

## **Proposed Merger of Stuart House Surgery & Westside Surgery**

### **Frequently Asked Questions** **Approved by the Practice's Patient Participation Groups**

The Partners of Stuart House Surgery and Westside Surgery have submitted an application to NHS England to merge. If this proposed merger is approved, the merged practice would be known as '*Sleaford Road Medical Centre*'.

Listed below are a number of **FAQs** that are provided to answer any potential queries patients of the surgeries may have. If you have any further questions, please join us at one of our patient engagement events listed at the end of this document.

#### **1. Why are you doing this?**

General Practice faces a number of challenges, including GP recruitment difficulties and an increased demand for services. We feel that by building on the close relationship we already have through sharing the same premises and formally merging to one organisation, we will be able to better meet these challenges and continue to provide high quality care for our patients.

We also have GPs that are considering retirement within the next 5 years, which in some localities is being hastened due to the increasing pressure, demand and working hours. This merger will ensure that our service does not suffer because of individual retirement plans, at a time when GPs are extremely hard to recruit. We also feel that we will be able to offer more desirable career opportunities - which will not only attract GPs but also retain them. This is also applicable to other health care professionals and practice supporting staff.

#### **2. Will there be any changes to the surgery opening times?**

No, you will still be able to access us Monday – Friday, 8am – 6.30pm. We shall also continue to offer the same number of hours for extended access outside of these times though we may need to review when this is offered to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of our patients.

#### **3. Will I still be able to see my usual doctor or nurse?**

Yes. All of our Doctors and Nurses will continue in their current roles. We hope that by increasing our skill mix; we will be able to free up time for your usual doctor or nurse – who might currently be doing tasks that can be shared more effectively.

#### **4. What is the anticipated timescale for the merger?**

If the merger is approved we would expect to operate as a merged practice from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018

**5. Will there be any changes to the way I book appointments?**

To provide a more efficient service we intend to upgrade our telephone system and online booking services (e.g. for booking appointments and ordering prescriptions) but we will maintain local management of local issues. We are also interested in researching the opportunities of e-consultations (email, Skype and telephone) – improving access to full-time workers, carers and patients who struggle with the limitations of Lincolnshire transport.

**6. Will it be easier or harder to get an appointment after the merger?**

Patients will have access to a wider number of clinicians and so if you are happy to see someone different you may be able to get seen sooner. We also hope that in expanding our clinical teams and expertise (we will have Advanced Nurse Practitioners, possibly Clinical Pharmacists and Paramedics) we will be able to free up routine GP appointments, enabling GP's to concentrate on more complex patients and those with long term conditions. We will always try to make an appointment for our patients with the appropriate clinician.

**7. Will there be any changes to the primary care services provided to patients?**

We will continue to provide all of the services we do now, but our goal is to enhance the services we provide. We want to work with patients and our staff to identify any areas where we could possibly provide additional service that would be of benefit to our patients. As a larger organisation; we also envisage a stronger opportunity to apply for funding and contracts enabling us to offer a wider range of services.

The skill mix within the team across the sites will expand – and clinicians will be able to refer and ask for advice internally – improving the continuity and quality of care for the patient.

**8. Will there be any changes to how I access the GP out of hours service?**

No, you will still have access to the GP out of hours service as you do now.

**9. Will I need to re-register to remain on the practice list?**

10. No, you do not need to do anything. Any transfer of patient data to a single clinical system will be done automatically and your 'paper' health record will remain at the surgery premises.

**11. Will this affect any treatment or medication I am currently receiving either at the GP practice or any hospital?**

No, none of this will be affected.

**12. I still have questions, what should I do now?**

Please join us at one of our patient engagement events where you will be presented with our proposal and have an opportunity for questions and answers:

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2017 1:00pm to 3:00pm

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2017 7:00pm to 9:00pm

**I would like to give feedback, how do I do this?**

As well as collecting feedback at the road show events, there is also a survey. You can collect one from the Practice and put it in the box once completed. Or, there is also the option to fill it in online by going to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/StuartHouseWestside> or by visiting our website