GP Practice Merger Patient Questions & Answers

The following questions and answers have been prepared to assist all patients of Charmouth Medical Practice and Lyme Bay Medical Practice who, subject to all regulatory approvals, intend to merge to form a single GP Practice:

* Charmouth Medical Practice, Charmouth
* Lyme Bay Medical Practice, Lyme Regis
* Lyme Bay Medical practice (branch), Lyme Regis Medical Centre, Lyme Regis

Q1  When will the merge to the new Practice take place? The merge will take place on 7 April 2021.

Q2  Will I still be able to make an appointment to see my usual doctor or nurse? Yes.

Q3  Will I still be able to make appointments at my usual doctor’s surgery? Yes. We will continue to provide daily appointments to see doctors, nurses and healthcare support workers.

Q4  Will my usual surgery opening times stay the same? All practices are required to offer services from 8am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday. There is also a nurse-led service at Lyme Regis Medical Centre on a Saturday morning between 9am and 12 noon.

Q5  Will there be changes made to the way I book appointments? No. We are not currently anticipating any changes to the way you book appointments and you will therefore continue to be able to book these in the same way as you do now.

Q6  Will I have to go to another GP Practice site for consultations and/or treatments? No. However , however, we anticipate that you will have wider choice of clinicians with particular skills which you may be able to access.

Q7  Will any service that is currently offered by my usual surgery be removed or stopped? No. We do not anticipate services being removed or stopped. Rather, we anticipate that this merger will bring about a greater choice of services. In the event that the contracts against which we deliver are changed by NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group, we would be unable to influence these changes.

Q8  Will there be any changes to how I access the GP out of hours service? No. In order to access a GP when the practice is closed, you will continue to telephone the NHS 111 service as you do now.

Q9  Will the current arrangements that I have in place for getting my medicines stay the same? Yes.

Q10  Will the intended merge affect any treatment or medication I am currently receiving either at my usual surgery or any hospital? No. Any current treatments, medications or investigations will not be affected by the merge.

Q11  Will I need to re-register to become a patient of the single GP Practice? No, you will not need to re-register. Your registration will automatically be transferred to the single practice system.

Q12 What will happen to my medical records? When practices merge, the clinical systems in each practice will also merge into a single system. This is an automated process and patient information will be transferred automatically. The new single system will allow the merged practice to work as a single organisation, providing you with safe and effective care, as we do currently.

Q13 I currently have on-line access to my medical records etc, will this continue? Yes. On-line access accounts will transfer automatically without the need to set up a new account or change passwords.

Q14 I am concerned that the practices will be taken over by a private provider The decision to commission GP services from a particular contractor lies with NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group under strict governance. Therefore the partners of Charmouth and Lyme Bay are not in a position to make such a decision. On the contrary, we are joining forces to sustain and preserve local provision of local healthcare for the foreseeable future.

Q15 I am concerned that my local practice will lose its identity as part of a bigger organisation. We are keen to preserve the local flavour of each practice under the umbrella of the newly merged contract, retaining their individuality where practicable, sharing the resources of the combined team to establish a stable workforce in each site. All practices are important to the merging organisation, being part of a bigger organisation will give them a stronger voice in the community and the wider Primary Care Network (PCN).

Q16 How can I be involved? You are invited to join the Patient Participation Group (PPG). PPGs can bring significant benefits to a GP practice: improving services, allowing resources to be used more efficiently and, most importantly, developing mutually supportive networks. You would be most welcome to join, please contact the practice manager in the first instance.

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