

Barnabas Bulletin

Newsletter of the Barnabas Medical Centre

Issue 13, March 2016

Top Ten Tips for Your GP Appointment

By Jacqui Piper

Did you know that the average GP appointment is only 10 minutes long? Here are the top 10 tips for getting the most out of that 10 minutes, as compiled by Healthwatch and NHS Choices.

1. **Is your issue urgent? Do you need to see a specific GP?** If you feel you need to see a doctor urgently then you may not be able to see your own GP or the one who knows you best. If you have a long term issue or would prefer to see a particular GP you might want to wait for an appointment with them.
2. **Do you need to see a GP or could a practice nurse deal with your problem?** In many cases a practice nurse could deal with your concern, so consider this as an alternative to making an appointment with a GP. The Practice runs special clinics such as asthma and diabetes – find out more from reception.
3. **Take notes to help you.** Before your appointment be clear in your own mind what you want to say. It might be helpful to make a note of your symptoms, worries and any questions you would like to ask.
4. **Many problems? See if you can book a double appointment.** If you have a number of issues that you would like to discuss with your GP ask if you can book a double appointment to give you more time to talk them through.
5. **Discuss important things first** and stick to the point. Make sure you tell the doctor about the important things first and try to get to the point. Don't feel you have to justify being there, try not to feel embarrassed and don't leave your main concern until the end.
6. **Do you need support for your appointment?** If you feel your situation needs it, or English isn't your first language and you feel you might not understand, take a relative or friend for support. They can help you understand or explain.
7. **Not clear on the treatment plan? Ask again.** Make sure you fully understand the next steps before you leave the room. If you don't then don't be afraid of asking the doctor to go through the plan again.
8. **Ask who to contact if you have any questions.** After your appointment you may think of questions that you would like to ask. Find out who you can contact to ask questions, as well as any support organisations that can provide reliable information.
9. **Take a list of your medicines.** Bring a list of any medication you are taking, including over-the-counter and/or alternative medicines and anything prescribed after a hospital visit. This includes tablets, liquids and creams. Your GP needs to know about everything you are taking.
10. **If you are unable to get to your booked appointment then let the Practice know.** Missed appointments are frustrating for the surgery staff and patients – they waste time and money and make it much more difficult to get an appointment. If you are unable to attend a booked appointment, for whatever reason, please ensure you contact the Practice so the appointment can be released for another patient. ■

Living Well Self-Management Programme

Ealing Clinical Commissioning Group and *Living Well* have joined forces to offer a free course for Ealing residents living with a long-term health condition.

The courses run throughout the year and are designed to give you the confidence and motivation you need to feel more in control of your health and well-being.

The programme is six sessions of two to two-and-a-half hours; one session a week.

Described as a self-management programme the courses have been shown to increase confidence, reduce stress and generally improve quality of life.

You are eligible for a FREE place on a programme if you live in Ealing and have one of the following conditions:

- Diabetes
- Arthritis
- Heart disease
- Asthma
- Epilepsy
- High blood pressure
- A neurological condition
- Pain conditions
- Are undergoing pulmonary rehab

Subjects covered include goal setting, relaxation techniques, action planning, stress management, pain management, diet and nutrition, physical activity and fatigue management. All the course facilitators are themselves living with long-term health conditions.

For more information, or to book a place on a programme please call Deamion on 020 3137 3373 or email deamion@livingwellcic.com. ■

Registering for Online Access

If you wish to book appointments or request repeat prescriptions online, and you are not already registered, please come into the practice and talk to Reception.

Please bring some form of photo ID and proof of address with you as we may need to see them for security reasons. ■

Dementia Support Organisations

With the current focus on dementia and mental health it seems useful to provide contact details for dementia support organisations.

Dementia Concern

A local organisation providing information and support services for people with dementia and their carers in the London Borough of Ealing. This includes assessment, advice & information, monitoring & support, advocacy, day care, short breaks for carers, dementia cafés, carers' information evenings and the *Carers' Voice* newsletter.

Website: www.dementiaconcern.co.uk

Email: enquiries@dementiaconcern.co.uk

Phone: 020 8568 4448

Dementia UK

A national organisation providing information and support for people with dementia, their families and carers through a team of specialist Admiral Nurses.

Website: www.dementiauk.org

Email: info@dementiauk.org

Helpline: 0800 888 6678

The Alzheimers Society

A national organisation for anyone affected by dementia, providing information and support, funding research and campaigning to raise awareness.

Website: www.alzheimers.org.uk

Email: enquiries@alzheimers.org.uk

Helpline: 0300 222 1122 ■

Missed Appointments

We continue to monitor the number of missed appointments. Last year we clocked up over 1800 unkept appointments; that is seven a day, every day we're open – or the equivalent of an afternoon clinic for a doctor and a nurse each week.

This year we've had 136 missed appointments in January and 127 in February. We really do need to see this number reduce significantly!

If you don't need, or can't get to, your booked appointment please tell us! A quick call is all it needs!

PPG Corner

Updates from our Patient Participation Group

There's an old Chinese proverb which says "If we don't change our direction, we will end up where we are going", so it is important that we know where we are going for only then can we usefully change direction if that is what is needed.

Since I wrote last the PPG has continued to think about what we are doing and where we are heading. And as I said in my last column, my vision is that the Practice and the PPG work together to get an **OUTSTANDING** rating next time we have a CQC inspection.

This is not going to be easy, but it can be done. It's like climbing a mountain. You stand in the valley and look at the peak and think "There's no way I can get up there". But there's a rock not far up and if we go there we can stop and drink our flask of coffee. Then we see another nice grassy area ahead where we can stop to eat our lunch. And so we proceed, step by step, until we suddenly realise we are at the top. And we can look back and think "Wow! We did it! What a wonderful view".

Sure we have a big mountain to climb; it's a big step between the good GOOD rating we achieved a year ago and OUTSTANDING. But we can climb that mountain. It's all about teamwork and having the vision that we can succeed.

The Practice has a super team. This was brought home to me recently when I had to deliver posters to every practice in our immediate area. Of the ten practices I visited at only two did I get a cheerful, happy reception and a smile. And at two the receptionist took the envelope from me without even looking up from her phone call. Compare that with Barnabas where our receptionists are always cheerful, happy and helpful. Such a team is what makes me believe we can successfully climb Mount OUTSTANDING.

And when we get to the top we can look at the view and see that we really have made a difference to every patient's healthcare.

Keith Marshall, PPG Chairman ■

Ealing North North PPG Network
present

The Pharmacist and the Doctor

starring

Dr Graham Stretch

Senior Clinical Pharmacist

**Tuesday 29 March, 1830 hrs
Northolt Village Community
Centre**

The Manor House, Ealing Road,
Northolt, UB5 6AD



Clinical Pharmacists are now working
within GP Practices.

Come along to find out why they are
there, what do they do, and how this
will help you.

The session is open to all patients, carers and
GP practice staff in Ealing North North Area.

Tea/coffee and biscuits will be provided.

Further information, if required, from
enn.ppg.network@gmail.com

Next Barnabas PPG Meeting Monday 14 March

The next meeting of the PPG is on Monday 14
March, 1800 hrs at the Medical Centre. Our
guest will be Nurse Henny Shanta who will tell
us about the role of the Practice Nurse.

The meeting is open to all Barnabas patients,
carers and staff so please do come along. ■

Staff News

Healthcare Assistant. Unfortunately Sian Fullerton, our HCA, is leaving us at the end of February. We are currently in the process of recruiting a replacement.

Medical Secretary. Marcia, our Medical Secretary has also left us. We are pleased to announce that Chris Sodhi – who has many years experience as a Medical Secretary – will be joining us in April.

We would like to thank both Sian and Marcia for their contributions to the Practice and wish them well for the future. ■

PPG on Facebook

Our PPG now has a Facebook page which is open to all our patients, carers and Practice staff. You can find the page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/barnabas.ppg/>. So if you are on Facebook, please do join us and help make this a valuable resource. ■

Repeat Prescriptions

Please remember it takes 2 working days from the time you request the repeat to it being ready for collection.

However you request your repeat prescription, if you are registered for electronic prescriptions your prescription will go direct to your nominated pharmacy and cannot be collected from the Medical Centre.

Minor Ailment?

Don't forget that you can now receive treatment and medication for many minor ailments from your local pharmacy without the need for a doctor's appointment.

Please ask at Reception for more details.

Extended Hours

The Practice is now offering appointments, with a doctor or nurse, from 0730 hrs on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings. These are **pre-booked appointments only** and are intended to help those needing to get to work.

The Practice will open early only for patients that have a pre-booked early appointment. We will then open our doors to everyone as usual at 0830.

Need a large print version?
Please ask at Reception

Barnabas Medical Centre

Girton Road
Northolt, UB5 4SR

☎ 020 8864 4437

www.barnabasmedicalcentre.co.uk

Surgery Times

Mon & Fri: 0830-1300, 1400-1800

Tue, Wed, Thu: 0730-1800

Out of Hours

For urgent healthcare outside surgery times please call 111

Repeat Prescriptions

Repeat prescriptions must be requested in writing or online and will normally be available for collection after 2 working days

Doctors

Dr Mohini Parmar (f)

Dr David Knight (m)

Dr Harpreet Kooner (m)

Dr Harjeet Bhatoa (f)

Dr Sonya Jey (f)

Dr Shankar Vijayadeva (m)

Practice Nurses

Henny Shanta

Anna Wan

Purnima Gurung

Pharmacy Assistant

Yaksheeta Dave

Heath Care Assistant

vacant

Integrated Care Plan Advisor

Paresh Virji

Practice Manager

Matthew Edwards

Patient Participation Group

Chairman: Keith Marshall

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*This newsletter is a joint production of
Barnabas Medical Centre and the
Barnabas Patient Participation Group.
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