

Today, as a Practice, we have received so much rudeness and abuse that I feel the need to write and share this with you.

GP practice staff have been front and centre throughout the pandemic, supporting their patients during the greatest challenge in a generation.

Unprecedented physical violence and verbal abuse and aggression are a growing concern. GPs, practice nurses and all of our practice staff have the right to care for others without fear of being attacked or abused. We ask that you treat all of our staff properly – without violence or abuse.

**Violent, aggressive or abusive patients will be reported to the police
and removed from the surgery's list.**

We understand that patients can sometimes feel frustrated, but verbal abuse can have a damaging effect on the welfare of NHS workers, and will result in staff leaving the practice.

Abuse of any kind has no place in the NHS. We understand the patients who are abusive are frustrated and it may not be intentionally directed at our staff, but it is still extremely upsetting and demoralising for them. We would urge patients to remember that they are speaking to a person with emotions and feelings when they talk to frontline workers. Staff are currently being reduced to tears on a daily basis. Perhaps most distressing of all is a real surge in the number of patients who feel it is appropriate to shout at, swear at and insult our clinical and non-clinical staff.

Unfortunately, GPs and practice staff are very often at the receiving end of this frustration, when really it has originated as a result of many issues outside the control of the practice, such as lack of resourcing, chronic understaffing and years of underinvestment by the government.

Our Receptionists follow the processes that they have been asked to by the Practice and have received training in order to be able to carry out care navigation to enable patients to be seen by the right clinician at the right time. In some cases, this may not be at the Practice.

We urge patients to look at other options before contacting their GP Practice; can their problem be dealt with by over the counter treatment from the pharmacist for a minor problem or an appointment with the optician for eye problems?

The primary care system is overwhelmed with demand and surgeries are struggling to meet the increasing demand for appointments and battling the false perception that GP Surgeries were closed through the pandemic. We fear the situation will get worse as patients on long waiting lists for operations turn to their GP for extra care. GPs are carrying out additional administration as patients are left waiting for hospital treatment because of growing NHS backlogs, with patients then turning to the GP for support.

30th November 2021

Insufficient investment in the GP workforce does not prevent patient numbers from rising. In fact, despite there being 1,704 fewer fully-qualified FTE GPs today than there were in 2015, each practice has on average 1,849 more patients than in 2015.

The number of standard appointments in general practice has noticeably risen since last month by 4.7 million to 28.6 million.

There were 319,344,626 repeat prescriptions in general practice in the year between November 2020 and October 2021. October 2021 saw 1,088,438 more repeat prescriptions than October 2020.

Our practice team are human and face the same personal challenges as everyone else, including covid and covid isolation, poorly children, travel problems in bad weather and bereavements. We try really hard to limit the effect that this has on patients, but there are times that an appointment will need to be rearranged for reasons outside of our control.

In the words on the NHS Five Year Forward View: "If general practice fails, the NHS fails".

I hope that you will take a moment to reflect on the contents of this post.

Kind regards,

Emma
Practice Manager