

# Barnabas Bulletin

## THANK YOU!

The last two years have been extremely difficult for you and for everyone at the Practice.

We want to say a big **THANK YOU!** to all our patients for your understanding and flexibility with the changes we've had to make to keep you all safe, while also ensuring the safety of everyone at the Practice. We know this has not been easy.

## Goodbye to Dr Parmar

Our senior GP and Practice Partner, Dr Mohini Parmar, has decided it is time to retire; she leaves us at the end of March. After 30 years at the Practice I think we would all agree she deserves to put her feet up and just relax.

Since 2012 Dr Parmar has also been Chair of Ealing Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), and following the CCG merger Chair of the new NW London CCG. A role which has been both rewarding and challenging.

We are all going to miss Dr Parmar's dedication, calm focus, superlative care and friendship. She will be a very hard act to follow. We wish her a long, relaxing and very happy retirement.

## Impact of the Covid Pandemic

Due to the Covid pandemic a lot has changed in the last two years and it has been an extremely difficult and stressful time for the Practice and for everyone.

As a practice we have had to make necessary and important changes to the way patient care is delivered to protect us and patients alike.

Below is a summary of some important things we've done.

1. The biggest change, which everyone will have seen, has been the move from almost entirely face-to-face appointments to a telephone triage system with a mix of phone consultations, and face-to-face appointments where clinically necessary.
2. Like most practices, we had to implement an online way for you to request an appointment or advice. The eConsult

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## Covid-19 Latest Information

*See the back page*

*91% of patients say they are "Extremely Likely" or "Likely" to recommend the Practice*

*No longer need your appointment or telephone call-back? Then please tell us!*

(Continued from page 1)

system has helped us greatly and although not ideal it has become a useful tool for patients to access our services.

3. As a result of the telephone triage system, and eConsult, we have been able to offer more appointments than previously.
4. We have installed a new, internet-based, phone system. As well as being up-to-date, this is giving us greatly more flexibility and we are looking into other ways of utilising the technology.
5. We have recruited new staff to the Barnabas team:
  - Dr Rebecca Carey, salaried GP
  - Sandip Sodha, Pharmacy Technician
  - Two new Receptionists: Tracey Peart and Isobel HansonWe are also hoping to have a permanent phlebotomist on site and also a Nurse Practitioner role.
4. A long serving receptionist Gill Hunt has chosen to take retirement. We wish her a long and happy retirement.
5. We have refurbished Room 7 into a larger consulting room. (See opposite.)
6. We paused production of his newsletter, *Barnabas Bulletin*, at the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020. In the interim our patient group (who produce the newsletter for us) have redesigned it to make it more suitable for online presentation.
7. Also during the last two years our patient group have taken a long, hard look at themselves. As a result they have rebranded as **Barnabas Patient Voices** (more on page 5), developed their new website <https://barnabasvoices.org.uk> and developed some plans to help us all progress.

We will expand on some of these points in the coming pages.

## Get it Checked Out

If you are concerned that you might have a serious illness, especially if it might be cancer, please contact your GP and seek advice. Finding cancer early makes it more treatable.

If you have a symptom such as a persistent cough (that's not due to Covid-19) or prolonged discomfort in the abdomen, please get it checked.

The four most common cancers in the UK are breast cancer, lung cancer, prostate cancer, and bowel cancer.

The Practice is open, you will be seen, and if necessary referred for urgent scans etc.

## NEWSROUND

### Barnabas Patient Voices

#### Next Meeting

Wednesday 16 March

13:30; on Zoom

### We're Recruiting More Staff

In order to help cope with demand, and to replace Dr Parmar, the Practice is looking to recruit:

- Additional salaried GPs
- 2 additional receptionists
- A Nurse Associate



### Consulting Room 7

As some of you will have seen, we have been able to rebuild Consulting Room 7. By the time you read this hopefully we'll have a sparkling new consulting room.

You said ...  
*You found the phone  
system difficult and  
often engaged.*

We did ...  
*We agreed; So we  
have installed a totally  
new, up-to-date,  
internet-based system  
which is much  
improved, and more  
flexible.*

### What do you want in *Barnabas Bulletin?*

This newsletter is produced to help you, the patients of Barnabas Medical Centre.

*What would you like to see included?*

*What would most help you?*

*What is it about medical care you don't understand?*

Let us know and we will try to include something in a future issue.

Please email your ideas to [contact@barnabasvoices.org.uk](mailto:contact@barnabasvoices.org.uk) or leave a note at Reception for the for the Chairman of [Barnabas Patient Voices](#).

## The Role of Reception

What is the Role of Reception?

Unfortunately the perception of a GP receptionist is that of someone who just "answers the phone" but in fact the GP Practice Receptionist is a skilled multitasker who has a vital role at every surgery in the country. The role can be stressful at times and extremely demanding, but also very rewarding.

- A receptionist's job is not to get in the way, be obstructive, or rude, or pry into anything personal. Nor is it just to answer the phones.

So what is the role, and how can you help ...

- The doctors have entrusted the reception staff with an important job: to deal with enquiries, book appointments, ensure the deluge of admin reaches the right person, and try to keep everything running smoothly.
- Receptionists will have a good understanding of the services on offer (both in the practice and in the wider NHS) so ...
- ... think of receptionists as your ally in finding the person most skilled and appropriate to help you ...
- ... but to do this they may need more details about your condition to help assess the degree of urgency.
- This means they sometimes have to be told personal information, and have access to some parts of your medical records. But they are required to keep all patient information confidential.
- You can help by asking "why am I calling the surgery?". Is the issue actually urgent? Do you really need to see a specific GP? (Maybe you do if you have an ongoing problem or need continuity of care for multiple chronic illnesses.) Could the Practice Nurse, Health Care Assistant, or Clinical Pharmacist deal with your problem?
- While the receptionists' job can be stressful, they equally know you too may be under stress, worried or concerned about your issue.
- Of course, mistakes will occasionally happen and our team always discuss them as a group and look for ways of improving the service.

Our team will do their best to help you at all times, so please try to be patient and courteous in return.

We are very lucky to have the team we have and I cannot thank them enough for all their hard work and efforts.



### Current Covid-19 Regulations

At the time we went to press, the government's Covid-19 rules were:

- You are no longer legally required to self-isolate if you test positive for Covid-19. But you should stay at home if you can and avoid contact with other people.
- You are not required to take daily tests, or self-isolate, following contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19.
- Staff and students in most education and childcare settings no longer need to test twice a week.
- If you are fully vaccinated, you no longer need to take a COVID-19 test either before or after you arrive in the UK. You do still need to complete a passenger locator form.
- If you are not fully vaccinated, you do still need to take a pre-departure test. And after you arrive, you need to take a PCR test on or before day 2, but you only need to quarantine if the PCR test is positive. You also still need to complete a passenger locator form.
- Remember that from 1 April, Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) are no longer free, except for those over 75 or classed as highly vulnerable. You may be able to purchase tests from some pharmacies.

### Patient Experience Sharing

As patients we know it would often be helpful or reassuring to know something of what to expect before undergoing a medical procedure or treatment. To help calm these concerns our patient group, [Barnabas Patient Voices](https://www.barnabasmedicalcentre.co.uk/practice-info/patient-participation-forum/) has created some "helpful notes" of patients' experiences of various procedures and treatments. These can be found in the PPG area of the Practice website at <https://www.barnabasmedicalcentre.co.uk/practice-info/patient-participation-forum/>, and on the [Barnabas Patient Voices](https://barnabasvoices.org.uk) website at <https://barnabasvoices.org.uk>.

**To make this really worthwhile we need more contributions, please!**

If you can contribute, please write some notes (they don't have to be neat, tidy or in polished English), address them to Keith Marshall, and leave them with Reception, or email them to [keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk](mailto:keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk).

The notes will be edited and added to the collection for everyone's benefit. All contributions will be anonymous.

### NEWSROUND

#### Foreign Covid-19 Vaccinations

If you've had Covid-19 vaccinations outside the UK, the NHS can now accept these and add them to your records. You to book an appointment to show evidence for any Covid-19 vaccinations obtained abroad.

Full details at <https://bit.ly/3tKWM7l>



#### Discover

Discover is a register of adults living in NW London who are interested in health research and want to find out more about health research opportunities. These may range from answering surveys or having a blood test, to testing innovative medical devices or phone apps, and even participating in clinical trials. If you are interested you can find out more, and sign up, at <https://www.registerfordiscover.org.uk/>

Source: Imperial College Health Partners

## *Barnabas Patient Voices* 2-Monthly Meeting Dates

*The dates for our full, formal meetings for the rest of 2022 are:*

Wednesday 18 May [AGM]  
Wednesday 20 July  
Wednesday 21 September  
Wednesday 16 November

All meetings are at 13:30 on Zoom; please ask for details.

## *Barnabas Patient Voices* Monthly Informal Calls

We also hold monthly, 30 minute, informal calls to enable us to keep in touch and share updates.

*The remaining 2022 dates are:*

Monday 4 April, 16:00  
Wednesday 4 May, 18:00  
Wednesday 1 June, 10:00  
Tuesday 5 July, 12:00  
Monday 1 August, 14:00  
Wed. 7 September, 16:00  
Thursday 6 October, 18:00  
Tuesday 1 November, 10:00  
Monday 5 December, 12:00

These calls are also on Zoom; please ask for details.

## Email Addresses

*Barnabas Patient Voices* now has the following general email addresses:

[contact@barnabasvoices.org.uk](mailto:contact@barnabasvoices.org.uk)  
[admin@barnabasvoices.org.uk](mailto:admin@barnabasvoices.org.uk)  
[chair@barnabasvoices.org.uk](mailto:chair@barnabasvoices.org.uk)

Please note our previous email [barnabas.ppg@gmail.com](mailto:barnabas.ppg@gmail.com) has now been retired.

## *Barnabas Patient Voices* Corner

*Updates from our Patient Group*

### Knowing about *Barnabas Patient Voices*

Although we didn't meet for the first 6 months of the pandemic we have since been meeting regularly over Zoom. In addition to our normal 2-monthly meetings we've held quite a few informal calls which has enabled those of us who have needed to shield to keep in touch and have some social contact.

At the same time we've been working on a rebranding exercise. We felt that calling ourselves a "Patient Participation Group" was meaningless to many people. Eventually we decided that *Barnabas Patient Voices* is a better, and more meaningful name, given that our role is to be the voice of the patients to the Practice.

Along with the new name comes a new website, <https://barnabasvoices.org.uk>, where you will find pointers to recent, relevant, news items and many helpful documents and links. There is also a Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/barnabas.ppg>.

These actions were all part of our plan for 2021-23, and hopefully there is more to come, but some will have to wait for the current plague to fully burn itself out.

If you would like to join us, and attend our meetings, you can join online at <https://barnabasvoices.org.uk/membership-application/>, join the Facebook group, or drop me a note (see below). All the Practice's patients, carers and staff are very welcome.

Finally I want to say a big **thank you** to everyone at the Practice. They have all been under tremendous pressure this last two years ensuring that we continue to get excellent healthcare while needing to safeguard us and themselves. I keep saying it, but we do have one of the very best Practices in the borough.

*Keith Marshall, Chairman, Barnabas Patient Voices*  
*Keith can be emailed at [keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk](mailto:keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk) or you may leave a note with Reception.*





## COVID-19 VISITING YOUR GP SURGERY



**PLEASE WEAR FACE COVERINGS.**  
COVID-19 PROTECTIONS ARE  
STILL IN PLACE IN THIS SURGERY.

In line with current Government guidance patients are required to continue to wear a face covering in all healthcare settings.

Face coverings primarily protect others, so doing so – unless exempt – is key to preventing spread of infection.

**CONTINUE TO RESPECT  
(2M) SOCIAL DISTANCING**



**TEST AND ISOLATE IF  
YOU HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS.**

If you have symptoms you must get at **PCR test** as soon as possible & before visiting your GP. **Rapid lateral flow tests should not be used to confirm infection.**

**WASH/SANITISE  
HANDS REGULARLY**



## Barnabas Medical Centre

Girton Road, Northolt  
UB5 4SR

020 8864 4437

email: [admin.barnabas@nhs.net](mailto:admin.barnabas@nhs.net)

web: [https://  
barnabasmedicalcentre.co.uk](https://barnabasmedicalcentre.co.uk)

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### Surgery Times

Mon-Fri: 0800-1830

Phone lines are open  
Mon-Fri 0800 to 1800

### Out of Hours

For urgent healthcare outside  
surgery times please call 111

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### Doctors

Dr Mohini Parmar (f)

Dr Harpreet Kooner (m)

Dr Harjeet Bhatoa (f)

Dr Elizabeth Fong (f)

Dr Rajee Navaneetharajah (f)

Dr Rebecca Carey (f)

### Practice Nurses

Henny Shanta (f)

Karen Collett (f)

Nikki Onoufriou (f)

### Clinical Pharmacist

Paresh Virji (m)

### Practice Manager

Matthew Edwards

### Office Manager

Angela Hemmingway

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### *Barnabas Patient Voices*

Chairman: Keith Marshall

020 8864 7993

[keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk](mailto:keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk)  
<https://barnabasvoices.org.uk>

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*This newsletter is a joint  
production of Barnabas  
Medical Centre and **Barnabas  
Patient Voices.***

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## Covid-19 Latest

The government has removed the remaining restrictions in England. There are still steps you should take to reduce the risk of catching and spreading COVID-19:

- Get vaccinated. You can book through the national system online to find a local centre.
- If meeting indoors, let fresh air in. Alternatively meet outside.
- Wear a face covering in crowded, enclosed spaces. Many places, including most healthcare facilities, continue to request that you wear a face covering.
- If you have COVID-19 symptoms, get tested, and stay at home until you have 2 negative LFTs 24 hours apart.

See page 4 for more on the current rules.