

2021

The Longcroft GP Clinic DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

As we enter December, it is a time for reflection. It is staggering to realise that General Practice has changed so much with COVID-19.

In January 2021, COVID-19 hit our patients heavily. Families were traumatised not just by multi-generational hospital admissions and deaths, but also the general impact of Covid-19 on mental and physical problems.

Now, after the second wave, as we look back and consider the role of primary care during the pandemic, all at Longcroft are proud of what we have achieved together.

The move to digital has opened the gates to primary care, and we are trying to surf a gigantic wave of demand. We have stepped up to meet the additional needs of patients, for example, dealing with mental health problems, managing acute COVID-19, and palliative care.

The move to remote working has not been smooth, but we are striving to ensure that we are aware of inequalities in the community and are mindful that not all patients have IT skills or even have home access to IT. As a result, we have a hybrid system with both IT access and telephone access. Both do become overwhelmed at times and that increased pressure as well as frustration on you as patients and us in striving to provide a professional service.

While there have been some hiccups and some criticism, the year end is an opportunity to take a step back and celebrate collaborative working with you all in adapting and improving our services. Some of our biggest roles during this pandemic are just beginning:

1. supporting patients with complex bereavements
2. managing long COVID
3. assisting with mental health recovery
4. regaining control of long-term and chronic conditions.

The Longcroft staff

Flus and Covid-19 Boosters

Flu and COVID-19 can both be life-threatening, and spread more easily in winter. If you're over 50, you are more at risk and so please contact the surgery for your flu immunisation.

Flu (influenza) is a highly-infectious illness that spreads rapidly through the coughs and sneezes of people who are carrying the virus.

Because flu is caused by a virus and not bacteria, antibiotics will not treat it. Anyone can get flu, but it can be more serious for certain people in our community.

Even if

you had a flu vaccination in previous years, you need this year's as the virus is constantly changing.

Getting the flu jab and COVID-19 booster vaccine is the best way to protect yourself: [nhs.uk/WinterVaccinations](https://www.nhs.uk/WinterVaccinations)



Reception

Jane Jones, our reception Lead, reflects on her work.

Every patient's journey to their healthcare provider starts with an initial enquiry which is handled either by our team of specially-trained receptionists, or the Longcroft website. The latter, which is called Footfall and whose format is common to all clinics in our area, is designed to help patients navigate their way to finding the correct healthcare professional or guide them to phone directly for appointments.

We are responsible for the prioritisation and immediacy of all patient concerns with the aim of delivering excellent customer service to you and your families as well as to our healthcare providers.

The role of a medical receptionist is demanding and sometimes challenging, particularly in our current times when stress levels and worries concerning everyone's safety are paramount. Our team have worked throughout the pandemic, in unusual and unprecedented circumstances, always seeking to deal with queries in a sensitive and empathic manner.

Alongside making appointments, our receptionists reschedule cancelled clinics, assist the GPs and nurses with queries, send emails and information when required and liaise with key contacts.

They:

- ◇ book new and follow-up appointments for all clinics, ensuring relevant notes are provided to the GP
- ◇ request results from hospitals and clinics, advising our GPs when they have been forwarded
- ◇ scan incoming letters and correspondence
- ◇ input sensitive data
- ◇ deal with prescription enquires
- ◇ send mails.

I just don't have enough space in this article to give you the full range of tasks and duties they juggle all day, every day!

"I have worked in clinical reception for seven years, seen many positive changes in the NHS and while it is facing huge challenges due to the pandemic, we strive to provide the best possible service that we can by identifying your needs and concerns. Our aim is that your experience at Longcroft is a positive one."

? Yes!



Cervical Smears

This is just one of the services now offered by the Surgery.

When you receive your invitation, please do not delay contacting us to book your appointment. Clinics are scheduled to minimise the presence of other patients.

Cervical screening is a free health test available on the NHS as part of the national cervical screening programme. It helps prevent cervical cancer by checking for a virus called high-risk HPV and cervical cell changes. It is not a test for cancer.



Meet Dr Nathan - Old? No! Experienced? Yes!

It could be his marathon running and general exercise regime, but to see him you might not realise that Dr Laurence Nathan is our longest-serving partner. So it's hardly surprising that patient consultations, whether in the surgery or via the internet or phone, can start like this: "I thought you'd retired Doc (or worse!)"

In fact, Dr Nathan joined doctors Smallshaw, Mansfield and Dewland in 1978 as a young man in his late 20s. "Through 33 years since then, always at Longcroft," he says "I've worked with the NHS's various management systems from Family Practitioner Committees (FPCs) to Family Health Services Authorities (FHSAs) of antiquity then progressing through the more modern Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to Integrated Care Systems (ICS) and Primary Care Networks (PCNs) today.

"Medical records have evolved from the Lloyd-George-era envelopes that still fill the shelves of our Lodge to the more legible and accessible digitised EMIS records that I understand are housed in secure facilities in Seattle!

"What hasn't changed is the Longcroft ethos: the provision of excellent primary care by a dedicated team."

Dr Nathan comments:

"The workload of GPs seems heavier than ever. Stepping down to half-time in 2010 has enabled me to continue to enjoy the special privilege of delivering medical care to our community (sometimes to children and even grand-children of patients) – something I aim to continue doing. Maybe I'll even see the long-, long-awaited move to an expanded facility so as to provide a one-stop Longcroft with allied medical services on site. .



Meet our Practice Manager: Kenny Sangar

We have a new, full-time Practice Manager who joined us in October. He is an experienced healthcare worker and is responsible at Longcroft for the administration of all the medical services we provide.

Kenny gained a first degree in Business Studies (hons) and also holds a Post-Graduate Diploma in General Practice Management. Having worked in Social Care, a charity and now the NHS, he brings a solid grounding in patient care and welfare to Longcroft. Kenny joined us from a busy dentist partnership, where he was also practice manager, and has worked for Bupa as Business Practice Manager.

While our entire team strives to meet your expectations, if you ever have a complaint please contact Kenny by emailing

kenny.sangar1@nhs.net

As the year draws to a close

All of us at The Longcroft Clinic wish you and your family health, happiness, peace and prosperity this Christmas and in the coming New Year. We hope to continue to work collaboratively with you all in providing excellent, patient-focused health care.

All our newsletters are emailed to those who request this, they are available in the clinic and are delivered to all chemists in Banstead and to Banstead Library with a request that they are displayed for anyone to take