

CHIDDENBROOK SURGERY & NEW VALLEY PRACTICE

Patient Information

December 2020

Dear Patient,

Chiddenbrook Surgery and New Valley Practice have been working together for some years and this has allowed us to improve the services that our patients receive. Reflecting on the work we already do together, and the exciting move to our new building in 2021, we are planning a merger of the two practices to a single practice.

After careful consideration we agree that a merged partnership gives us the absolute best opportunity to give you high quality care and develop services for you locally into the future. It will also attract more great medical professionals and support staff, which are so vital to general practice. The change will improve patients' ability to see their usual doctor and help us to provide additional services to our community.

Should the merge proceed [we need to get regulatory approval for this], we anticipate that, in the short-term, our patients would see no change to how they currently access appointments, clinical staff and services at New Valley Practice and Chiddenbrook Surgery. However, the merge would provide additional options for sites where our patients can be seen, which we believe will allow greater flexibility and enhance patient choice. This would be New Valley, and the Thorverton branch practice for patients of Chiddenbrook; New Valley and Thorverton patients would have the option of attending the Chiddenbrook site.

Our two practices are working on a joint venture to develop a new surgery building to the east of Crediton, on land next to Tesco. If the build goes to plan, we hope to move into a purpose-built surgery as a single, unified practice, towards the end of 2021. This will mean some changes to how we run the practice in the future, but we believe this is a positive move for us and our patients. Central to our approach is continuity of care for you, our patients - you will still be able to see the same doctors and nurses, but you will have the added benefit of being able to see or speak with doctors and nurses at the other sites covered by our new partnership.

Remember: You will still be able to book appointments with your usual GP, but you will also have access to full services at both sites

Benefits of a Merger

- **Better services for patients across both practices:**
 - Increased access to both male and female GPs
 - Greater choice of when and where to see a GP, Nurse Practitioner, Nurse, or Healthcare Support Workers
 - Improved quality of services we deliver
 - A more resilient and consistent service because we can share staff and resources across both practices
 - A single way to access services at both practices
- **Opportunities for partnership working and innovation:**
 - Chance for GPs to develop their skills within the wider community
 - Staff experience and knowledge to be shared across both practices
 - Improved training opportunities
 - Wider community engagement

Chiddenbrook Surgery & New Valley Practice
GP Practice Merger - Patient Questions & Answers

The following questions and answers have been prepared to assist the patients of Chiddenbrook Surgery and New Valley Practice.

As our plans develop, and following feedback from our patients, we will refresh, update, and add to these.

1. When will the merge take place?

It is anticipated that the merge will take place by 1st April 2021, subject to all regulatory approvals, and following a period of engagement with patients and all of the staff who are employed by both of the GP Practices. We hope to move into our new building towards the end of 2021.

2. Will I still be able to make an appointment to see my usual doctor or nurse?

Yes. We very much value all of the one-to-one relationships our patients have with our doctors and nurses. It is therefore expected that merging practices will further increase our ability to provide you with continuity of care and access to your usual doctor and/or nurse.

We also expect to be able to reduce the need for locum doctors and provide you with a greater number of highly skilled local doctors and nurses if your usual doctor or nurse is absent from work.

3. Will I still be able to make appointments at my usual doctor's surgery?

Yes. We will continue to provide daily appointments to see doctors, nurses and healthcare support workers.

In addition to these appointments, we will also be offering e-consult which is a convenient way to communicate with a GP 24 hours a day via the practice website. This is a really popular service where you are asked the same questions that a GP would ask in a face-to-face appointment. Your answers are then reviewed by a GP and you will receive a response from the practice by the end of the next working day, with advice about what needs to happen next. This could be a phone call, a face-to-face appointment, a prescription or a referral to another service.

4. Will my usual surgery opening times stay the same?

Yes. Both surgeries will continue to be open from 08.30am to 6pm, so there will be no changes to our core opening times. We will also continue to offer pre-booked evening and weekend appointments as part of the NHS Extended Access service.

5. Will there be changes made to the way I book appointments?

No. We do not anticipate any changes to the way you book appointments, and you will continue to be able to book these in the same way as you do now.

As now, we will continue to contact patients who require scheduled vaccinations, chronic disease reviews or routine screening, e.g. cervical screening tests.

6. Will I be able to make an appointment to see a doctor and/or nurse at another GP practice site?

From May 2021, once we have merged our computer systems, you will be able to request appointments with any doctor and/or nurse at all practice sites, providing you with greater access to a wider range of services and availability.

7. Will I have to go to another GP Practice site for consultations and/or treatments?

No. However, if in the future we feel that being seen at the other site provides a better or more appropriate service for specific patients, for example a particular doctor at one site may specialise in COPD or diabetes, you may be asked if you would like to attend that site in order to access more specialised care.

8. Will any service that is currently offered by my usual surgery be removed or stopped?

No. We do not plan to remove or stop any services. If anything, we anticipate that this merger will bring about a greater choice of services for our patients.

9. Will there be any changes to how I access the GP out of hours service?

No. In order to access a GP when the practice is closed, you will continue to telephone the NHS 111 service and they will either signpost you to the most appropriate service or arrange for you to access a GP.

10. Will the current arrangements that I have in place for getting my medicines stay the same?

Yes, this will remain the same as it is currently.

11. Will the intended merge affect any treatment or medication I am currently receiving either at my usual surgery or any hospital?

No. Any current treatments, medications or investigations will not be affected by our intention to merge.

12. Will I need to re-register to become a patient of the single GP Practice? What will happen to my health records?

No, you do not need to take any action. You will not need to re-register and we anticipate that you will remain registered with the same GP as you are now.

All of our patient lists will automatically be merged into a single GP Practice and your health records will reside within a single patient database. The NHS safeguards, in relation to patient confidentiality of information, will continue to remain in place both throughout the transition and afterward.

13. Will the single GP Practice be able to provide new services to patients?

One of the main reasons to merge, and form a larger practice, is for us to be able to expand the services that we can provide locally. For example, in time we hope to be able to include access to see other healthcare professionals, e.g., pharmacists for medication reviews.

14. How will the new arrangement benefit GPs and Nurses at the practice?

Our GPs, Nurses and Healthcare Support Workers will have access to a wider pool of clinical knowledge and expertise to draw upon and will have far greater opportunities to specialise in areas such as diabetes, care of the elderly, palliative care and urgent care access.

We also anticipate that the current level of administrative tasks that our clinical staff perform will be dramatically reduced, therefore allowing them more time to spend responding to, and delivering, the clinical care our patients need.

We anticipate being better able to cover planned or unplanned absences, which we hope will alleviate the resulting pressures felt by the remaining staff. In addition, we should be able to reduce our reliance on expensive locum and bank staff.

Furthermore, our staff will have greater opportunities for enhanced training and career development.

15. Getting to the new surgery when it opens

During our previous consultation with the local community, in February 2019, some patients expressed concern about getting to the new surgery using public transport. However, the new site is close to many bus routes, is nearer to the train station and has plenty of on-site parking.

16. I have further questions I would like to ask and / or comments I would like to make. How do I do this?

You can put these in writing for the attention of the Practice Manager at your usual surgery.

Alternatively, you can submit any questions and / or comments by email to:

chiddenbrook.enquiries@nhs.net

or

newvalleypractice@nhs.net

Please submit your comments by 15th January 2021

Yours sincerely,

For Chiddenbrook Surgery

Dr Peter Twomey

Dr Mick Braddick

Dr Claire Griffiths

Dr Mike Kirwan

For New Valley Practice

Dr Elizabeth Saunders

Dr Jo Harris

Patient Survey – Have Your Say...

We want to know what you think about our proposed merger. We hope you will support us with what we think is a great opportunity and would welcome your feedback on the merger by **15th January 2021**.

You can either complete the form below and send it or hand it back into the practice or, if you prefer, you can send it to us by email: chiddenbrook.enquiries@nhs.net or newvalleypractice@nhs.net

You can also find this on our websites:

<https://www.chiddenbrook-surgery.nhs.uk/> or <https://www.newvalleypractice.co.uk/>

1. How do you feel about the proposed merger with New Valley Practice?

- a) I understand why the practices might wish to merge and I do not have any concerns
- b) I do not have any positive or negative feelings about the merger
- c) I have some concerns about the proposed merger and would like to discuss these with someone

Comments:

2. Do you have any other comments, concerns or suggestions about merging the two practices and moving into the new building from next year?

Comments:

3. Please indicate your current GP practice:

- Chiddenbrook Surgery
- New Valley Practice
- If other, please say which practice you are registered with

4. If you are happy to do so, please provide your name and contact details:

Thank you for your help and cooperation.