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PATIENT CHARTER

1. SURGERY PREMISES - We will endeavour to keep our surgery building well maintained, easy for you to find your way around, accessible, and appropriate to the needs of our users. Fire exits will be clearly marked and kept clear at all times, and our fire alarm system and evacuation drills will be tested regularly.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - If you have any suggestions for improvements to our premises please let us know. Please respect other users by keeping passageways and exits clear at all times. Parking bays designated for use by disabled patients should only be used by those genuinely disabled

2. PATIENT & HEALTH INFORMATION - We will update the information on our notice boards regularly and provide a wide variety of leaflets. Additional information on healthy lifestyles, common diseases and disorders in the form of leaflets are available within the practice. Please ask at reception for the appropriate leaflets.

3. PRACTICE STAFF - Our staff wear name badges to enable identification. Staff will be courteous and respectful at all times and endeavour to help you to the best of their ability, although they may need to refer you to another department or member of staff to deal with your enquiry. Practice staff are trained to be aware of patients with special needs. They understand that patients are often worried and under stress when attending or telephoning the surgery.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - Please treat our staff with the same courtesy and respect that you expect to receive from them. If you have any special needs or disability, please inform reception staff who will do their best to ensure you receive all the appropriate help.

4. PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY - Your privacy and confidentiality will be respected at all times. Please understand that we are unable to give information on any patient or other person without their written consent. We will maintain confidentiality within the Practice Team. Identifiable patient information will only be shared within the practice team and, in the case of referral, to the clinician to whom the patient is referred. Disclosure of identifiable patient information to any other outside agencies will only be done after receiving written permission from the patient.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - If you wish your conversation to be in private, please inform the reception staff.

5. APPOINTMENTS - The Practice has adopted a system to ensure that the majority of patients can be seen within 24/48 hours. This means that the majority of routine appointments are booked on the day. The main aim of this system is to reduce the number of Non Attendee's. There is still the facility to pre-book a small number of appointments. For urgent appointment requests, staff will ask for some details and arrange for the duty doctor to speak to you. An appointment to be seen that day will be made if considered appropriate. This may be with a doctor other than your own. Sometimes, due to holidays or other commitments, a routine appointment with your own doctor may not always be available within the desired time.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - If you think you might need a longer appointment than normal (ten minutes is average), please let staff know when you book the appointment. If you have booked an appointment and then find you cannot keep it, please let us know as soon as possible. It is important that you arrive for your appointment on time as late arrival causes additional waiting time for others. If you arrive more than ten minutes late you will be asked to rebook your appointment for another time. An appointment is for one person only. If another member of your family needs to be seen or discussed, more time will be required and a separate appointment should be made.

6. TELEPHONE - Your telephone call will be answered and staff will assist you as best as they can. If you need to speak to a doctor or nurse, this can be arranged. Urgent requests will be passed to the doctor or nurse immediately. The doctors are available every weekday for telephone advice. This can be arranged by asking for a telephone consultation. Please be available 30 minutes either side of the time given for the doctor to call you back.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - Please give full details to staff, whenever possible, as this will help us to deal with your enquiry promptly and efficiently. All our staff are trained to respect patient confidentiality but need to have some details to help the doctors deal with your enquiry. If we have to call you back,

please be aware that we cannot always be precise on the times available as other patient appointments may take longer than anticipated.

7. WAITING TIMES - Our surgery and clinics will normally start on time. We aim for you to be seen within 20 minutes of your appointment time. We will give you an explanation if we keep you waiting any longer. Unfortunately it is sometimes difficult in general practice to run to time as patients being seen before you may present with unforeseen problems. Patients arriving with an urgent or serious problem will be seen as a priority. When a doctor is called out on an emergency we will inform you and offer the option to book an alternative appointment.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - Sometimes your GP may feel that the time you have booked is insufficient to deal with your problem and under those circumstances might ask you to book another appointment for a longer time. This is in the best interests of both yourself and the next patient who is waiting to be seen. If you arrive late for your appointment you will be asked to re-book for another appointment.

8. PRESCRIPTIONS - Repeat prescriptions will be available for collection after three working days of your request when the items requested have been authorised by your doctor. Prescriptions can be collected direct from some local pharmacists. Please note that we do not take requests over the phone, except for housebound patients.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - Please use the authorised request slip for repeat prescriptions or if you have access to the Internet, via our website at www.poplar-grove.co.uk. You can also e-mail your request to switchboard.k82038@nhs.net. If you have a regular prescription for the same medicine, please order repeat prescriptions in plenty of time. If you are asked to see the doctor before a further supply can be issued, it is important that you follow this advice. Check with your pharmacist if your medicines are cheaper to buy directly from them. Please do not overstock or hoard your medicines. All medicines are expensive and we try as far as possible to avoid wastage. Money saved on our drug budget can be used on other types of patient care.

9. HOME VISITS - Requests for home visits from a doctor will be noted immediately after your request has been made and any details you might have regarding the visit will be recorded at the same time. All emergency requests will be passed to the duty doctor immediately.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - If you require a home visit from a doctor, please telephone before 10.00am, giving as much detail to the secretary as possible as the doctor will need to arrange and prioritise his/her visits. It is better if you can get to the surgery as there are more facilities for examination and treatment and it allows the doctor to use his/her time most efficiently. If you are expecting a home visit from any other member of our team (e.g. district nurse), please remember that they also need to organise their day. We are happy to visit at home when requested but will not do so as a matter of routine. If you are caring for someone who has regular visits or you have regular visits yourself from any member of our team, please inform us if you or the patient will be going away.

10. OUT OF HOURS VISITS - When the Surgery is closed between 6:30pm - 8:00am weekdays and at weekends and bank holidays, there is a duty on call rota which is covered by the out-of-hours service; NHS 111. The doctors on call may ask you to attend the OOH Centre for examination or will visit at home if necessary. Please ensure all your calls for this service are for medical emergencies only. For medical emergencies out of hours only please ring 111.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - Doctors on call during the night and at weekends have worked all day, so please use the emergency service for genuine emergencies, which cannot wait until the next surgery.

11. TEST RESULTS - When a test or investigation is undertaken in the surgery, we will ensure that you are told approximately how long it will be before the result will be available to you. A doctor sees all incoming results. After the time you have been told the results will be available, we would ask you to contact the secretary, who will tell you whether the results are normal or if any further action is required. We are not able to give the results of tests to anyone other than the patient, except by prior arrangement.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - Please call after 2pm for your results. If you do not understand your result, please ask to make an appointment to speak to or see your doctor.

12. REFERRALS - If you have been advised by your GP that you are to be referred to a hospital or other service then that referral will be dealt with promptly. Your GP will offer you a choice of which hospital you wish to be seen at. We aim to have the appropriate referral letter or form despatched within five working days of your appointment for non-urgent referrals, and 24 hours for urgent referrals. You are entitled to have a copy of the referral letter if you so wish.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - Please make sure your details of address and telephone number are accurate. If you are referred to hospital and are unable to attend for your appointment or decide to cancel, please let them know as soon as possible so another patient can be seen in your place.

13. MEDICAL RECORDS - When you move to a new area or practice, your records are transferred via the Primary Care Support Services at TVPCA Reading. When we receive a request for transfer of records we aim to despatch these within five working days of the request and within 24 hours if the record is required

urgently for medical purposes. All staff are trained to be aware of the Data Protection Act and all staff contracts include clauses that any breaches of confidentiality may result in dismissal. Your rights of access to your medical records are dictated by current legislation. Your records include both written and those held on our computer.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - Medical records include terminology you might not be familiar with. Your doctor prefers to go through any records you have requested with you. This is to save you any unnecessary worries or fears. The secretary/receptionist will therefore ask you to make an appointment for this purpose.

Please understand that this appointment is for your benefit, but in no way affects your rights to have access to your records. We are entitled to charge you an administrative fee when we have to copy information for you. Under the Children's Act, any child who is able to understand their rights has to give permission before a parent or guardian can see their records. Parents or guardians need to understand that they do not have an automatic right to information on a child's behalf.

14. COMMUNICATIONS - When changes and developments are introduced to our practice procedures, we will ensure that these are clearly publicised. We will endeavour to complete any forms requested by you in a reasonable time (e.g. passport applications, insurance claims, etc). Most forms, as well as special medical examinations and reports, carry a charge (a scale of charges is available at reception).

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - Please notify us quickly if your address or other circumstances change. This helps us to keep our records accurate. Please allow maximum time when you know a form needs completing.

15. CLINICAL STANDARDS OF CARE - We endeavour to provide excellent health care, which reflects medical advances and up to date legislation and information. As professionals we work as a practice team - please understand you may be referred to another member of the team who is more appropriately trained to meet your needs. During the consultation it may be necessary for you to be examined. The clinicians will normally ask if you would like a chaperone present if an intimate examination is required. The purpose of the chaperone is to witness the examination to protect both the patient and clinician.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - The clinicians aim to deal with all of your problems during the consultation. If you think you will need more than 10 minutes please book accordingly. If you need an examination of any part of your body, for which you feel you would prefer to have a chaperone present, please ask the doctor or nurse concerned as this can always be arranged.

16. COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS & COMPLAINTS - There is a Practice complaints procedure, details of which are available from reception. All complaints should be made in writing and will be acknowledged within two working days, and under normal circumstances investigated and responded to within 20 working days. You will be kept fully informed of the discussions and progress. The Practice team will consider all constructive comments and suggestions. You are also able to add any feedback via the NHS Choices web site.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES - Mistakes and misunderstandings can happen. If you are unhappy with a service you have received and want to make a complaint, please do so as soon as possible after the event that has led to your complaint. If you feel happy with the service we provide, pleased with your care, or feel that the practice staff have done well, we would be delighted to know. As patients you have the right to receive a high standard of medical care and to be treated with courtesy and respect. Along with this right you have responsibilities as patients. By working together we can achieve and maintain these standards.