

Waterfield House Surgery

www.waterfieldhousepractice.nhs.uk

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Dear Patients of Waterfield House Surgery,

Following on from our open letter to patients on 29th June, we have Dr Woods no longer working with us from the beginning of September leaving with one fulltime GP short. We are aware of the patients' dilemma, frustrations and even anger for the lack of GP appointments and in some cases the seemingly Face-to-Face appointments.

We will like to address a few things:

- Surgery is open to all patients and we are doing our best to accommodate patients with appointments by either signposting or booking with right health care professionals. Please continue to give the reason for your appointments when asked.
- Surgery is doing Face to Face, Telephone appointments and Home Visits. Clinicians will triage during the initial telephone call and if needed will call in for a face to face appointment or if need be will do a home visit for housebound patients. Please do note that the virus is still in circulation and any guard down will only boost the circulation and hence to protect patients and following BMA and Kent Local Medical Committee [advice](#) we are limiting face-to-face appointments only for those needed.
- We lost our paramedic practitioner in January but because of high demand of healthcare professionals we were not able to recruit one until mid-September.
- We lost one of our practice nurses to retirement at the end of August. We are still trying to recruit one since May.
- We are currently engaging with locums to fill the appointment void.
- With Dr Woods departure, Dr Justice and Dr Minkah are bearing the lion's share of GP workload which includes managing the care of the patients registered with Dr Woods. This will continue until we have recruited a new GP.
- It is highly likely that you may not get GP appointment in the first instance because we are trying to ensure that GP appointments are available for those who really need e.g., chronic management cases or multi-morbidity cases.

We will also like you to consider the following:

- In the month of August 43% were Face to face appointments, 52% Telephone and 5% Home visits.
- The patient population has steadily increased with our current GP to patient ratio 1:2800, this is much higher than the average 1:1700.
- Various underlying issues (recruitment and retention primarily) crippling the general practices across the country are outlined to government by the BMA of which some of it is addressed [here](#). This was also alluded in our [open letter](#) of 29th June.
- BMA is urging patients and general practice staff to sign the petition so that the government is able to make long term decision for the primary care and in particular the general practice. I will urge you to sign this [BMA's petition](#).

Thank you again for your understanding at this challenging time.

Dr Richard Justice