

Merger of Woolston Lodge and Chartwell Green Surgeries: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The two practices would like to thank all their patients who took the time to complete our survey regarding the merger. The merger is due to take place on 1st October 2023. There were some wonderful comments about both practices' teams.

We received over 2,200 responses to the survey! We have summarised and commented for each of the questions and/or issues raised by our patients.

1. Why are you forming a partnership?

Patients at the Chartwell Green practice may be aware Dr Iles is the only GP partner there. This puts Chartwell Green in a vulnerable position if Dr Iles becomes unavailable for an extended period for any reason. Going into partnership with Woolston Lodge provides sustainability as well as additional support for the surgery team members and patients alike.

As we said in our original communication about the merger, Chartwell Green and Woolston Lodge have been working together for a number of years. Some patients may have already benefited from the services we share, for example Mandy, (Chartwell Green's Nursing Assistant) provides spirometry clinics to Woolston patients, Jo our Social Prescriber and Maria or Shalini our Pharmacists (to name a few), provide their services across both sites.

As a partnership we will be able to improve access and provide flexibility for patients to access specialist health and care services. We will continually develop and adapt the services we provide to meet our patients' needs.

Forming a partnership will create more opportunities for patients to book urgent care appointments, long-term condition reviews and provide more opportunities for recruitment, staff training and development and research.

2. Chartwell and Woolston are far away from each other. I don't want to be forced to travel elsewhere for appointments when public transport isn't very good!

Just as you can now, you will still be able to be seen at your local surgery once the surgeries are joined. When our systems are merged, we will be able to offer you a wider choice of appointments across both our sites to see our team. We will not force any of our patients or community members to travel to an alternative site.

3. What are the benefits for patients? Will the practice still offer the same services?

We feel these questions go hand in hand. We will continue to provide all the services currently offered across the two surgeries. Due to the partnership some patients will be able to access local services that they have not been able to before, for example:

- FeNO and spirometry (*respiratory*) diagnostic testing
- Long Acting Reversible Contraception – LARC
- Community groups
- Pharmacy Technicians
- Specialist nurses – Respiratory, Diabetes, Tissue Viability (*skin and soft tissue wounds*)
- Minor Surgery clinics – Joint Injections and Invasive procedures including incisions and excisions (where clinically appropriate)
- The Welfare Team, including: Mental Health Nurses, Social Prescriber, Patient Advise and Liaison Supporter and Health and Wellbeing coaches. Teens also have access to a Teen text-in.

4. Will the merger mean one of the surgeries will shut?

No, due to the distance between the surgeries and the fact that the partnership will require at least the same amount of accommodation, both Woolston Lodge and Chartwell Green will remain open.

5. Will I still be able to see the GP or Nurse I am used to?

Yes – we plan to continue all current services.

6. Will the two surgeries keep separate telephone numbers?

Yes – for the time being at least, although the management team will be looking to integrate all systems across the two surgeries where possible.

7. Do you intend to make any changes in the way that patients contact and otherwise interact with the two surgeries?

We know that there isn't a 'one size fits all' when it comes to contacting the surgeries. We want it to be as easy and as safe as possible for you to get in touch. We currently have several ways of contacting the surgeries.

- Face to face
- Telephone
- eConsult
- Online form
- NHS App
- Email
- Teen Text (*currently only at Chartwell*)

We will continuously monitor our access routes and update these as necessary.

8. What do you see as the longer-term vision for the delivery of services by the new partnership?

Following our long working relationship, both Partnerships felt it was the right time to merge organisations. Moving forward, we feel we can provide a wider range of high-quality services for our patient population as one organisation.

9. Do I have to stay with the merged practice?

We do not wish to lose any of our patients, but any who do not feel comfortable transferring to the new larger practice may choose to register at another practice. The link below will show which local practices that are taking on patients.

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp>