

Rydal Group Practice
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Issue 9

Rydal Group

Patient Participation Group (PPG) Newsletter



Patient Group



Rydal Group Practice

Doctors at Rydal

Following Dr Richard Price's retirement, Rydal partners have agreed that, given the way the practice is now run, there is no need for a senior partner. Recruiting a permanent replacement for Dr Price is proving difficult. It seems many qualified doctors prefer to act as locums rather than commit themselves to a salaried post with a view to becoming a partner. Despite this, the practice is actively looking for a replacement.

Patients are still required to have a named GP, although today, in practice, this has less significance than it did. Dr Price's patients have been reallocated but, because of teething problems with the new computer system, it is possible that some patients have not been informed. If you were a patient of Dr Price and need to know your new named GP, please enquire with reception.

New Rydal Patient Participation Group Members

The current group feel that it would be very good to recruit some new blood! If you feel you can offer a perspective, are interested in how the practice and its patients relate to each other, how the health service works at GP level and how, as patients, we can support each other to keep as healthy as possible and would like to join the group, please contact us by giving your name to the receptionist or email us at: rydalppg@gmail.com

Computer Systems

Those patients who use the internet to communicate with the practice will be aware of significant changes that have occurred during the spring. Rydal was required to change its clinical information system and we now use the new Patient Access programme, rather than SystemOnline, to contact the surgery. In the very near future the practice will be able to work collaboratively with other practices, hospitals etc., so that if health needs arise out of hours and / or in different locations, patients' GP records can be accessed. This has already started with physiotherapist working in South Woodford connecting directly with Rydal. Most of the changes are "behind the scenes" – they are the detailed information that the doctors and support staff deal with and see on their screens. We see a reduced version of this information on our computers through the new Patient Access system.

Contact the PPG:

The PPG is your contact with the running of your Practice. We cannot deal with personal clinical matters which must be dealt with through the existing system, but please let us know if you have any comments, suggestions or general complaints about the running of the Practice.

Email us: RydalPPG@gmail.com or write to us via our Mailbox in Reception

Computer Systems (continued)

Just as with the previous system, patients need a username and password. These are issued by Rydal reception staff. Although there were some oddities with the old system (for example having to go to “questionnaires” to send a message for a call back), the PPG has noticed that there are also some oddities with the new system. The most striking is that, in order to request a call back when you have a health worry, you have to use “Messages”, even though Patient Access expressly says this facility is for non-urgent and non-clinical use. In addition, if you click ‘Book New Appointment’, you are told that the practice does not offer this service. To clarify this, Rydal has inserted a note on a blue background at the top of the Patient Access home page directing you to use “Messages” to seek a call back. If you do use the messaging facility to request a call back, it works well and we encourage patients to use it. Ordering a repeat prescription is straightforward and it also works well. Good too is the presentation of test results. It gives you a very full history with clear indications as to whether a particular result is normal or not.

Another frustration for some of us, at the time of writing, is that the facility to book an appointment on-line with a nurse, that was available before, is not available on Patient Access. A further feature of Patient Access, which may or may not be welcome, is that you are sent health advice emails but you can ‘unsubscribe’ from the service.

The PPG is seeking to ensure that Rydal’s own website is updated to help patients use Patient Access effectively.

Sometimes Rydal PPG discusses why we make so much of using the internet when you can just phone up. Our policy, if that is the right word, is to encourage as many patients as possible to use internet access, as the practice wants to relieve pressure on the telephone system and the reception staff taking the calls so that time waiting for a reply is reduced as far as possible.

Health and Wellbeing Space

Those patients who have come to the surgery may have noticed that the hitherto empty front space opposite reception has been populated by an array of notices and leaflet holders. Because fewer patients need to attend the surgery, less seating is required and hence the space became redundant. The practice offered the space to the PPG to make use of as it saw fit. We felt that our role was to help patients help themselves to enjoy as much health and wellbeing as possible. We have collected together notices and leaflets about where patients can receive support to promote their health or cope with health conditions that make life tough.

In addition, although clinical information is primarily for doctors and nurses to recommend, for many conditions we have also assembled information about diseases and conditions so that patients can educate themselves about their cases, with, for example, diabetes, cancer and arthritis.

We have described this very much as “work in progress”. We know that leaflets are taken so that it is being of some use but we would like to make it much more useful.

It would therefore be really helpful if you could send us your comments on the use that we are making of this space. Is the information available there helpful? Do you have particular experience of support service that should be promoted? Are there gaps in the information that is available? Please leave your written comments with reception or email us at: rydalppg@gmail.com
