Squires Lane Medical Practice
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Patients' Charter

Squires Lane Medical Practice always aims to provide the best possible standard of healthcare for our patients.

Our responsibilities to you:

You will be treated as an individual and partner in your healthcare, given courtesy and respect regardless of your background, ethnicity, religious belief, personal situation, or the nature of your health problem.

We aim for the highest standard of medical practice at all times. The doctors and health professionals concerned undertake to maintain these standards through continuing audit of your care, peer assessment and through professional learning and development.

Your responsibilities to us:

Help us to help you:

- Please let us know if you change your name, address or telephone number.
- Please do everything you can to keep appointments. If you cannot keep your appointment inform us with as much notice as possible.
- If you are referred for a hospital outpatient appointment - please keep it or if you cannot, inform the hospital NOT the surgery as soon as possible. It is also very important to tell the hospital of your new address if you are on a waiting list for an operation.
- Please ask for home visits by the doctor only when the person is too ill to visit surgery. When booking a home visit, please contact the surgery as early as possible ideally between 8.00am and 11.00am.
- Please keep your telephone calls to the surgery brief and to the point, and avoid calling during peak morning time for non-urgent matters.
- It is your responsibility to contact the surgery to obtain test results. Blood test results are usually back after one week, other tests may take longer. To obtain your results, call the surgery between 9.30am and 1.00pm or 3.00pm and 6.00pm.
- We ask that you treat the doctors and practice staff with courtesy and respect. Abusive or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated.

- Remember, you are responsible for your own health and the health of your children. We will give you our professional help and advice. Please act upon it.

Waiting time:

We run an appointment system at this practice. You will be given a time at which the doctor or nurse hopes to be able to see you. If you have been waiting for more than 30 minutes for a booked appointment please let reception know.

Access:

You will have access to a doctor rapidly in the case of an emergency. We will arrange a home visit as appropriate for those who are too ill or infirm to be brought to the surgery. We will try to offer all patients access to a doctor within 48 hours and a nurse within 24 hours for medical problems of any kind although it will not always be possible to offer an appointment with the doctor or nurse of your choice. We have an emergency service for patients who need to talk to a doctor or be seen on the same day. You will be referred for appropriate investigations, consultant opinions and care at a hospital or clinic when both you and the doctor treating you agree it is necessary and would be of benefit. We shall always endeavour to give you access to the doctor or nurse of your choice.

Telephone:

We will try to answer the telephone promptly and ensure that there are sufficient staff members available to do this.

You may also call after 10.00am and request a routine telephone consultation with a doctor. The doctor will call you back to discuss your concerns. Telephone consultations are available throughout the day and are suitable to discuss problems where an examination is not required.

Complaints and Suggestions:

We shall give you a full and prompt reply to any complaints you make about the service we provide and try and change the way we work if this would improve care or standards to you and others. In the event of a complaint, patients have access to the Practice´s Complaints´ Procedure. This can be accessed via our Complaints Supervisor. Suggestions on how our service may be improved should put in the suggestions box in reception.

Health promotion:

The practice will offer patients advice and information on steps they can take to promote good health and avoid illness, and self-help which can be undertaken without reference to a doctor in the case of minor ailments. The nurses are happy to discuss health promotion with any interested patients.

Medical records:

Information contained in your health records is kept confidential at all times and only disclosed to others for purposes related to your health care (except when you have given permission).

However, NHS auditors have a duty to carry out routine checks of practice records from time to time, to determine if claims for payment by the practice have been made correctly. In the course of these checks, it may be necessary to verify details from patient records. Such checks are undertaken in accordance with strict guidelines agreed with the Health Authority, the Local Medical Committee and the Community Health Council.

Everyone working in the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential.
If you have any concerns or objections about your records being inspected for any purpose, please notify us. Your wishes will be respected.

Your Rights to Information

- You are entitled to request information about Squires Lane Medical Practice under the NHS Openness Code 1995.
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000 recognises that members of the public have the right to know how public services are organised and run, how much they cost and how the decisions are made.
- From 1st June 2005 the Practice has been obliged to respond to requests about information that it holds, and is recorded in any format and it will create a right of access to that information. These rights are subject to some exemptions which have to be taken into consideration before deciding what information it can release.
- Under the Data Protection Act 1998, you are also normally entitled to access your clinical records or any other personal information held about you. For this, please contact the reception staff.

How your medical records are used to help you

Your records are important to help ensure that you receive the best possible care from us.

Your records are used in the following ways to guide and administer the care you receive:

- to ensure that your doctor or nurse has accurate and up to date information to assess your health and decide what care you need when you visit in the future
- to ensure that full information is available should you see another doctor, change doctors, or be referred to a specialist or another part of the NHS
- to ensure that there is a good basis for looking back and checking on the type and quality of care you have received
- to ensure that your concerns can be properly investigated if you need to complain.

Whilst always preserving your confidentiality, your records can also help us to help you by:

- assisting with the teaching and training of health care professionals (but you can choose whether or not to be involved personally)
- assisting with health research. (If you need to be personally involved with the research, you will be contacted to see if you are willing to participate. You will not be identified without your agreement).

If you do not want certain information recorded on your records, please talk to your doctor.

Keeping your records confidential

Your doctors, their staff and everyone else working for the NHS have a legal duty to maintain the highest level of confidentiality about patient information.

In some instances, you may be receiving care from other people as well as the NHS. We may need to share some information about you with them, so that we can all work together for your benefit. Anyone who receives confidential information about you from us is also under a legal duty of confidence. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, for example, when the health or safety of others is at risk, we will not disclose your information to third parties without your permission.

We will only give your relatives, friends and carers information if you want us to. We will always ask you to sign a consent form giving permission for them to have information.

In certain circumstances we are required by law to report information to the appropriate authorities. This information is only provided after formal authority has been given by a qualified health professional. For example:

- notification of new births
- where we encounter infectious diseases which may endanger the safety of others (e.g. meningitis or measles, but not HIV/AIDS)
- where a formal court order has been issued

However, our guiding principle is that we are holding your records in strict confidence.

How you can arrange to see your own records

Everyone has the right to see the information that is kept in their medical records. If you want to see them, you should make a request at reception. We are normally obliged to let you see the information and also to explain any part of the record which you do not understand.

You are also entitled to receive a copy of the information you have seen. Please note that a charge of £0.35 per copy will be made for the administration, copying and time involved. The maximum charge is £50.

Should your doctor decide that seeing your records might put your health at risk, you may only be shown part of them.

Copies of letters about you

Please ask if you wish to have a copy of a letter written about you, by your GP, to another clinician (e.g. referral letter).