

What is a Primary Care Network?

Overview

Since the NHS was created in 1948, the population has grown and people are living longer. Many people live with long term conditions such as diabetes and heart disease or suffer with mental health issues and may need to access their local health services more often.

To meet these needs, practices have begun working together and with community, mental health, social care, pharmacy, hospital and voluntary services in their local areas in primary care networks.

Primary care networks, or PCNs, build on the core of current primary care services and enable greater provision of proactive, personalised, coordinated and more integrated health and social care. Clinicians describe this as a change from reactively providing appointments to proactively caring for the people and communities they serve. Where emerging primary care networks are now in place in parts of the country, there are clear benefits for patients and clinicians.

Refreshing NHS Plans for 2018-19¹ set out the ambition for Clinical Commissioning Groups to actively encourage every practice in their area to be part of a local primary care network so that these will cover the whole country, as far as possible, by the end of 2018/19.

PCNs will be based on GP registered lists, typically serving natural communities of around 30,000 to 50,000. They should be small enough to provide the personal care valued by both patients and GPs but large enough to have impact and economies of scale through better collaboration between practices and others in the local health and social care system.

Source: NHS England

Should you require further information on Primary Care Networks, NHS England has created this YouTube clip.

<https://youtu.be/W19DtEsc8Ys>

Our Primary Care Network

Our PCN

PCN 5, have come together to make up your local network. These practices are:

- Carden & New Larchwood Surgery <https://www.cardensurgery.co.uk/>
- Montpelier Surgery <https://www.montpeliersurgery.co.uk/>

- Practice Plus Brighton Station <https://www.practiceplusbrightonstation.nhs.uk/>
- Seven Dials Medical Centre <https://www.thesevendialsmedicalcentre.co.uk/>
- University of Sussex Health Centre <https://www.unimed.co.uk/>

Appointments

For regular appointments, please contact your practice as you normally would.

At your registered surgery we will always make every effort to enable you to see one of the clinicians at this practice. However, should there be no appointments available and it is felt that the matter cannot wait, we may utilise a member of the additional PCN staff to support your needs.

As a registered patient of the PCN we are pleased to announce that we can book you appointments with a GP or Nurse in the evening and weekend at Practice Plus Brighton Station. Your local practice can book these appointments or you can use your online account if you are registered to do this. As the PCN share clinical data, with your permission the clinician will have access to your electronic patient records (see 'Data Control' for more information on this subject).


What is changing?

With a wider geography, we will now be able to utilise the skills of other clinicians in the area. Additionally, funding for more clinical staff has been made available with these healthcare professionals being shared throughout all practices within the network. This will mean that local patients will have greater access to appointments including some during the evening and at weekends.

Being a network and having greater shared resources does not mean that all of these extra appointments will be available at this practice. Should you need to see a clinician urgently, we may suggest that you travel to another local practice, although of course we will always attempt to balance any inconvenience against your needs.

Although you may feel that not much has changed on the surface, the benefits to you by 2022, and once the PCN has become fully functional, will mean that it is likely that many of the following additional healthcare professionals will be available to all patients within our area:

- Clinical pharmacists
- Social prescribers
- Paramedics
- Physician associates




Times are changing

Evening and weekend appointments now available

You can now book an appointment to see a GP, nurse or other healthcare professional in the evening or at the weekend.

Speak to your practice receptionist or a member of the practice team to find out more.



- Health and well-being coaches
- Care coordinators
- Occupational therapists
- Dieticians
- Chiroprodists/podiatrists
- Pharmacy technicians
- Mental health practitioners

Data Control

Your personal medical records

Health and care staff may use your confidential patient information to help with your treatment and care. The practice maintains your personal medical records and follows strict guidelines. This will not change should your records be available to clinical staff at another practice as all staff are bound by the same confidentiality code.

Your information is held on our secure system and all information is covered by the Data Protection Act (2018) and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

This PCN, and in accordance with GDPR, has completed data protection impact assessments to ensure that appropriate safeguarding measures are being adopted and that any risks are identified and correctly managed.

We will also ensure that our staff will:

- handle, store and transmit personal confidential data securely, whether in electronic or paper form.
- ensure that personal confidential data is shared for lawful and appropriate purposes only
- understand their responsibilities under the National Data Guardian's data security standards, including their obligation to handle information responsibly and their personal accountability for deliberate or avoidable breaches
- complete appropriate annual data security training and pass a mandatory test
- maintain strict controls and audit our compliance as per current national guidance

You can be assured that personal confidential data is only accessible to staff who need it for your patient care in their current role and access permission is removed as soon as it is no longer required.

Your registered practice regularly carry out random audits of access to personal confidential data on their clinical IT system. Any unauthorised access to a patient's record by any member of staff will be fully investigated by the data protection officer and the appropriate disciplinary action taken. Should any such incident occur, you will be informed of the circumstances and any outcome.

Should you feel uncomfortable about your electronic medical records being available to medical staff outside of your practice, please discuss this with the lead for data security and protection at your registered practice.

The national opt-out programme

The national data opt-out programme will afford patients the opportunity to make an informed choice about whether they wish their confidential patient information to be used only for their individual care and treatment or also used for research and planning purposes. <https://www.nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters/where-confidential-patient-information-is-used/>

Patients who wish to opt out of data collection will be able to set their national data opt-out choice online at the link above. An alternative provision will be made for those patients who are unable to or do not want to use the online system.