worried because you think your rash or lump might be cancer, then say so. If you want to exclude some rare condition because your mother had it – let the doctor know. Try not to leave your main problem until the end. You would be amazed how many people get through the whole consultation and then, at the end, say something like *"While I'm here, can I mention this crushing chest pain I've been getting?"*

## Dates for the diary

Afternoon closure for training:

- 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019
- 13<sup>th</sup> Feb 2019
- 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019

The surgery will be open again from 4pm for appointments

## Coming soon – online consultations

On 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018 we will be launching our new online consultation system called E-consult.

Rather than ring up constantly to try and make an appointment (and we know how difficult that can be sometimes!) patients can use a secure online portal to self-check their symptoms or get a GP to review their concerns within the next 2 working days.

No separate login or password is required just check out our website after 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018 at [www.whitemoormedicalcentre-belper.co.uk](http://www.whitemoormedicalcentre-belper.co.uk)

## Heath News: How to beat the winter blues

Lots of people get depressed in winter, or suffer from the "winter blues". The medical name for this winter depression is seasonal affective disorder (SAD). If the short, dark days are getting you down, what can you do to feel like yourself again?

### What causes winter depression?

Most scientists believe that the problem is related to the way the body responds to daylight.

Alison Kerry, from the mental health charity Mind, says: "*With SAD, one theory is that light entering the eye causes changes in hormone levels in the body. In our bodies, light functions to stop the production of the sleep hormone melatonin, making us wake up*"

### How can you take back control and beat SAD?

- If the winter blues is about lack of daylight, it's no surprise that treatment usually involves getting more light into your life. If you feel low in winter, get outside as often as you can, especially on bright days. Sitting by a window can also help.
- It is also important to eat well during the winter. Winter blues can make you crave sugary and stodgy foods (such as chocolate and pasta) but don't forget to include plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables in your diet.
- There's another weapon against the seasonal slump: keeping active. There's convincing evidence that 30 minutes of vigorous exercise 3 times a week is effective against depression, and anecdotal evidence that lighter exercise will have a beneficial effect, too.

## Reminders

Out of Hours cover:

If you need help when the surgery is closed

- Call 111
- Derby Walk in Centre, Osmaston Road – 8am-7.30pm
- Ripley Hospital Minor Injuries Unit – 8am-10pm
- Call 999 in an emergency

Remember pharmacists can help with minor ailments

Derbyshire Community Transport is available for anyone needing transport to & from the surgery who struggles with the bus. Call 01773 746652

## PPG News

The Patient Participation Group (PPG) considers all aspects of the practice which affects patients.

Over time we have considered website upgrades, telephone access (number of lines and cost of calls), getting appointments, and modifying the parking spaces to make them drain (current).

We always discuss staff changes and the meetings are always attended by one of the doctors and management.

We often find ourselves discussing funding for services and staff. We discuss anything and everything which affects the patients, from obtaining an appropriate appointment and diagnosis, to subsequent hospital referrals, results and transfer back into the community.

Hopefully you can see that the PPG attempts to improve patient services, and so finally, look out for **eConsult** on the website in December, and read about how your symptoms can be assessed via the internet.

KB, PPG Member

If you have any comments or suggestions for the newsletter please let us know.