

Unity Health – Update on CQC regulatory compliance and addressing patient access issues

Two further call handlers joined the team on 27.08.18, boosting staffing levels to four call handlers at peak times (mornings and lunchtimes) and two call handlers at off peak times. We continue to encourage patients to avoid calling the surgery for routine matters between 08.00 and 09.00 if possible and encourage calls from 16.00 onwards and Saturday mornings when we have greater capacity. Call handler vacancies exist for an additional two members to join the team and we are actively recruiting to fill these.

A BT trainer visited the Practice on 20.06.18 and delivered a well-attended training session to all staff on how to operate the revised telephony system. We're confident that we are ironing out the telephony teething problems that led to long waiting times.

Patients deemed to be clinically higher risk continue to have a dedicated phone number with direct access to the Duty Doctor, Monday –Friday 08.00 – 18.00.

In addition, to telephone access, patients who are online are encouraged to log into Patient Access for 24/7 access to book appointments, request prescriptions and see test results. Of course patients who wish to walk into our surgeries are welcomed by members of our experienced reception team.

The Partners hosted three Saturday morning patient drop in sessions in July and August and we are looking forward to reforming our patient participation group (PPG) on Saturday 1st September. Top of the agenda will be working together with patients on how we further improve access in the coming months when we predict an increase in the demand for our services.

We thank our patients for their supportive comments following the publication of the CQC report in July 2018 and our stakeholders for taking the time to understand the wider system pressures. This included a recent visit to the Practice by Rachel Maskell MP.

We are looking forward to the CQC re-inspection in mid-September 2018 and meeting compliance in order to reopen our patient list to new registrations. We have been in regular contact with our university colleagues to keep them up to speed with the student registration position.

Since May 2018 a weekly improvement plan has been shared with CQC and VOYCCG to keep both organisations updated on our progress towards regulatory compliance, and we thank CQC and VOYCCG for their support, along with the RCGP who the Practice has bought in to support staff with the changes required.

The Partners are carrying out a programme of refurbishment at the Wenlock Terrace surgery w/c 10.09.18, to include decorating and replacement flooring. Whilst we apologise for any inconvenience caused by a lack of clinical appointments at the surgery during this time, there will be a full reception service and we look forward to reopening fully on 17th September and meeting CQC premises regulatory requirements.

Through the summer staff have received the required mandatory training to ensure they meet CQC threshold requirements and now benefit from a programme of weekly meetings to ensure improved communication and the necessary patient reviews are completed.

We are currently recruiting additional GP's, Nurse Practitioners and a phlebotomist to support our clinical team.

Addressing health and safety issues, along with infection prevention improvements, continue to be high priority to ensure patient and staff safety. We are encouraged with the progress we have made in a relatively short period of time and that this progress has been recognised in our regular communications with the CQC and VOYCCG.

We continue to receive feedback from our patients via NHS Choices, direct contact and social media and recent feedback has been more positive. We are responding promptly to concerns and demonstrating that we are addressing many of the issues which our patients have flagged up. This is being appreciated by our patients.

We have published a new patient newsletter (attached) and are about to launch a patient information leaflet for patients.

We continue to engage with all our stakeholders to keep them updated on progress.

