



Newsletter Phrase – It takes both sides to build a bridge – Fredrik Nael [Author]

If the Practice can implement the improvements that we all seek and if patients
a. Attend all appointments [or cancel in good time]
b. Adapt, if possible, to the new communication systems

Then we as practitioners and patients should all benefit in the future



Welcome

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2025. The PPG would like to wish all patients and staff at KBMC a happy and successful year.

SMS and the Newsletter

The PPG are delighted that patients can receive a copy of the newsletter every three months via a SMS notification from the Practice. Follow the links to access the Newsletter. The newsletter will also be on the website and the Practice notice boards. The PPG notice board at the Bramingham site has been moved to make it more accessible to patients.

PPG Meeting dates

Our next meeting with the Practice is Tuesday 14th January 2025 11.00 – 13.00 at Kingsway.



What's coming in 2025?

From the end of March 2025, a programme called eConsult which stands for electronic communication will be introduced. eConsult will involve all patients wishing to book an appointment at the Practice with either a GP or nurse having to fill in a form [TRIAGE REQUEST]. This form will be triaged by a Practice Medic who will decide on the level of treatment the patient needs, either seeing a GP, seeing a nurse, or being recommended medication from a pharmacy. Patients will still be able to turn up at the Practice or telephone to ask for an appointment. Instead, the eConsult form will need to be completed first. The patient will then be contacted following the medic's decision on the form of treatment and when.

Why introduce eConsult?

The most common reasons patients go to their GP Practice is for medication, an admin query, showing symptoms of potential illness, ear, nose and throat issues and musculoskeletal complaints. eConsult is a way of booking appointments by patients. It was designed by GPs for GPs as a more efficient way of working and increasing productivity. It is estimated that 2 out of 3 eConsults takes the same amount of time as one GP face to face with a patient. It is being rolled out by GP Practices across the country.

How to access eConsult

eConsult can be accessed online via a tablet, smartphone or computer online at any time OR telephoning, with the receptionist helping you with the form OR attending the Practice in person for the receptionist to complete the form with the patient. It can also be used with the NHS app. There are a series of tick boxes and free text boxes. It is processed the next day if after closing time or on the same day if received before opening times or during Practice opening hours. eConsult forms will be not be processed once the Practice is closed but will be processed once the Practice re-opens in advance of morning surgery hours.

Other aspects of eConsult

Patients will be able to check their symptoms online, find self-help, NHS advice and information and find local services they may wish to refer to and contact, again online.





eConsult further answers

The PPG at its next meeting in January will provide the Practice with clarification questions prior to the introduction of be eConsult to help the smooth roll out at the end of March.

What about my annual medication review, annual blood test or wellbeing visit, annual flu vaccination or covid booster?

The Practice will contact you to arrange these appointments, and there is no need to complete an eConsult form.

NHS App and SystemOnline

Patients are still welcome to use SystemOnline for repeat prescriptions but there will be NO FURTHER online appointments available once eConsult begins. The Practice is going along with the preference from NHS England for its patients to use the NHS app. This will now be promoted by the Practice from January 2025.

Website

The new Practice website has been experiencing severe details but hopefully issues found in amalgamating the two sites will be shortly resolved. We will then have a single website address. The PPG will be scrutinising the new website to satisfy itself to see if it is patient friendly, easy to navigate and works for everyone.

Do I need a GP or Nurse appointment?

The Practice has notified patients of the use of pharmacists. The PPG are reinforcing this message. 'Pharmacies can treat urinary tract infections [in women], new sinus problems, sore throats, ear infections, infected insect bites, impetigo and shingles without a GP appointment. Pharmacists can also provide advice and treatment for common illnesses, supply medicines including prescription-only and refer patients to a GP or hospital.' By using a pharmacist importantly appointments will be freed up for patients who need them.

Not attending appointments

The PPG is very disappointed that patients not attending appointments has shown an increasing trend. There have been over 4,000 during 2024, averaging 16 a day or 80 each week. We have urged patients over the past 3 newsletters to let the Practice know if you cannot attend an appointment. This can be done by phoning the Practice and using option 1 giving the appointment details. There is no queue. You may also attend in person or text/email the Practice. This will then free up an appointment for another patient. The PPG feel that patients should take responsibility by thinking of other patients and cancel their appointment if feeling much better or have another commitment.



NHS APP

The NHS App that lets you book appointments, order repeat prescriptions and access a range of other healthcare services.