

VMC PRACTICE UPDATE

STAFF

As you will know, there is currently a significant shortage of doctors and nurses in the UK. The government admitted defeat on reaching their own recruitment targets in 2021. However bad you thought the recruitment crisis was, it is probably worse! VMC have had their fair share of recruitment challenges of late and experienced some unforeseen situations in August which significantly affected capacity. However, the situation is improving with some new staff members in all departments. All services with the exception of the Well Women's Clinic are now up and running.

Dr Alexander who has been a GP at VMC since 1998 will be on sabbatical leave from the end of September and plans to step down as a partner on 1st December and intends to return in an alternative role in 2023.

MUSCULO-SKELETAL SERVICES IN SOUTH WESTMINSTER

VMC is in negotiation with the NHS sub-contractor Healthshare about their request to be allocated a first contact physiotherapist to work on site. VMC is trying their best to launch the service on site as quickly as possible.

COVID and FLU VACCINATIONS

Covid vaccine invitations are sent out centrally in priority order. Please wait until you receive an invitation.

Flu jabs will be administered at the practice. Nasal spray vaccines for children are available and walk-in flu clinics will be held at VMC every Saturday 9.00am – 12:00 from 8th October and some pre-booked clinics on Thursday evenings. From 1 November please double check walk-in clinic arrangements with the practice.

COMMUNITY PHARMACY CONSULTATION SERVICE

Originally launched in 2019 this service is proving to be a great help in alleviating pressure on GP appointments. It enables patients to get a same-day appointment with their community pharmacist for minor illness, an urgent supply of regular medicine and help with access to local services. Receptionists are suitably trained and can refer patients in to the service directly.

EXIT E-CONSULT – ENTER PATCHS

You may have noticed when using VMC's website that the E-Consult online service, which was not very good, has been replaced by PATCHS. There are teething issues affecting the performance of the platform. VMC is grappling with the issues and trying their best to resolve technical problems as the offer of training has been very limited.

EXTENDED ACCESS

NHS England has made changes to the funding of out-of-hours services. Funding to GP practices has been withdrawn and given to Primary Care Networks forcing the practice to end its Saturday morning and Tuesday evening clinics (except for existing appointments). VMC is managing to stay open until 8.00 pm on Thursday.

PPG MATTERS

With patients still suffering the effects of the pandemic and now facing difficult times ahead the PPG will be holding an event on ANXIETY on Wednesday 15 November at 6.00 pm in the Group Room. A panel representing the practice and a range of local services will answer patients' questions on how to cope with anxiety at every level. They will focus on 'Help the Practice to Help You'.

Listening to music is known to be therapeutic in cases of anxiety and the PPG is planning to hold a joyful musical evening with the audience participating in singing traditional and well-known popular songs on Thursday 15 December. SAVE THE DATE! More information to follow.