

### New appointment system

#### What is eConsult?

eConsult is a digital platform, that will help us to greatly reduce long waiting times for answers you need now. Every medical query you have will be dealt with, as a patient contact, on the same day or within 2 working days by a GP that you have requested\*.

There is no change to how you book Nurse and HCA appts  
**\*Depending on GP availability**

### A message from the Partners...

The beginning of a new year is traditionally a time to reflect on the past year and for thoughts and expressions of good will for the coming year.

It is a very challenging time for General Practice across the UK on the whole but this has been felt in particular across Warrington as some Practices struggle to fill GP roles for their current Practice populations and we see a lot building of new homes; The latter of which we are seeing a great deal of in Latchford.

This has prompted the team at Latchford Medical Centre to review and futureproof our existing service and workforce to ensure we continue to offer a great service and retain our current staff who we value dearly. Our main focus being – how can we ensure that our patients receive timely advice and care by the right clinician?

On December 16<sup>th</sup> 2019 we launched **e-Consult**. This system allows patients to contact the surgery, ask questions or seek appointments through a high quality, safe and reliable online platform available on the Practice website. In the first week we received **261** e-Consults and it was apparent that this system was proving a great benefit to our Patients so much so we had to change our appointment set sooner than we expected in order to keep up with the unexpected demand. A process that we continue to review weekly to ensure the system is working for all our Patients.

### How do I use eConsult?

**eConsult:** a new system for getting help and advice from the practice online quickly

-  Visit the practice's website:  
[www.latchfordmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.latchfordmedicalcentre.co.uk)
-  Click on the eConsult banner to start.  
You can do this at any time of the day.
-  Choose what kind of help you would like:  
specific condition, new symptoms or administrative help (such as a sick note).
-  Complete the short online questionnaire and click submit. Confirmation is emailed.
-  We will review your eConsult and let you know what the next steps are by the end of the next working day.
-  We may contact you by telephone, text or email. You may be given advice or invited to come in for an appointment.

### Why did we have to change?

We recognised last year that our patient demand was starting to exceed our capacity and as more and more new houses were popping up in and around our catchment area we had to start thinking about the future.

Warrington Clinical Commissioning Group has been working with Practices, Patients and eConsult since April 2019 on this project to be implemented across all Warrington Practices to improve Patient Access. At Latchford Medical Centre we welcomed the system as an improvement to our service that would benefit **ALL** our Patients and ensure they receive timely advice and care by the right clinician.

From day one, eConsult has been a popular choice for our Patients. We received **68** within the first 24 hours and **279** eConsultation in its first week. Today we are the highest utilising Practice in Warrington and we are receiving on average 500 eConsultation per week.

### How is this benefitting Patients?

Since Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019 **EVERYONE** who has sent an eConsult in the Practice has been responded to within 48 working hours (children under 5 years are responded to on the same day) and **EVERYONE** who has needed an appointment as a result of their eConsult has had one booked for them within this time or a time that is convenient for them.

All eConsults are being reviewed by one of our regular doctors if clinical and our Patient Advisors if administrative. They all endeavour to respond as soon as possible, with the end of the next working day as the absolute deadline. The early data has been extremely promising but we recognise we still have a long way to go.

We understand that eConsult is a different way of requesting an appointment and that it is not as straightforward as booking one on the telephone.

However our goal is to; **increase** our efficiency and become a more convenient service for you by texting advice or calling you so that you don't have to surgery and take time off work or arrange childcare. Finally we are looking to ensure continuity by allowing your regular GP to keep up with your ongoing health concerns.

To date, in the main, feedback from our patients has been positive but we recognise that we have a long

way to go and would like to thank all our Patients for their patience.

We would also like to reassure everyone that we have processes in place to accommodate **ALL** our patients including those who are vulnerable, cannot read and do not have access to the internet. If this is you please do not hesitate in calling the Practice to find out how we can help.

We want to give a special mention to all our staff at Latchford Medical Centre. Please know that this is not just a change for you but our doctors, nurses, receptionists and administrators are all adjusting to it as well.

None of this would have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the excellent staff at Latchford Medical Centre. The intensity of our work is often relentless and exhausting, so it is testament to our team that these implementations have been such a success.

Finally we would like to wish Dr Teinert good luck in her new venture, we will be sorry to see her go! Dr Fiona Davies will be starting with us in February and we hope that you will join us in making her feel very welcome.

Many thanks

*N. Palmer*      *R. Wong*      *C. Unwin*

Dr N Palmer

Dr R Wong

C. Unwin

### For more information...

To keep up to date with our news visit our website (address below) or search for Latchford Medical Centre on Facebook

[www.latchfordmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.latchfordmedicalcentre.co.uk)

We have recently added a frequently asked questions document to answer all your questions about eConsult and a contact form should you need any more information.