



Farnham Centre for Health, Hale Road, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 9QS
Tel: 01252 723122
www.farnhamparkhealthgroup.co.uk

17th May 2021

Message from Farnham Park Health Group (formerly The Ferns Medical Practice and River Wey Medical Practice)

GP Practices and their staff have recently been heavily criticised. Despite some of the media's portrayal, throughout the pandemic we have been open, complying with the terms of our NHS contract by offering patient access to the practice via phone/online, and offering face to face appointments based on clinical need, even when we have been faced with unwell staff or staff having to shield. One of the reasons for the merger was to build resilience so we can offer a continued service.

The demand on General Practice has greatly increased. GPs consulted more patients in March than in any other month since records began. Statistics have shown from February to March there has been a 20% rise in GP appointments across England. In May, our practice has seen a rise of 55% in patient requests from what we would normally expect. This does not reflect the increased complexity of the work we are now faced with. This also does not take into account our part in the Covid-19 vaccination programme or supporting the backlog of patients on waiting lists for other NHS services.

We truly understand patient frustrations and are constantly looking at ways to rectify them. Patient care is our main focus. However, like the general population our staff have been scared, suffered with Covid-19 and missed seeing our friends and families, but the accusations and abuse we are receiving is demoralising.

The increased workload we are faced with has led to an increase in our working day hours. We are exhausted, our staff's mental wellbeing is being affected, and some are close to burnout.

So to be able to offer a service we need to manage expectations and keep them realistic. Our staff chose to work in healthcare to help others, but we need you to help us to help you. The NHS has many resources for self-care for common illnesses and ailments, including NHS 111 online help and pharmacies.

Please be aware that after a referral has been made to Frimley Health Foundation Trust there is an average 18 week wait for the first routine outpatient appointment - Dermatology 20, General Surgery 24, Trauma & Orthopaedics 36 and Pain Clinic 40 weeks.

Thank you for your continued kindness, patience and understanding whilst we work through this together.

Farnham Park Health Group