

Charterhouse Surgery in Orpington

NHS Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group can confirm that a new team has taken over providing medical care at the Charterhouse Surgery in Orpington.

The surgery is not closing.

This change in provider is as a result of a recent Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection which rated the practice as inadequate. The new provider, McLaren Perry Ltd, took over on Monday 12 February 2018. The new team are experienced and will provide high quality care to registered patients. They will also ensure that the improvements required by the CQC are put in place.

A lot of arrangements have had to be made within a short timescale which has caused some initial disruption to patients. This is already improving and the practice is operating as usual. A number of improvements are also being put in place. Patients should continue to make appointments and use the range of services available at the practice. Letters are being sent to all registered patients about these changes.

A change like this can obviously cause concern for patients so we have provided more information below.

Q: Has Charterhouse practice shut?

A: No the practice has not shut.

Q: Have the two lead GPs at the practice had their registrations removed?

A: Yes, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has withdrawn registration from the two lead GPs at the practice with effect from 11 February 2018. This means they can no longer run the practice. This is in relation to the business of the practice, not the clinical practice of the two lead GPs.

Q: What is the difference?

A: Lead GPs in a practice have two functions:

1. To work as clinicians in the practice
2. To run the 'business' of the practice, as co-owners (in some cases, as leaseholders) of the premises, ensuring there are good processes in place to deliver safe and good quality care

In the case of Charterhouse practice, the CQC has indicated that the GPs can no longer run the business, as the systems and processes in the practice were not sufficient to ensure good quality care for patients. No comment or criticism has been made on the clinical practice of the two lead GPs.

Q: Who is the new caretaker organisation that is taking over the practice?

A: McClaren Perry Ltd. They are experienced at delivering high quality medical care for patients.

Q: When did they take over?

A: Monday 12 February 2018.

Q: Why has there been a disruption in the practice if a caretaker organisation is running it?

A: The CCG felt that it was best that the existing premises were used to continue providing services from. There have been some challenges in the transfer of use of the premises to the new caretaker provider, and although a team of doctors and nurses were available first thing on Monday, they had to use an alternative site for the morning. The problems are now being resolved and staff are working on the Charterhouse premises.

Q: Do you expect there to be further disruption?

A: We anticipate that over the next two weeks, services will settle down and indeed, begin to improve.

Q: How can I get an appointment?

A: This can be done as normal by contacting the surgery on 01689 820159. The new team will be offering more appointments to patients.

Q: Will I be able to get a home visit?

A: A small number of patients, including those who are bed bound, require general practitioners to visit them at home. These services will continue to be available to those patients who need them.

Q: What improvements can we expect to see?

A: A number of improvements are being put in place. This includes:

- Longer opening times, from 8am until 6.30pm on Monday to Friday, including being open at lunchtime
- Increased clinical capacity by an additional 16 hours of GP time per week compared with previous doctor time
- Increased 'enhanced' services (in addition to core GP services) to improve end of life and complex patient care; improve patient satisfaction; improve local uptake of screening and immunisations; improve post-operative wound care; and improve practice resilience.
- A swift and robust action plan to address the persistent concerns identified by the Care Quality Commission within the next three months.

Q: The previous GPs know me and the new GPs will not

A: Good quality care and continuity of care is important for patients. Sometimes this is provided by having the same GP looking after patients, but continuity can also be provided by a GP having access to a patient's notes.

Already, we have seen an increase in the number of doctors that will be available by the end of the first week, including a GP who has some expertise in mental health problems. A very skilled type of nurse – an advanced nurse practitioner – will also be joining the practice soon. These health professionals will help to provide good quality services and deliver continuity of care.

Q: Why did this happen?

A: This situation has arisen because the Care Quality Commission (CQC) made a number of visits to Charterhouse practice and found them to not be up to the standard expected in a number of areas. The CQC felt that they could not continue with the registration of the two lead GPs. It is regrettable that this has happened and the CCG recognises how difficult a time this is for patients, as well as all members of staff.

Staff in the CCG have put in a lot of time and placed additional resources in the practice to help them to improve. This includes paying for support from the Royal College of General Practitioners, a pharmacist in the practice and additional practice manager support. This is in addition to funding staff development sessions.

Q: Have staff been sacked?

A: Apart from the two lead GPs any permanent staff have the right to be transferred to the new provider if they wish to continue to work at the practice. At the point of handover, we are aware that four members of the original Charterhouse team will continue to work in the practice

More staff are being recruited into the practice. One of the existing GPs in the practice, Dr Kamara, will be increasing her days to become full time (from 2 days per week), and two more doctors will be starting, one on 26th Feb and one on 5th March.

Q: How are you informing patients about these changes?

A: A letter is going out to every registered patient explaining the changes.

Q: I want to register elsewhere but other practices have turned me away

A: None of the surrounding practices are closed to new patients and should be able to register new patients. However, it might be that some of the neighbouring practices feel that things will settle down shortly with

Charterhouse and would want to encourage patients to remain with the practice.

Neighbouring practices are also able to offer urgent treatment in cases of need if Charterhouse is not functioning normally. This is what happened on Monday 12 February. This should not be the case any longer and all patients should be able to use Charterhouse practice as usual now. Patients still wanting to register elsewhere are entitled to do so. If there is difficulty in registering, please contact the CCG on 01689 866544

Q: What is the Care Quality Commission?

A: The Care Quality Commission is a national public body set up to regulate and inspect health and social care services in England. You can read the Charterhouse Surgery inspection report on their website [here](#).