Kingswood Health Centre Patient Newsletter

Autumn 2024

Welcome to the first KHC patient newsletter, brought to you by the Patient Participation Group!

The PPG is a group of patients working with the practice, giving a patients perspective. We give constructive feedback, help engage with the community and work with the practice on the development of services.
We also provide support by volunteering, fund-raising and leading support groups.
If you would like to join us, please email– kingswoodhealthcentre@nhs.net
Or ask at reception for an application form.

Online Services

Do you find it difficult to access our on-line services?
Do you know someone that would benefit from some help to access our on-line services?
The NHS app, with patient access, allows you to-
-view, request and cancel appointments
-view your medical record
-see consultation notes and test results
-order prescriptions
-view letters and documents

The PPG can help you get online!
Please contact the practice, or speak to a PPG volunteer, so we can support you to take control of your healthcare records.

Frequently Asked Questions

In this issue the PPG have put some frequently asked questions to Robyn Clark, the Managing Partner for the surgery, that they feel patients might not know the answers to. If you have a question, or have wondered about how something works at the surgery, please email your question to kingswoodhealthcentre@nhs.net, or drop it into Reception, and we can answer it in the next issue of our patient newsletter.

Q: Why was the Klinik system brought in?
A: We brought Klinik in to help us better manage the high volume of requests we receive each day, and to try and help stop the 8am rush on the phone lines. Prior to Klinik, appointments were booked on a first-come-first-served basis, which wasn't always fair or safe depending on what the patient's presenting problem was. Klinik allows us to triage requests, and prioritise them based on urgency (like you might see in A&E departments), and also ensure that patients are seen by the right person or service for their problem. This isn't always a GP, and we have a multi-skilled team at KHC, which helps us keep GP appointments free for those patients who really need to see a doctor. By going online, patients are also helping free up the phone lines for those who can't use the internet. We've been really pleased to see over 85% of requests a month come in via the Klinik system which is great, and patients of all ages are using it consistently.

Q: How can I order my repeat prescriptions?
A: There are a number of ways! You can order using the Klinik system or by emailing kingswoodhealthcentre@nhs.net. You can pop a paper slip in the postbox at the surgery. Some pharmacies can order your medications on your behalf as well. However, the best way is by ordering online using the NHS App or Patient Access. When a request is made this way, it goes straight through to the authorising GP's inbox. All the other methods require our prescription clerk, Megan, to process so using the online options helps reduce the admin workload for the practice.

Q: How can I cancel an appointment?
A: This is really important for us, as we have sometimes had as many as 250 unattended, but not cancelled, appointments in a month. So please do cancel if you can't attend so that someone else can have that appointment. You can cancel an appointment by using the link in the appointment text reminders that are sent, by using the cancel appointment option on the Klinik system, or by calling Reception to cancel.

Q: Sometimes Klinik is closed, but I think I need an urgent appointment. Why does it close, and what should I do if I feel I need to be seen?
A: We close the Klinik system to new appointment requests either when it's outside of our opening times, if we're closed for training, or (as is most frequent) when we have no more appointments left to offer. If you feel your problem is medically urgent for that day, just call Reception who can fill out the Klinik form for you and our on-call GP will review it and take the appropriate action. If your problem isn't urgent, please wait for the form to reopen the next working day and submit your request then. If the problem becomes urgent when we're closed, please call NHS 111 for advice and access to the out-of-hours service.

Q: How are the GPs appointments structured?
A: Our GP sessions are split into a mixture of routine appointments, "within a week" appointments, same-day appointments, and 2 Results telephone slots. We regularly review our appointment book to check we have the balance right. The "within a week" slots are for problems that are slightly more urgent, but not on-the-day issues. Same-day appointments are for things like infections or worsening symptoms that need to be seen urgently. Routine appointments are scheduled for the beginning and end of the day, to allow for patients who work or have other responsibilities to access. Generally if someone needs an on-the-day appointment they are available to come in at short notice so these appointments sit at the end of the morning session and beginning of the afternoon session. We also offer some evening and alternate Saturday appointments for routine issues to help patients who work be seen. Every day there is an on-call GP who helps to triage the incoming requests and deals with medically urgent problems that come in from other healthcare professionals (e.g. paramedics, hospitals, etc.) as well as from patients when we have reached our appointment capacity for that day. The majority of our appointments are carried out face-to-face.

Q: What other staff do you have at the surgery besides doctors and nurses?
A: We have a lot of clinical staff at KHC. We have our own pharmacy team consisting of 2 pharmacists, a pharmacy technician and a prescription clerk. The pharmacists and pharmacy technician carry out medication and chronic disease reviews, can support patients with managing side-effects and answer queries about medications. We also have 2 Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs) and a paramedic practitioner who see patients with acute minor illness. Our ANPs can also offer advice on contraception and sexual health, and one of them can fit coils and implants and also help with queries around the menopause and HRT. We have a First Contact Physiotherapist who can see patients with new or recurrent joint and muscle problems. Our social prescribers are able to help patients with non-medical issues that are negatively impacting their health (such as social isolation, external factors impacting on mental health, lifestyle advice etc.). Our Care Coordinator team provide additional support to housebound, frail elderly patients in their homes. The surgery is also supported by our amazing team of non-clinical staff including Receptionists, administrators, secretaries and management who keep the operational side of things ticking over.

Q: The NHS is really busy, so how can patients help the practice?
A: The most helpful thing is to use the Klinik system where you can, so that those who can't are able to get through on the phones. When you do contact us for an appointment, give us as much information as possible so we can adequately triage your request and get you the right care for your problem. Try and self-care where you can - local pharmacies are really helpful and can even prescribe medicines for some common problems now without the need for an appointment. Most importantly, please do contact us if you have a health problem. We want to help our patients stay well at home for as long as possible, so early intervention is important!