



PATIENT NEWSLETTER

Our bimonthly patient newsletter aims to keep you informed of services at Compass House and give you important insights into getting the most out of the Practice



Dear Patient,

Welcome to the first edition of our Patient Newsletter for 2024.

Despite the chilly temperatures and the flurry of seasonal illnesses that often accompany this time of year, the teams at Compass House have been hard at work supporting the local community in staying well this winter.

In December and January, we provided 3520 patients with face-to-face clinician appointments (GP or ACP) and made 3395 telephone calls to patients requiring medical support. While this information highlights the work we do to support patients who are unwell, we know healthcare shouldn't just be reactive and to enhance the wellbeing of our community we are always seeking ways to improve health outcomes for patients by ways of proactive healthcare improvements.

Here are just some of the additional projects we have been involved in lately to support our patients:

Hospital Admission Avoidance

We know no one wants to spend unnecessary time in hospital away from home.

To help reduce hospital admissions, where primary care intervention can support a patient staying home, we have identified a cohort of patients who, due to their medical conditions, are at a higher risk of being admitted to hospital. We are then looking at ways we can help the patient manage their symptoms at home instead of being admitted for hospital care if this is not needed at first.

Secondary to that, we are also reviewing patients who have recently been admitted, to see if there is anything we can do to support them, preventing re-admission.



Falls Project

People aged over 65 have a 1 in 3 chance of falling this year. Falls in our older population often lead to lengthy hospital stays and uncomfortable fractures or bruising.

As part of our Falls project to help reduce this number, we are reviewing patients who have suffered a recent fall, to identify if a drop in blood pressure was the cause of their fall.

If this was the cause, then an in-depth medication review will be done to identify any areas where improvements can be made in their prescribed medications. A falls assessment may then be completed to support patients to prevent falls in their homes.

There are also proactive measures patient can take at home to reduce their risk of falling. See the link for the "Steady on Your Feet" leaflet:

<https://bit.ly/Steady-On-Your-Feet-Leaflet>



Fuel Poverty/ Health Inequality Project

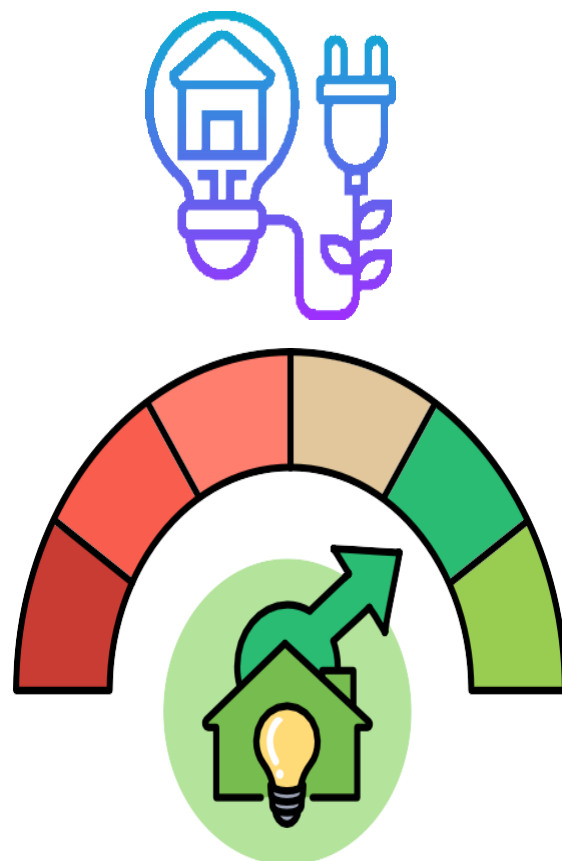
You may be surprised to know but Torbay has an extremely high level of deprivation.

Where there is known high levels of deprivation in an area this often leads to health inequality amongst our most vulnerable patients and a significant increase in hospital admissions.

To tackle this, we have been working with other Practices in Torbay to identify our 200 most vulnerable respiratory patients. These patients have then been referred for a home energy evaluation, provided by an energy organisation, who assess the patient's environment and ensure the home is as warm, safe, and as energy efficient as it can be.

Our Nursing team will also be providing support to these patients in the way of a respiratory management plan and ensuring they are aware of ways in which they can support their respiratory conditions during winter to prevent any unnecessary admissions.

The project also involves liaising with educational leads to encourage them to raise awareness amongst their staff on how best to support children with Asthma or other respiratory conditions when they are in schools.



Pneumococcal, Shingles, and Flu Vaccines

Staying up to date with vaccinations is important, not only do vaccinations safeguard individuals against preventable diseases, but they also play a vital role in preserving community health and immunity. Some of the vaccinations you become eligible for with age, and others depend on your long-term health conditions. A few of these are detailed below.

Pneumococcal Vaccine

The Pneumococcal vaccine helps to protect against serious illnesses such as Pneumonia and Meningitis and is recommended for people who are at higher risk of getting seriously ill from Pneumococcal infections. Anyone aged 65 or over can have the vaccine, as well as those patients who are immunocompromised.

Shingles Vaccine

The Shingles vaccine helps to protect against Shingles, a common condition that causes a painful rash which in severe cases can lead to long-lasting pain, hearing loss or blindness. Anyone who turned 65 on or after 1st September 2023, is eligible for the vaccine, and will be offered two doses, given between 6 and 12 months apart. If you turned 65 before this date, you will be eligible when you turn 70. Anyone aged 70 to 79 is also eligible until their 80th birthday. Immunocompromised patients are eligible from the age of 50.

Flu Vaccine

It's not too late to get this season's flu vaccine. If you are aged 65 and over, or turn 65 before 31st March 2024, or in an at-risk group, (long-term health condition such as Asthma or Diabetes, pregnant, carer, or have a weakened immune system), you are eligible for the vaccine.



If you are unsure if you have had any of these vaccines, you can check via the NHS App, (on the immunisation section of "Your GP Health Record"). If you do not have online access, please contact the Surgery and one of our Care Coordinators can advise you, and book you an appointment if necessary.

Attending Appointments

Thank you to our 8934 patients who attended their appointments in January.

We really appreciate your attendance to appointments as this supports your ongoing health and enables us to plan any future care that is required.

While we appreciate there may be certain circumstances where patients are unable to attend, we had 163 non attended appointments in January, with 12 alone on Monday 22nd January.

This does have an impact on some of the services we can provide and means patients may be waiting longer for appointments.

We kindly ask that if you are unable to attend, you contact us to cancel so we can offer this appointment time to someone else.

You can cancel appointment via the following methods:

- By replying to your confirmation text if you have a mobile on our system
- Via KLINIK using the appointment cancellation and re-booking option: <https://access.klinik.co.uk/contact/compass-house-medical-centres>
- On our phonedlines, pressing option 3.

The NHS App & Tracking Your Prescription



You can now see the status of your prescriptions in the NHS app.

To check your prescription requests using the NHS App or the NHS website.

Please follow the steps below:

- Log in.
- Go to "Your health" and then "View and manage prescriptions."
- Select either "Status of your requests" or "Your approved prescriptions."

This will show you the status of your latest prescription requests.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Our Patient Participation Group (PPG) is a partnership made up of a group of volunteer patients, our Practice Manager, one of the GP Partners, and other members of our management team. The group meets at regular intervals throughout the year.

The purpose of the PPG is to ensure that patients and carers are involved in decisions about the range, shape and quality of services provided by the Practice.

The aim is to promote the proactive and innovative involvement of patients and carers through the use of effective PPG, and to act on a range of sources of patient and carer feedback in order to improve the services delivered by the Practice.

We have a lovely group of patients who currently regularly attend our meetings and provide valuable feedback. Over the past few years, they have supported the Practice by:

- Completing a feedback survey about KLINIK, which helped us adapt processes to better support our patient population with navigating this new system.
- Supported fundraising events, which led to us purchasing equipment to support patient examinations.
- Helped to tailor our phone messages and functionality.
- Provided feedback on health promotion letters.

If you would like to join our PPG and help us shape future system in General Practice, please e-mail compasshouse.ppg@nhs.net. We are particularly keen to involve younger patients to identify and resolve health concerns relative to this patient cohort.



Research Projects

As a research-focused Practice, our commitment to supporting research projects is paramount in advancing medical knowledge and improving patient outcomes.

Your active participation ensures that our Practice remains at the forefront of innovation, contributing to a healthier future for all.

For the majority of the studies we are involved in, patients will be invited to participate after a notes review by one of the Clinicians in the Surgery, however, on occasion, the NIHR (National Institute for Health and Care Research) team, who are funded by the Department of Health & Social Care, or our clinical system (Emis) will notify us of eligible patients to invite based on clinical codes in our patient records.

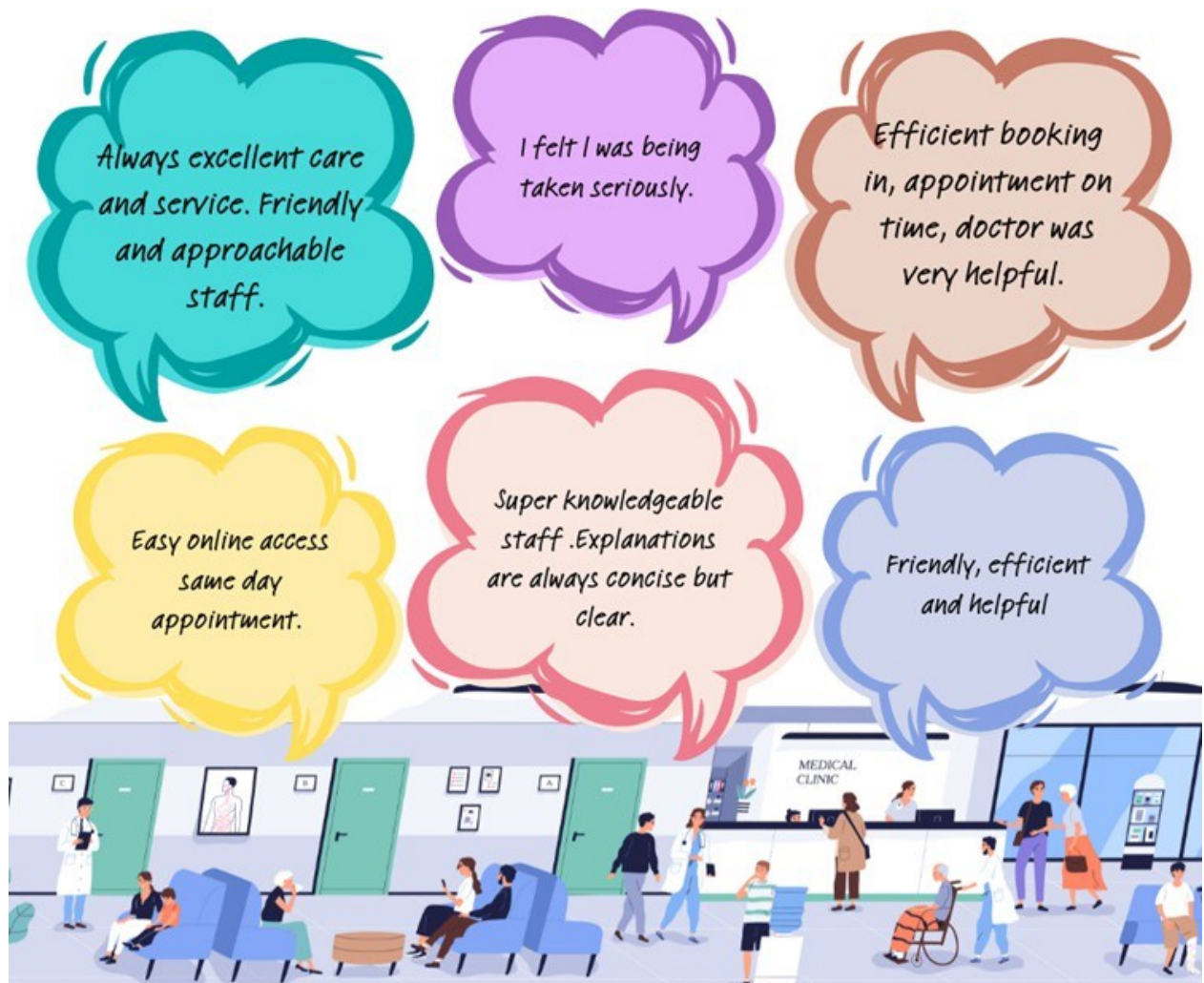
If you have been invited to participate in any studies and feel happy to help, then don't delay in responding to your invite. Sometimes these projects only run for a short period of time and so your prompt response either way is much appreciated.

Full details of all the projects we are involved in can be found on our website at:
<https://compasshousemedical.com/research/>



Patient Feedback

A huge Thank you to those of you that take the time to leave us kind comments. These always provide a well-deserved moral boost to our Staff. Here's just a few of the positive feedback we have received over the last couple of months.

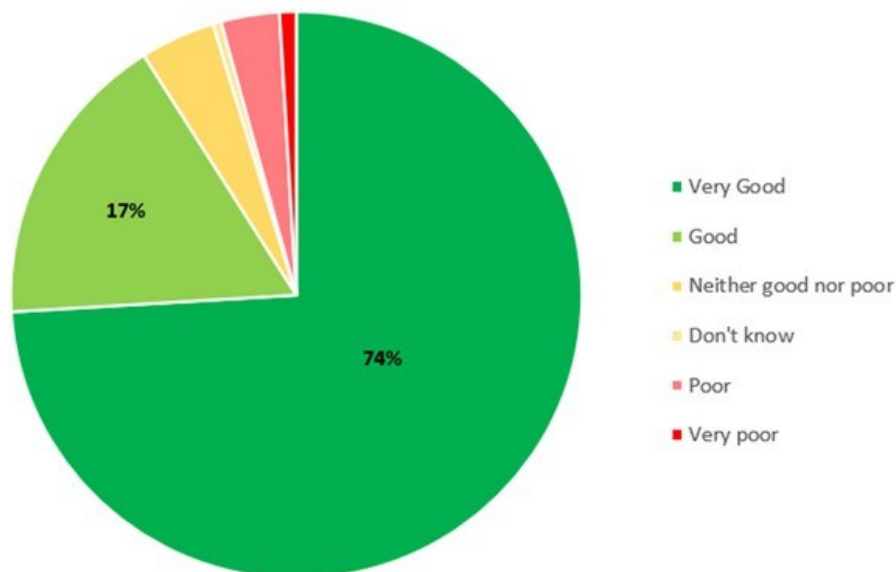


Friends and Family Test

Thank you to those of you that took the time to provide us with feedback following your appointments in December.

We received 212 responses, with 91% of patients rating us as good or very good.

Although all the feedback is anonymous, and we are unable to identify or respond to individual comments, we do read them all and take the comments on board, seeking to make improvements where we can. We also pass the comments onto the named staff members where they are provided.



Are you a Carer?



For many, the journey into caregiving begins organically, driven by love and a sense of duty. Perhaps it starts with helping an aging parent with household chores or providing emotional support to a friend facing a health crisis, supporting someone with substance misuse or a long-term disability. Gradually, these acts of kindness evolve into significant caregiving responsibilities, such as administering medications, supporting with trips to medical appointments, shopping, meal preparation, emotional support, this list can go on.



Amidst the demands of caregiving, it's easy for carers to overlook their own well-being. The shift from supporting others to becoming a primary caregiver can happen imperceptibly, leaving individuals caught in a cycle of prioritising the needs of their loved ones while neglecting their own physical, emotional, and social health.

At Compass House, we have a dedicated Carer Support Worker. Sarah can offer support to carers in the way of a health and wellbeing assessment, linking in with health and social care, emotional support and many other services.

She also runs a coffee morning on the last Tuesday of the month, 1-3pm at Brixham Community Centre, which is an opportunity for carers to meet up with other unpaid carers and reconnect outside of their caring role. Other benefits of being identified as a carer include:

- Free hospital parking
- Free Flu jabs
- 1:1 support
- Free Health and Wellbeing checks
- Carers support groups or activities

If you would like to register as a carer, please collect a registration form from reception, or visit our website to download the forms: <https://compasshousemedical.com/information-for-carers/>.



If you feel you don't currently need support in your caring role, it is still important to register on Torbay Carers Register, so that you have a Carers card. Having a carers card enables you to have free hospital car parking when taking the "cared for" to hospital appointments or visiting them in hospital. You will also receive the quarterly Signpost newsletter, which includes lots of useful information for carers and have the opportunity to set up an emergency plan. Please click here to download the application form:

<https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/uploads/torbay-carers-register-application-form.pdf>