

Surgery Merger Proposal

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Which practices are merging and where are the sites located?

The merging practices are: De Parys Medical Centre, Goldington Medical Practice and Pemberley Surgery. The practices operate from five sites as below. All of these sites will continue to provide services following the merger:

- **De Parys Medical Centre** – 23 De Parys Avenue, Bedford & Bromham Surgery, Molivers Lane, Bromham
- **Goldington Medical Practice** – 2 Goldington Road, Bedford & 147A Church Lane, Bedford
- **Pemberley Surgery** – 32 Pemberley Avenue, Bedford

Q. Why are the practices merging?

General Practice is seeing a substantial increase in demand, coupled with fewer doctors choosing a career in general practice. In order to continue to provide a high standard of care that is sustainable for the future, the partners all feel that this merger will put us in a stronger position. Longer term we will be able to not only survive, but flourish. We believe the combined practice will be stronger, more resilient and better placed to attract and retain new staff, across a wider range of specialities.

We had considered undertaking the merger under a wider umbrella organisation, however we will now undertake the merger as a local development, which enables us to ensure decisions are made locally for the benefit of local patients.

Q. How will the merger benefit patients?

Together we will be able to offer better services and improved access to patients. We plan to combine our organisations so that there will be a total of 18 GPs, a large nursing team, and other staff such as pharmacists and paramedics, providing plenty of choice and a greater skill mix than we can offer alone.

Patients will also be able to access services at any of the five sites, if they wish, or continue to access services from the site they currently visit. All current services for patients will remain and together we are working on some exciting developments to improve services.

Q. Is the main reason to merge so you can recruit more GPs?

This is not the main reason, however by joining together we will widen the pool of GPs, nurses and other health professionals available to our patients, improve access and broaden the services we can offer. Through the merger we will be able to encourage and support staff who wish to specialise and will increase opportunities for training, this will help us recruit and retain staff.

Q. Do you have to seek approval to merge?

Yes, we have to obtain permission from NHS England (Midlands and East) and Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG). This process is under way. We

will also keep key organisations informed across the town such as Healthwatch, Bedford Borough Council, adjoining practices and local councillors.

Q. When will the merger take place?

Following patient engagement and approval from NHSE and BCCG, the full merge is due to take place on 1st July 2018.

Q. Will I have the option to be seen at one of the sites closest to my home/work?

Yes, to improve patient access to services, you will be able to make appointments at any of the five sites, whichever one is most convenient to you. If your problem is relatively urgent you might be offered an appointment at another site.

Q. Will the clinician I see have access to my medical record whichever site I am seen at?

Patient records are held electronically on a secure network. Following the merger all health professionals across the partnership will have access to your medical record to ensure continuity of care.

Q. What about transport and parking?

All sites will continue with their current parking arrangements.

Q. Will there be a new telephone number to contact the practice?

We will be moving to one central phone number, however initially the contact telephone numbers will remain the same. Once the new telephone system is installed and has been tested we will let everyone know the new number.

Q. Will the opening hours and appointment times change?

We will maintain the opening hours you have become accustomed to.

Q. Will sessions such as 'flu jabs be held at all surgeries or held centrally?

Currently the "flu jab" service is conducted at all sites and we have no plans to change this.

Q. Which methods of communication will be used to keep patients informed of developments as the merger progresses?

We will continue to update our patients and Patient Participation Groups via newsletters and our website.

Q. Will the Patient Participation Groups continue?

Yes, the groups will continue and we hope they will want to merge into one PPG at some time in the future.