

# **CROWN HEIGHTS MEDICAL CENTRE**

The doctors and clinical staff here at Crown Heights Medical Centre are aware of the difficulty that patients are currently experiencing when trying to book a routine appointment.

Demand upon our service exceeds our capacity to provide routine doctor and nursing appointments. This issue is not ours alone but, as widely reported in the national press, it is something affecting the majority practices across the country. Despite this we continue to provide an average of 7600 routine clinical appointments each month.

We have tried to recruit but been unsuccessful in attracting new GP partners or salaried GPs to join us on a long term basis. This means we simply do not have the capacity to provide any more clinical sessions or routine appointment slots.

As a consequence of this lack of routine appointments we are experiencing a very high demand for our urgent "same day" service. This too, creates additional strain. We regularly have at least 200 patient contacts per day for a system that was devised to contact 150.

We understand and empathise with our patient population and appreciate how frustrating this situation is for you.

The solutions are complex and will take time to deliver. We are aware some patients think we should stop taking on patients. Unfortunately we are unable legally to "close our lists" and refuse to accept any new patients living within our recognised boundaries.

## ***What we are doing is:***

- 1.** We've appointed a Paramedic to undertake the majority of our home visits, thereby freeing up GP time for more practice based consultations
- 2.** We've appointed a Community Matron to undertake the majority of the daily contacts with our Care & Nursing Home patients, to again free up GP time
- 3.** We've reviewed our Rapid Access Clinic. Unfortunately an increasing number of patients are not using the clinic for medically urgent problems, and therefore we will be making changes to the patients we can see.

## **How can you help?**

- Be patient with our dedicated reception and administration teams who are working hard behind the scenes to ensure that we are running to full capacity on a daily basis.
- Please do not abuse our staff. When we advise that we have no available routine appointments to offer, we truly have nothing showing on our screens at that time.
- Think carefully about the type of appointment that you need. A telephone consultation may be more appropriate than waiting for a face to face routine GP appointment.
- Plan to give us time to handle your repeat prescription or fit note, this will reduce the stress for all.
- Explore the expertise of your local pharmacist or other self-help opportunities (NHS UK).
- Do not waste a precious routine appointment if you are unable to keep the date/time or if the appointment is no longer required. Use the online portal, use the link at the foot of our home page on our web site, send us an email via our web site, or visit the surgery to re-arrange or cancel at reception. We will shortly be providing a voicemail option as well.
- Join our Patient Participation Group and become part of the pro-active voice of the surgery to help by working together with us to shape our healthy future.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and for your patience and understanding.

***Crown Heights Medical Centre Partners***