

TO THE PATIENTS OF PONTESBURY & WORTHEN MEDICAL PRACTICES

19th OCTOBER 2020

Dear Patients

We are extremely excited to announce that the partners at Pontesbury and Worthen Medical Practices have agreed to form a new joint practice from 1st April 2021. Our joint vision is to provide our patients with outstanding Primary Care Services and to ensure our access and service standards exceed all expectations. An application has been made to Shropshire CCG and NHS England which, when approved, will enable the merger to take place.

Why merge the practices?

Our practices have worked together for many years, and are closely aligned from both a clinical and managerial perspective. More recently we have been very influential in establishing the Rural Cluster of the Shrewsbury Primary Care Network, through which much of the future funding for Primary Care Services will be drawn. Our combined strengths in clinical care and service provision will place us in an extremely strong and influential position in determining how services are commissioned and implemented for our own patients, and will help secure the broad accessible service we currently provide is maintained and continually improved.

Our practices clinical and administrative teams will be combined forming a stronger more resilient team. Together we are committed to providing our communities with a first class, holistic health Primary Care service. With the additional staff available through our Primary Care Network we will build on our current strengths, improving access and the breadth of our services, whilst maintaining the excellent safety and governance structures.

What will the practice be called?

The new practice will be called **Pontesbury and Worthen Medical Practice**, and will operate from both sites. It will be possible for patients to be seen at either site, and prescriptions will be available for collection from both sites as they are now.

Will I be able to see my usual Doctor?

As a result of the merger, patients will have access to a broader range of clinicians. We understand and value of continuity of care and will ensure that where possible, patients are able to see the clinician of their choice. However the additional flexibilities resulting from having a larger team, means we will be able to see more urgent problems alongside the more routine work.

Opening Hours

The new practice will continue to provide a range of additional 'extended access' surgeries in addition to the normal 08.00 – 18.30 service. This will allow a greater choice of times in which patients can be contacted or seen by their preferred clinician, particularly those patients who struggle to attend during normal hours.

Booking appointments – will I see any changes?

The Practices have had slightly different appointment models. Both have had to make very significant changes during the COVID19 pandemic. We will be looking very carefully over the coming months at developing our appointment bookings to best suit the wider patient population, with a particular eye on our patients' needs as we emerge from the pandemic.

My Medical Records – how will these be affected?

Both practices operate identical clinical record systems (EMIS) and all clinicians are trained in its use. Our clinical system provider will merge the electronic records of all our patients at the point of merging and records will then be available at both sites. Our aim is to digitalise all of the old 'paper' records over the next few years, but in the meantime these will continue to be stored securely.

Prescriptions – how will these be affected?

With a shared computer system there should be no change to the current way in which you order or receive your prescriptions. In addition, the new practice will continue to operate a prescription delivery service for those housebound patients unable to arrange collection of their medication. The new practice will continue to dispense medicines, but with our combined teams we believe we should be able to improve our speed and efficiency.

Patient Participation Group

We value the input we receive from our patients and look forward to a thriving Patient Participation Group representing the larger practice area. If you are interested in being part of our PPG please let us know by speaking to the Reception Team at either site. We are happy to receive comments and suggestions from all patients though, and there are a number of ways to do this.

Keeping you Informed

We will post regular updates on our new dedicated website www.pontesburyworthenmp.co.uk , provide paper updates at the health centres and engage with our patient participation group. We would very much like to hold open public engagements but in these challenging times this will not be possible, so we will be looking to gather feedback, between now and 15th November, in a variety of ways to ensure you have the opportunity to comment on the planned merger. In the first instance you can email our dedicated email address info@pontesburyworthenmp.co.uk – please do not use this email address for any medical issues. You can also write to us at either address, or speak to one of the practice team; please go through reception to organise this.

We value your views, and if you have any questions or comments, please address them to Dr Julian Povey, Pontesbury Medical Practice or Dr Kieran McCormack, Worthen Medical Practice.

Yours

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Pontesbury Medical Practice

Dr. Kieran McCormack
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On behalf of the Partners of the Pontesbury and Worthen Medical Practices