

**We are increasingly receiving comments and feedback about the length of wait for morning surgery.** "Open access" or "sit and wait" surgeries enable those who need to see a GP on the day ready access to a doctor without having to ring for an emergency appointment or the need to be "triaged" by a GP prior to attending - both of which are common models in other practices.

Anyone who has attended the practice in the mornings will realise how busy these clinics can be with waits of up to two hours or even longer. We recognise that this may be stressful and frustrating for patients who are feeling unwell, particularly the frail, the elderly or parents with young children. The unpredictable nature of these clinics can often also be stressful for the GPs who are seeing up to twenty patients (sometimes more!) at a time, to the reception team who bear the brunt of your irritation and for the dispensary staff too.

One comment recently made was that with the number of patients needing to be seen couldn't we just put additional doctors on to help reduce the waiting times which on one level may seem like perfectly common sense. Unfortunately reductions in levels of funding to general practice - a national issue and one of the many challenges currently faced by the NHS - means this simply is not an option. Like most GP surgeries demand for our services is increasing but resources aren't.

### ***So how can you help?***

We recognise that no one plans to be unwell and our walk in surgeries are there to help you when you are acutely unwell or have a new onset of a problem. An acute illness is one which has arisen perhaps a matter of days or a couple of weeks previously. We frequently see patients who come with longstanding problems of several months' duration or attending for follow up of an existing (stable) problem or routine review of medication. Sometimes patients attend with a list of problems that they may have been "saving up" to see the GP about and while we always try and deal with all of your concerns often when we are busy our time is limited.

While we recognise that coming to open surgery may be more convenient than waiting for an appointment with the GP of your choice we would ask you to try and use this service considerately in order that we can make this safe and sustainable for everyone in the long term. However, whilst we would not wish to do so, in the interest of patient safety we may need to consider moving to an appointment system in the future.

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