



GPS Healthcare

General Practice Solihull

Statement from Chief Executive Officer Tom O'Sullivan updating patients and stakeholders.

16th Nov 2020

Dear Patients and Colleagues,

I last wrote to you in late September to highlight the pressures that we were facing, to explain our response, and thank our team of 140 clinical and nonclinical colleagues that dedicate their efforts to providing primary care for our registered patients.

Since then we have had to come to terms with a second national lockdown, and we have seen Covid 19 rates climb to record levels in Solihull. We have also had positive news as we make hugely important progress with the vital flu vaccination programme, and receive encouraging news about a Covid 19 vaccine sooner than many thought might be possible.

So what does this mean for our patients? Well, first, we remain open and continue to manage routine primary care, as well as respond to Covid 19 and deliver record levels of flu vaccination. This is, and remains, a stretch. The way we are managing to achieve this is twofold. We have increased our capacity to record levels - we have nearly twice the national average of GPs to patients - and we continue to recruit additional clinical roles. We have also worked hard to improve the clinical prioritisation of access, so those with the greatest need get seen as quickly as possible, typically on the same day. To support this, we have developed and improved our use of technology, we have been using text based and video-based services for some time and are now piloting online 'virtual' consultations. We are constantly learning and refining our ways of working as we gain experience.

We have also grown physical capacity by teaming up with other local providers. This has enabled us to make use of spare capacity at Blossomfield Road Surgery to create a safe environment for patients with coronavirus symptoms to be seen if they need a face to face appointment. This allows us to continue routine face to face activity at all six of our practice sites. We are also now at an advanced stage of developing plans for the launch of a new Coronavirus vaccination service, which will be delivered for multiple sites across Solihull.

Unfortunately, and despite all these positive developments, we have suffered significant abuse. Particularly online, so called 'trolling'. This is never acceptable, and we have taken action against those that abuse our workforce. We are all in this together, and we are doing everything we can. We are grateful to our patients for their patience and understanding, I continue to hope that we will get through this by working effectively together.

Yours Faithfully,

Tom