

As many of you know, the NHS is being overwhelmed at present. In terms of general practice across England, we:

- Offer 20% more appointments than before the pandemic
- See the equivalent of the whole population every two months
- See more than 1 million patients per day in England
- Care for 8 million more patients across England, who are currently on hospital waiting lists.

At Compass House in the past 12 months our patient numbers have increased by **1.3%**, yet our workload has increased by nearly **10%**. Over the past year we have delivered:

- 91,326 face to face appointments
- 43,080 telephone appointments

As a GP practice we received an increase in funding of just 2% this year, taking the amount we receive to **£107.57 per patient per year**, or just **£8.96 per month**. This is the same amount regardless of how many times you access our services. And like you, our costs are rising, including inflation, utilities and year on year national living wage increases of 9.8% this year alone. We must manage all these cost increases within the funding we receive, whilst also meeting the large increase in workload.

Here at Compass House Medical Centres – as with every other GP practice in Devon and across England – we are feeling the pressure and working as hard as we can to provide the right care for all our patients. However, the underfunding now means that we are unable to recruit more staff meaning that:

- Telephone answering takes longer than we would like
- Your waiting time for routine appointments may increase
- Request for things like medical reports, medical records and assessment may take longer

Some other NHS services can help ease the pressure so we may signpost you out of the surgery to the local pharmacy or other services - over the years patient pathways have been changed to get you services quicker via self-referral, so please do take advantage of these options.

Please also help us free up clinical time by trying to manage minor illnesses yourself, with lots of self-help advice available on [Health A to Z - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk), visiting the pharmacy first and attending for health checks when invited, which aim to keep you well. And please ensure you cancel any appointment you don't need in good time – in the past 12 months we had 1,874 appointments wasted where patients did not attend.

We are worried and distressed about the current situation too and wish we could do more, but we can only deliver the service that the funding allows. If you feel strongly about the issue of general practice funding, you may wish to contact your local member of parliament to express your views.

In the meantime, we will continue to do our best to look after our patients and we appreciate your support and consideration during these difficult times. We ask that you remain kind to our staff, who are working extremely hard and doing the best they can in the current circumstances.

The Partners

Compass House Medical Centres