



Welcome to our first practice newsletter since the start of the pandemic. We are committed to releasing a newsletter quarterly to keep our patients, PPG and staff up to date with what is happening at ARMP

Business as usual

Since the outset of the pandemic we have been open and operating at full capacity. Despite media reports and NHS England statements, we have never been closed. In fact we have been working the hardest we have ever been working in recent times. Following advice provided by NHS England, we continued to provide a “*Total Triage Model*”, a system we had already been operating for 2 years prior. By this we mean all appointment requests are screened by a clinician to decide how best the patients’ needs are met. The focus has shifted to remote consulting by default using digital solutions but we have continued to bring in patients that require face to face assessment. The front door is closed and we have an intercom system that allows us to control the footfall through the practice. This is primarily an infection control measure to prevent an outbreak within the surgery which could leave us and our patients extremely vulnerable. E-consultation (an online consultation tool) continues to be our primary mode of managing demand. The rich information provided by this source, allows GP staff to better manage demand and help navigate patients through the NHS to access the support they need. Our phone lines remain open to support patients with digital poverty and language barriers.

New senior management and staff members

July saw the addition of 2 new partners, *Dr Kanthasamy and Dr Crofton* both of whom have worked at ARMP for several years. This has provided stability, strategic vision and increased resilience to the senior management team. Three new GPs and a nurse have joined the clinical team; *Dr Kumar, Dr Khatun, Dr Joy* as well as *Nurse Muhid Rahman*. We now have a fully staffed GP workforce on fixed long term contracts with no locum doctors. We hope that a stable workforce will offer patients the long term relationship-based care and continuity we know they appreciate.

Infection Control Measures

Patients are screened before being invited into the surgery. They are advised to wear a mask and their temperatures are checked before entry. Clinicians wear PPE in line with Public Health guidance when seeing patients and wear masks in communal areas. Infection control policies are up to date and the practice has a robust business continuity plan. Patients with suspected COVID are seen outside of the surgery in dedicated “Hot Hub” sites, our nearest one being Forest Road Medical Centre.

PCN

ARMP is now part of a Primary Care Network called *Walthamstow Central*. This sees 5 local practices (The Firs, Dr Dhital’s, Claremont Medical Centre and Waltham Forest Community & Family Health) collaborating to benefit from potential economies of scale as well as well as the merits of collaborative working. The PCN has a population of approximately 38 000 patients and there have been several new staff members that have joined the ARMP team through the PCN as Additional Roles; **Pharmacists:** *Elsy Gomez Campos & Samantha Ricketts*, **Social Prescriber:** *Sue Kofi*, **Physician’s Associate:** *Esther Odunaiké*, **Care Coordinator:** *Gloria Acheampong* and **Health and Wellbeing Coach:** *Rowenna Clifford*. These additional staff members bring an entirely new and diverse skill set to the ARMP team which we hope patients will really benefit from.

Digital Solutions

- E-consultation
- Video Consultation
- Multimedia Text Messaging (AccuRx) with image capturing function and ability to text back clinicians
- Remote / Digital Online registration within 48 hours
- Electronic Prescribing by default

Above are just a few examples of solutions that have facilitated remote consulting. ARMP is in the process of building a new fit for purpose practice website which we hope to launch before Christmas. It will enable a more user friendly approach to e-consultation, support access to the NHS app and Patient Access as well as a multitude of other digital features that can enhance patient care in this new era.



Quality Improvement

The practice has teamed up with a Quality Improvement (QI) Team called EQUIP and has its own dedicated QI coach. The coach meets with the practice fortnightly and helps the practice to embed Quality improvement into its day to day running. Thus far they have helped to support the practice to develop a new website with branding and logo design. They have also helped to pull together a set of values and a mission statement. The values identified by staff that they wish to abide by include; **Teamwork, Mutual Respect, Integrity, Quality & Care and Compassion.** They hope to work with the PPG to finalise these values along with their mission statement.

Expansion Plans

With the workforce ever expanding and plans for the practice to grow with the local population, space is limited at ARMP. The senior management team are putting together a business case as part of an estate strategy to better utilise potential vacant space on the first floor of Comley Bank Clinic. The practice continues to keep a close eye on the Whipps Cross Redevelopment as well as local housing developments. The practice is in the process of being accredited as a GP training practice and come August 2021 ARMP hopes to invite GP trainees into the practice. Although this is an exciting development it requires a co-ordinated estate strategy.

The “Smile behind the Mask”

There has been a misconception that GP practices have been closed since the start of the pandemic. With the front door closed we have had feedback that has suggested that our front façade looks akin to Fort Knox. We have been working with our medical students to team up with local schools to create a collage for our front bay window. This will consist of a collage of coloured face masks to highlight not only to children but to all patients attending the surgery that we are very much open, here to help and most importantly smiling behind the mask.

Reset and Recovery Work

Whilst some of the focus of clinical work in the past 10 months has been around COVID, we wish not to neglect our patients with long term conditions, those with learning disabilities, those that need medication reviews for their chronic conditions and those that are shying away from presenting with potential symptoms suggestive of cancer. At ARMP we are working alongside the CCG to focus our attention on this reset and recovery work as a priority using a mixture of strategic risk stratification and audit, remote consulting and face to face consultation where appropriate.

Patient Participation Group - PPG

Addison Road Medical Practice is pleased to have a very active and effective PPG. The current PPG was set up in 2015 and has become one of the most acknowledged PPGs in Waltham Forest. We hope to re-engage with them moving forward into 2021 as we immensely value their expertise especially at this uniquely challenging time.

Flu Campaign

The flu jab is more important than ever this year. Our campaign has been well under way since September. We hope to achieve 75% coverage of our eligible population by the end of the year. We have recently started inviting our over 50s. We have run a number of successful Saturday clinics. Our Federation (FedNet) which is an organisation that represents all practices in Waltham Forest and supports our extended hours access is also supporting us in delivering the campaign.

COVID 19 Vaccination Programme

Yesterday saw the approval of the Pfizer vaccine. The vast majority of the Covid Vaccination Programme will be coordinated by central government via mass vaccination centers. Primary care will likely have a role in vaccinating the highest risk priority groups such as housebound patients and those living in care homes or homes that support those with learning disabilities.

Homeless Patients

ARMP is actively supporting the registration of homeless patients that are residing in a number of temporary accommodations on Lea Bridge Road. The pandemic saw a huge spike in rough sleepers across the borough and the local authority quickly placed people into hotels and hostels to help meet their challenging health needs. Many of these patients have no recourse to public funds but at ARMP we recognise these patients as a particularly vulnerable group that need additional support during these times and we are here to support them

CQC

We are expecting a telephone CQC visit on the 7/01/20. The CQC continues to operate during this time to ensure quality is maintained in primary care and that public safety is kept at the forefront. We welcome them with open arms as it gives us an opportunity to showcase the great work that we are doing at ARMP.

