

Your General Practitioners are under PRESSURE



At a recent meeting of the Patient Representative Group, Dr Richardson and Dr Sacks, senior partners of the Law Medical Group Practice, outlined their concerns about the way in which pressures in General Practice are building up and the likely impact on patients, staff and the service currently being provided.

A group of patients who attended the Patient Representative Group had sufficient concern to summarise the main points arising from this meeting in order to raise the awareness of a greater number of patients.

THE MAIN POINTS ARE OUTLINED BELOW:

In February 2014, NHS England announced a review of how General Practices are funded. In NW London, this review is due to conclude in June 2016. The aim is to redistribute £235 million throughout the country, which would amount to a reduction of about £20 million in NW London. As a result, the anticipated loss to general practices is expected to be from £10k to £450k each. This may make some practices unviable, resulting in practice closures.



It is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit and retain staff. Doctors, nurses and ancillary staff all face the same pressures of living in London as everyone else. Doctors are also choosing to work as locums, retire early or leave the NHS in order to avoid the

unsustainable pressures within practices. There is a looming workforce crisis.

Recent attempts at recruitment by the partners have produced very few applicants. This applies across the board; to doctors at both senior and junior levels, nurses and ancillary staff.

Patient demand and capacity are increasing. The Law Medical Group Practice (LMGP) has a practice population of 14,300 and apart from the restrictions of the catchment area, there is no limit to the number of patients that must be accepted, irrespective of the demands on staff, or their availability.

In addition, rising expectations of provision from patients, the NHS and government reforms, all lead to increasing GP workload at a time when there is falling investment in General Practice as a percentage of total health spend. From April 2016, general practice will receive only 7.23% of the NHS budget, down from the previous year's share of 7.31%. It would make more sense to increase funding to GPs in order to relieve pressure on A&E.

.Other challenges include:

- An increase in long term conditions with increasing complexity
- Poorly resourced community services in Brent
- People are living longer with increased care needs
- When compared to other practices for levels of deprivation, the LMGP is in the bottom 50%
- As with any workforce, increased pressure and reduced funding can affect staff morale

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT YOU?

Recent monitoring of the Law Medical Group Practice and data released by Public Health England and NHS England has shown that in spite of the above pressures, the practice has achieved the following notable outcomes:

- Few patients leave the practice annually – only 13% as opposed to a national average of 39%. Given the transient nature of inner London populations, this indicates a high level of patient satisfaction.
- The government has plans to make the UK the most dementia friendly society by 2020. The practice is among the top achieving practices in Brent for identifying and diagnosing those suffering with dementia.
- Hypnotic prescribing, i.e. number of prescriptions issued for sleeping pills. Only 9% of prescriptions issued by LMGP are for sleeping pills compared to 30% on average. This is because the practice prefers to advocate talking therapies, which aim to address the root cause of sleeping difficulties.
- Low antibiotic prescribing.
- The practice is recognised as having a high detection rate for cancer. When compared to other practices in Brent, the LMGP came eighth from a total of 68 general practices.
- The average life expectancy of a LMGP female patient is three years above the national average ~ 85.8 years compared to a UK average of 82.8 years.
- Care Quality Commission has rated the practice as ‘good’ across all areas in a provisional report.

Increased pressure on GPs and any reduction in funding, challenge current provision and pose risks to established practice, leading to:

QUALITY OF PROVISION BEING UNDER THREAT

A PROBABLE INCREASE IN DEMAND AND WAITING TIMES

GREATER DEMAND ON A&E

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Write to your local MP Dawn Butler,
her contact details are:
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

or you can visit Dawn at her surgery:
Monday and Friday 10am - 12noon, Thursday 4pm -
6pm
at 156 High Road, Willesden, NW10 2PB

Call 020 8451 6560 to make an appointment during
the hours of 10:30am to 3:00pm
or email: dawnbutlermpoffice@parliament.uk

Attend the Patient Representative Group Meeting to hear news of what's going on in the practice and to express your views and make suggestions. The meetings are twice yearly and are always advertised in the surgery and on the website.



Support your general practice by understanding the difficulties they are facing. It's so easy to grumble!



Would you be interested in forming an action group? If so, please hand your name and contact details in at the surgery.

Please support your local GP