

University of Reading Medical Practice

Patient Newsletter October 2015

Over the summer months, there have been discussions between the GP partners of the University, Whitley Villa and South Reading practices. These discussions have come about due to the increasing demands on general practice, the difficulties in recruiting GPs and the local Clinical Commissioning Group's strategy to encourage practices to work together to provide services for their patients.

The partners have concluded that we will be in a stronger, more resilient position should we combine forces. This in turn will enable us to be more effective which will allow us to continue to:

- maintain high quality care,
- increase services and choice for our patients,
- secure the future of the practices in an otherwise challenging environment.

The partners therefore see this as an extremely exciting opportunity.

On Wednesday 9th September 2015, the Joint Primary Care Commissioning meeting approved the application from the **University, Whitley Villa and South Reading practices to merge.**

We propose to merge the University and Whitley Villa practices in April 2016 (phase one of the merger), followed by the South Reading practice in September 16 (phase two of the merger). This will give a total list size of around 30,000 patients.

For those patients in South Reading and Shinfield Surgery and Whitley Villa Surgery, it will bring the security of being a part of a larger practice. The University Medical Practice has been awarded "Outstanding" by the CQC.

For patients at the University Medical Practice, the merger provides greater resilience against future NHS changes, particularly in light of proposed reduced NHS funding for practices with a large number of students.

As a patient of one of either the University Medical Practice, Whitley Villa Surgery or South Reading Surgery you will know that quality healthcare is our priority, and we look forward to continuing this into the future

Frequently asked questions

- **Will I still be able to see my own GP?**
Yes -your usual GP will continue to work at their usual site.
- **Will there be any staff changes?**
No –there are no anticipated staff changes in the near future.
- **Will there be any changes to the surgeries opening hours?**
No-the practices will remain open for core opening of 8am till 630pm, Monday to Friday.
However the timings for extended hours (early morning, evenings and Saturday mornings) are likely to change so patients will be able to access a wider range of extended hours appointments which are likely to be at the largest site, which is the University Health Centre.
- **Will the system for making appointments change?**
No - You will still be able to make appointments in the same way as now, in advance on the same day and on-line.
In addition to this, there will be more choice for patients as there will be a wider range of appointment times and choice of sites.
- **Will you be cutting any services?**
No - existing services will remain the same, however patients will benefit from being able to access extra services at the University Practice such as minor surgery.

If you have further questions relating to this information you can either post your comments on our practice website below or via the box in Reception. We will respond to such queries via both regular updates on the web site and patient newsletters (available in the waiting rooms).

<http://www.readinguniversitymedicalpractice.nhs.uk/welcome,44375.htm>