

# The right care, at the right time.



WHAT YOU NEED  
TO KNOW  
ABOUT YOUR  
GP SERVICES TODAY

# Putting things into context.

Primary care in the UK is currently going through significant change. The growing population and declining numbers of doctors are just a couple of the factors that are causing huge challenges for the NHS. The issues surrounding the NHS are complex and will not be fixed overnight and so in the meantime it is our job to respond to, and deliver on, the challenges that we face by delivering a service that means that our patients receive the best care and advice possible.

**“A significant proportion of (GP) demand must be managed through helping patients stay well, self-care and navigate to other team members, or alternate services”.**

**(General Practice Forward View, 2016)**



# General Practice explained.

**GPs:** A General Practitioner (GP) is your family doctor and is the main point of contact for general healthcare for NHS patients. All UK residents are entitled to the services of an NHS GP. GPs are highly skilled doctors who support patients throughout their lives. They help you to manage your health and prevent illness and are trained in all aspects of general medicine i.e. child health, mental health, adult medicine, the diagnosis and management of acute medical and surgical problems and the management of long-term health conditions such as diabetes and asthma.

GPs assess, diagnose, treat and help patients manage illness plus promote general health and wellbeing. GPs also provide the link to further health services and work closely with other specialist healthcare colleagues at the practice.

Your doctor is also responsible for arranging hospital admissions and referrals to specialists and they link with secondary and community services about your care. They also collect and record important information from other healthcare professionals involved in your treatment. Some GPs are also involved in the education and training of doctors (Registrars) and spend time teaching and supervising during their clinics.

**“GP numbers have fallen by almost 1000 in the last 4 years”.**

**(TUC Analysis)**

**Physician Associates:** Physician Associates are medically trained, general healthcare professionals, who work alongside our GPs and provide medical care as an integral part of our multidisciplinary team. Physician Associates work with a dedicated medical supervisor, but are able to work independently with appropriate support. Our PAs also specialise in mental health and are able to provide the continuity of care for patients who need it most.

**Paramedics:** Primary Care Paramedics have quickly become an essential resource in the Practice. They take on visits for our housebound patients, see patients with acute and long term illnesses as part of the Urgent Care team. The Paramedics are fully supported by the GPs who are always available for input and advice when appropriate.

**Practice Nurses & Specialist Practice Nurses:** Practice Nurses are qualified and registered nurses. They help with health issues such as family planning, smears and immunisations. Our Specialist Practice Nurses manage many patients who have long-term health conditions such as asthma or diabetes. These nurses are experts in identifying how to support patients to ensure they get the help they need to live with their conditions.

**Health Care Associates:** Health Care Associates support other clinicians with their daily work and carry out tasks such as phlebotomy (blood tests), dressings, blood pressure monitoring and new patient checks. HCAs may also give some injections.

**Pharmacists:** Clinical or Primary Care Pharmacists work as part of our general practice team. They are highly qualified experts in medicines and can help patients in many ways, including carrying out structured medication reviews for patients with ongoing health problems and improving patient safety. They are available to consult directly on the phone. They also support our GPs who provide medical care to residents in local Care Homes.



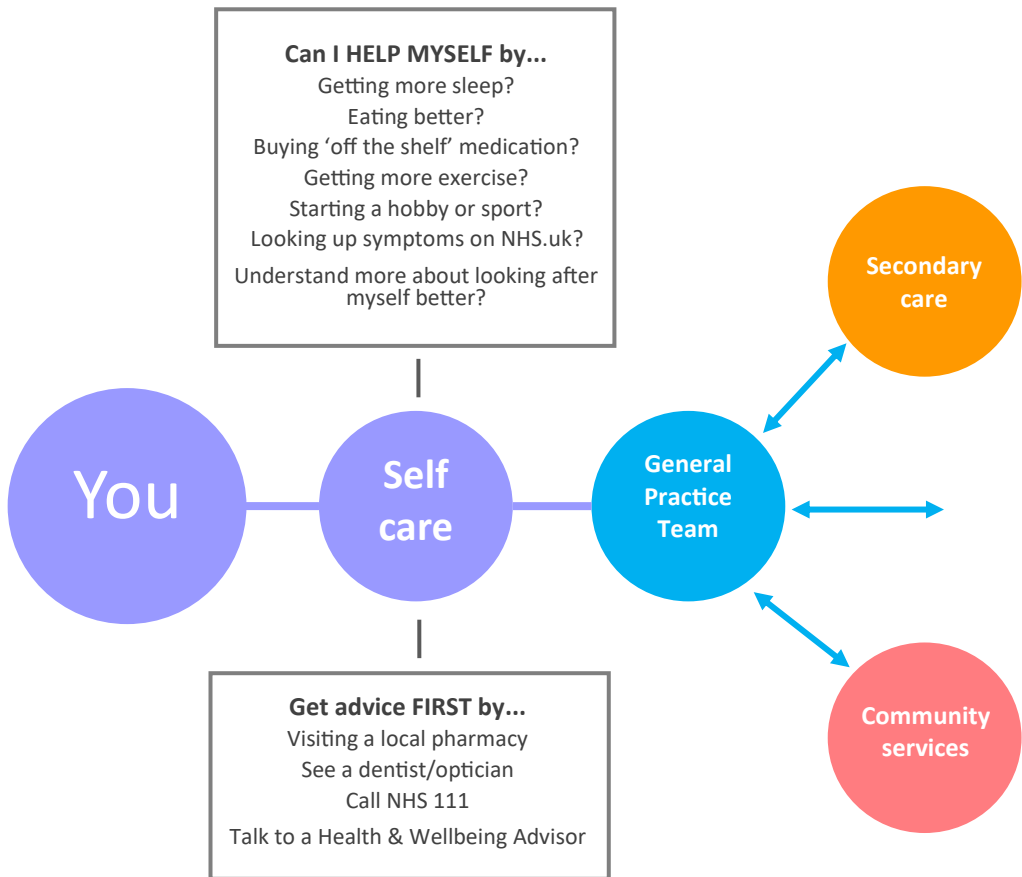
**Health & Wellbeing Advisors:** We understand that not everything can be fixed by medicine and many other factors influence a person's sense of well-being so it's key patients find the appropriate help and support. Our Health and Wellbeing Advisors are available to anyone aged 18 years and over who are experiencing ongoing issues which they feel they are not managing well. This could be lacking social confidence, loneliness, financial issues, needing practical help, wanting to improve their fitness and much more.

**Mental Health Specialist:** We have a team of Mental Health Specialists from Talking Therapies and Mind offering appointments for patients in crisis and for ongoing mental health support.

**Musculoskeletal (MSK) Practitioners:** These practitioners assess patients for a full range of musculoskeletal conditions affecting all joints or muscle groups. They will assess and can suggest treatment, making referrals for further investigation and treatment as required.

**Self Care:** Your role in your health and wellbeing is paramount to the survival of the NHS. Having bad health can be miserable, but there is a lot you can do to help yourself live well. If you need advice about how to do this better please turn to the back to find a list of helpful resources, or pick up our 'Self Care' and 'Minor Illnesses' leaflets available in the waiting rooms.

# Where we fit in the bigger picture.



Primary care services in the UK are only **one piece of a much larger ‘health care’ picture**. It is important for patients to understand that it is their health and ultimately they are largely responsible for doing what they can to help themselves lead a happier, healthier life.

Our team’s primary role is to ensure that our patients receive the best care possible, when they need it. However in order for us to be able to provide this service effectively, we need to take a look at where our services fit into the bigger picture.

The diagram below shows the relationship between General Practice, and other service providers.

Hospital clinics  
Specialist doctors / consultants  
Physiotherapy  
Surgeons



NHS 111  
Walk In Centres  
Accident & Emergency

District Nursing  
Midwives  
Health Visitors  
Talking Therapies  
Dieticians  
Teenage Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

For years GPs have had to absorb increasing workloads from hospitals and community trusts. The demand on doctors not only comes from the day to day patient demand, but also from inefficiencies and issues around how primary and secondary care interact with each other. Currently there are a lack of clear systems and processes which has a significant impact on how primary care runs. However, we are part of a network of local practices who are working with the Royal Berkshire Hospital and Berkshire Healthcare Federation Trust, to improve communication and processes locally.

‘Making Time In General Practice’(2015) reported that an estimated 27% of appointments could potentially be avoided if there was more coordinated working between GPs and hospitals, wider use of primary care staff, better use of technology to streamline administrative burdens, and wider system changes.

(General Practice Forward View, 2016)

# Where we fit in the bigger picture.

Local community pharmacists are highly skilled health professionals who have a minimum of 5 years of training, giving them expert knowledge on how to use medicines and support patients with minor illnesses such as coughs, colds, itchy sore eyes, and earache. They can drastically speed up patients' access to health care with face-to-face consultations.

General Practice, while providing much help and advice to patients, also provide the link to further health services. Our doctors and urgent care team are responsible for arranging hospital admissions when felt appropriate and also ensure referrals are made to specialists within secondary and community care services.

**“27% of general practice appointments in England could potentially be treated elsewhere. 18 million of these could have been treated through self care & local pharmacies.”**

**(‘Making Time in General Practice’ NHS England 2015)**



# Help US help you.

We work hard trying to make access to the service we provide as easy as possible. We constantly assess, review and discuss new initiatives and ideas to try and help our patients and staff manage the demands we are faced with.

Once you are sure you need to see a clinician or speak with someone about your health—here are some of the ways you can help us help you:

- **eConsult.** Complete the online consultation form to send us information about your medical need or query. Our triage team will then be in touch with the best next step for you by the end of the next working day.
- **Turn up.** Most months we have **over 300 missed appointments** which is a huge waste of resource and means other patients could have been seen sooner.
- **Cancel appointments.** If you no longer need an appointment please cancel it in good time, it will mean another patient can be seen instead. Ensure you are set up for text reminders, then a simple **text back 'CANCEL'** is all you need to do.
- **Be prepared.** Make sure you know what it is you need to discuss. Our team will do all they can in your appointment but they also have other patients waiting.
- **Urgent, or just convenient?** We can provide a better service if patients use what we offer each day appropriately. **Be organised** about medication reviews, **seek advice** from community pharmacists and **look online** at recommended sites for advice at your finger tips (see overleaf for our list of recommended sites ).

# What can I expect?

We want to ensure our patients get the care they need when they need it most. That's why not only do we have a large multi-disciplinary team working for us, but also offer a range of different appointments. There may be a longer wait for particular clinicians so it is important you decide whether your health issue can wait or if another clinician could help sooner.

Our reception team can help you more effectively if you are open with them about what it is you need an appointment for. They are trained and ensure high standards of confidentiality are maintained.

We would encourage patients with long-term health conditions to try and see their usual clinician when possible to maintain continuity of care.

## Types of appointments:

- **Routine:** For ongoing health concerns.
- **Specialist Practice Nurse:** Only bookable with certain nurses who are trained in particular areas and long-term conditions.
- **Urgent care:** For acute conditions that need addressing very quickly and cannot be resolved by self-care.
- **Telephone:** Usually for an update regarding an ongoing condition with your usual GP or specialist nurse.
- **Home visits:** If you are medically housebound you can arrange a home visit with one of our team. Try and book before 10am if you feel it is needed on the day.
- **Video:** Occasionally our team will make use of video consultations to help with appointments for patients who are not able to attend the surgery.

# Help yourself resources.

**Manage your health online.** Download the NHS App and set yourself up with online access to your medical record which enables you to see test results, make/cancel appointments and request your repeat medication. Ask a member of reception for more information.

**Our Website:** Provides helpful patient information and enables you to send in enquiries and questions online.

**Community Pharmacies.** Provide medical advice without the need to book an appointment and can help with many minor illnesses.

**Phone 111:** If you're worried about a medical condition and need advice quickly, 111 trained advisors will help assess your need over the phone. They are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Walk-in centres.** Offer treatment, information and advice for a range of minor illnesses and injuries. Anyone can use them and you do not need to be a registered patient.

## Websites:

[NHS.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)

[Patient.co.uk](https://www.patient.co.uk)

[Brooksidegrouppractice.co.uk](https://www.brooksidegrouppractice.co.uk)



# Our Practice locations.

## **Brookside Surgery**

Brookside Close  
Earley  
Berkshire  
RG6 7HG

## **Chalfont Surgery**

Chalfont Close  
Lower Earley  
Reading  
RG6 5HZ

## **Winnersh Surgery**

10 Melbourne Avenue  
Winnersh  
RG41 5EL

## **Wilderness Road Surgery**

1 Wilderness Road  
Earley  
Reading  
RG6 7RU

**Brooksidegrouppractice.co.uk**  
**0118 9669 333**