



Nettlebed Surgery

Wanbourne Lane,

Nettlebed,

Henley-on-Thames, Oxon, RG9 5AJ

01/03/2024

Message for our patients

As you are probably aware the NHS is under extraordinary pressure. This is particularly true of General Practice. We're feeling the pressure from both the government and our patients. With hospital waiting lists growing, patients awaiting specialist care, treatment, or surgery increasingly rely on us for support. This escalation of demand is putting a financial & operational strain on our services. We think it's important you understand how these pressures are impacting the surgery.

In recent times, our surgery, much like your own homes, has faced a surge in expenses across the board. From the essentials we purchase to the price of energy and the wages for our dedicated staff, costs have risen sharply. Despite receiving a slight increase in government funding — roughly at a rate of 2% annually — it falls short of bridging the gap between our resources and the actual expenses. You might have heard about additional funding for primary care networks. While it's true that some of these funds are enhancing patient care by supporting additional staff, they unfortunately don't alleviate the overall financial burden on our surgery. Our budget is stretched thin.

The BMA's GP England committee (GPC England) says that the 1.9% national GP practice contract baseline uplift offer, which gives practices a fixed amount of money per patient — called the GMS contract — goes nowhere near what is needed prevent practices from reducing services, or closing down altogether.

GPC England says that the 2024-25 GP contract will do little to bring hope, stability or safety to the profession. Details of the contract come at a time when a BMA survey of 10% of practices in England found almost two in three (64%) report concerns over short and long-term viability. More than half (57%) have experienced cashflow issues in the last 12 months. The BMA estimates that up to one in four GP surgeries will seriously consider reducing their staffing to remain open for patients. This was before this year's derisory contract offer. You can read more from BMA at <https://www.bma.org.uk/bma-media-centre/gp-patients-likely-to-suffer-unless-government-improves-inadequate-gp-contract-offer-warns-bma>

Historically, Nettlebed Surgery ran smoothly with two doctors. In April 2023, Dr. Kaur stepped in to lead, with the former partners remaining as enhanced salaried GPs. The number of doctor sessions hasn't changed much, and we've even brought in more nurses and allied health professionals (pharmacist) to keep up with your healthcare needs. However, our resources are limited, and we can't continue without the funds to support it.

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Our surgery thrives because of our fantastic staff who are dedicated to providing top-notch care, and the support from our patients and support group is something we cherish deeply. It's important to us to be transparent with you about the difficulties we're facing.

We're now looking at how to run things more efficiently and alter how we provide care, but rest assured, our commitment to your health remains unchanged. We are working with independent consultants who are helping us with the transformation.

You'll likely notice some changes in how things are done here, and we're letting you know because your understanding matters. We're dedicated to maintaining the quality of your care as we streamline our operations.

Adapting is essential; it's how we'll avoid the risk of shutting down, something none of us want.

You might see some changes in our staff, which could mean your appointments may not be with your usual clinician. Rest assured, we're taking steps to reduce any inconvenience these changes may cause.

We're excited to be bringing in new digital tools to help direct you to the appropriate care more efficiently. This might mean changes in how you get in touch with us and book your appointments. You may experience slightly longer wait times for routine appointments, and occasionally, we might guide you to other healthcare providers for certain services. Our goal is to maintain the high-quality care you're accustomed to, even as we adapt our service delivery methods.

You can support us by taking care of small health problems at home, making use of alternative services when suggested, and keeping up with routine health checks, answering questionnaires and attending appointments. We are looking forward to welcoming you to Nettlebed Surgery Health Talks from April. These dedicated interactive talks will help us in raising awareness about various health conditions and give you opportunity to ask questions.

We will keep you well-informed about any updates at Nettlebed Surgery.

Our dedication to your care is unwavering, and we're thankful for your continued support and understanding.

Warm regards,

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