

Dear patient

As a patient of Bursledon Surgery or Blackthorn Health Centre, we would like to hear from you on a proposal to merge Bursledon Surgery with Blackthorn Health Centre.

At present, patients registered with Bursledon Surgery have their GP services provided by Blackthorn Health Centre. This temporary arrangement follows the retirement in December 2019 of the GP previously running Bursledon Surgery. In discussion with the CCG, Blackthorn Health Centre now proposes to make these temporary arrangements permanent from October 2021, if agreed by the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group.

The coronavirus pandemic meant that Bursledon Surgery was used as a hub for consultations with patients from across the Eastern Southern Parishes with a suspected COVID-19 infection and, more recently, as a vaccination site supporting our highly successful delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

Whilst Bursledon Surgery was used for other purposes since spring 2020, patients have been offered 'face to face' appointments at Blackthorn Health Centre or remote consultation offered via telephone, video or online.

The proposal confirms that all GP services for all patients of both practices will in future be provided only from Blackthorn Health Centre. The proposal intends to create a single stable practice able to deliver high quality continuing care to all patients from a single site.

If the proposal is agreed, it means that the Lowford Centre surgery site would continue to have an important role in the delivery of NHS primary care services within the local area. The Lowford Centre site would be used as a base for new staff employed by practices across the Eastleigh Southern Parishes (which include Hedge End Medical Centre and West End Surgery) to support GPs in the delivery of care to their patients, e.g. social prescribers, care navigators, physiotherapists, mental health practitioners, clinical pharmacists, youth counselling service, health and wellbeing coaches, etc. It will also be used as a base for GP services at evenings and weekends, known locally as *Appointments+* or "the Hub" (currently based at Botley Health Centre).

We welcome hearing from you about this proposal. You can contact us by writing to the address at the top of this letter or emailing hsiccg.communications@nhs.net.

We also have a survey you can fill out online which is accessible on the websites of both practices. Paper copies of this survey will also be available at Blackthorn Health Centre and at the Lowford Centre. Alternatively, you can contact the CCG for a paper copy using the above details.

We have also compiled some frequently asked questions (FAQs) overleaf.

Yours faithfully,



Martyn Rogers
Head of Primary Care, South West Hampshire

Frequently asked questions

Why is Bursledon Surgery merging with Blackthorn Health Centre?

The previous GP who ran Bursledon Surgery retired and could not recruit a replacement. The team at Blackthorn Health Centre temporarily took on the NHS contract in January 2020 to care for Bursledon Surgery patients and the proposal is that this becomes a long term arrangement.

Is the Lowford Centre surgery site closing?

No, there is no proposal to close this building and NHS primary care services will still be run from the building. The difference will be that daytime appointments with a healthcare professional will take place at Blackthorn Health Centre. Evening and weekend GP appointments will be available at the Lowford Centre site via the Appointment+ (“the Hub”) service.

Is there parking for patients at Blackthorn Health Centre?

Yes.

Why does this proposal not include continuing with appointments during the day at the Lowford Centre site?

In order for Blackthorn Health Centre to be able to permanently take on the additional 4,600 patients currently registered with Bursledon Surgery, it proposes keeping its services on one site in the local area so that it can provide good continuity of care for patients. This will make it easier for you to request to be seen by the same and familiar GP for all your appointments and for the GP to be familiar with your health and care needs.

What is the *Appointments+* service?

Appointments+ (“the Hub”) is a service which allows for routine and urgent appointments with a range of healthcare professionals such as a GP, nurse, phlebotomist (blood test), mental health practitioner and physiotherapists in the evenings and at weekends. This service would continue to be available for Bursledon Surgery, Blackthorn Health Centre and the other Eastleigh Southern Parishes practices.

I use telephone or online ways to contact my GP, will this change?

Under this proposal you will not experience any change. All online and telephone services provided will remain the same.

It would be impossible for me to get to Blackthorn Health Centre because I am unable to travel. How would I see a healthcare professional face to face?

Blackthorn Health Centre will continue to provide home visits where clinically appropriate.

Will Blackthorn Health Centre be providing face-to-face appointments?

Yes, face-to-face appointments have been available at Blackthorn Health Centre throughout the pandemic despite lockdown and social distancing restrictions and this continues via the existing GP triage system.

How do I make sure my views are heard before a decision is taken by the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)?

Please contact the CCG using the details overleaf. We also have a survey which is available online or a paper copy can be sent to you.

How can I request a copy of the survey and information in a different format?

Please contact the CCG using the details overleaf.