



LEN VALLEY PRACTICE

Up-to-date News & Information for all Staff and Patients

In 2015 it became a contractual requirement for all GP Practices in England to form a Patient Participation Group (PPG). Their remit was to respond to the needs of their own patients and local community and to contribute to continuous improvement in the quality of patient care and the patient experience. The PPGs aim is to provide the patient perspective which may include health promotion i.e. Flu clinics, surveys on patient satisfaction, preparing newsletters and supporting, future developments in services.

In September 2019 West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) confirmed that there was a vote in favour of merging the 8 CCGs in Kent & Medway which has now been approved by NHS England.

As part of this merger the introduction of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) was introduced and in the Summer of 2019, Len Valley Practice became part of the "Ridge Primary Care Network" and they will be working together to share their experiences, workforce and services, with the aim of better meeting the needs of their community.

PPGs across all five surgeries will have a greater involvement in the new reconfiguration and will collectively be carrying out surveys, liaising with other organisations to inform patients about Health and Wellbeing options, aim to develop good links with local communities and work with other representatives across the PCN to develop more services to ensure people in their local communities are well informed about future options.

The five practices that Len Valley will be working closely with are; Bearsted, Sutton Valance, Langley and Headcorn surgeries. Information about some of the services can be found on the PCN website www.theridgepcn.co.uk.

A patient survey will shortly be carried out across all 5 practices within the PCN to identify where there are gaps in the current services in order to look at planning future services and the resources required across all five sites. The following are the clinics that are planned to be running from November/December and new staff are already being recruited to work across all five practices. These are:

- **Adult Counselling:** If you are experiencing MH problems such as depression, anxiety, stress or PTSD, there will be **ThinkAction** counsellors available either by referral at the surgery and your GP or nurse, or self-referral, which you will be able to do via the PCN website link. The service will run as a clinic at either of the following practices within the PCN (Len Valley, Bearsted, Sutton Valance, Langley or Headcorn) on a designated day.
- **Family Support Group:** this clinic is for children and parents. It will provide a children's counsellor, a patient volunteer and a health visitor to support both children and parents. It will run from Headcorn surgery on a Saturday morning. You will be able to get a referral through your GP, health visitor, or the receptionist at your surgery.
- **Home Support Clinic:** these are to support patients in later life, to be able to achieve independent living for longer. They will provide the links to other support – such as

physiotherapists, occupational therapists, social prescribers and community support. There will be a podiatrist coming to the service to deal with common foot problems in coming months. This will run from Bearsted, but you will be able to book an appointment through your own surgery.

- **Intensive Support Clinic:** For patients suffering chronic pain or terminal illness. This will be run by a team of specialist nurses who will be able to assist you with a host of concerns around pain control, wider health and social care issues and support for wider family and family/friend carers.
- **Teen Support Clinic:** this clinic is for teenagers between 12-18 years. This will run from the Langley surgery and you will be able to get a referral through your GP or nurse who will arrange an appointment for you.
- **Diabetes Support Clinic:** this is aimed at patients struggling with their diabetes medication or other health needs often related to diabetes. It aims to improve health and wellbeing so that long-term risks of diabetes are minimised, and your treatment strategy is easier for you to manage practically for you. This will be run from Bearsted surgery, but you again will be able to get a referral from any of the network practices to the service.
- **Physiotherapy Neck & Back Pain Clinic:** a clinic for recent onset and back pain which will be offered at Harrietsham and Lenham surgeries and will be open to the network patients to refer into.

This is just the start of the new shared services being provided across the network practices and audits will be carried out on a regular basis to see how many patients are using these new services in order to plan for the future.

It's exciting times in the NHS and everyone is having to consider new ways of working as the demands upon the NHS increase.

If you wish to add any further ideas about future services, watch out for the Patient Survey sheets which will be available shortly on reception. The survey is for patients of the practice and to look at issues that are affecting them which will be fed back to the practice.

For those patients at the Len Valley & Harrietsham surgeries, you may not be aware that the practice runs a Health Walk with trained volunteer walk leaders. These walks are aimed at all age groups and for experienced and non-experienced walkers. Please watch out for the "Walks" display board in reception at Lenham and Harrietsham surgeries giving the dates of the walks throughout 2022.

Len Valley & Harrietsham are also part of the "Only One You" campaign which offers advice on a healthier lifestyle. "One You" is sponsored by Kent County Council.

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