

Our Primary Care Network

There's a change ahead for the primary care network (PCN) which our GP practice is a member of.

From April 1, 2022, it will become smaller in both geography and size.

There will be no impact on you, as our patients – but we thought you might find the brief Question and Answer factsheet below helpful if you wanted to know more.

1) What is happening?

The existing East Hampshire Primary Care Network (EHPCN) which presently serves around 81,000 patients from its nine member practices will become smaller from April 1.

2) Why is this happening?

Two of the practices – Swan Medical Group and Liphook and Liss Surgery – are formally merging and are also, as a result, setting up their own PCN, to be called Swan Medical PCN.

3) What does this involve?

The setting up of the new Swan Medical PCN means there will be seven remaining GP practices in the East Hampshire PCN, which will continue as before. These seven practices are Badgerswood and Forest Surgery (Bordon and Headley); Pinehill Surgery (Bordon); The Grange Surgery (Petersfield); Riverside Partnership (Liss); Clanfield Practice, Rowlands Castle Surgery and Horndean Surgery. It means that EHPCN will have around 49,000 patients and Swan Medical Group PCN some 32,000 patients.

4) What is a primary care network?

PCNs build on existing primary care services and enable greater provision of proactive, personalised, co-ordinated and more integrated health and social care for people close to home. They help make the change from reactively providing appointments to proactively caring for the people and communities they serve. Each PCN is based on GP registered patient lists, generally serving communities of between 30,000 to 50,000 people. They are small enough to provide the personal care valued by both people and GPs, but large enough to have impact and economies of scale through better collaboration between GP practices and others in the local health and social care system.

5) Why are PCNs important?

Since the NHS was created in 1948, the population has increased considerably and people are living longer. Many people are living with long-term conditions such as diabetes and heart disease or suffer with mental health issues and may need to access their local health services more often. To meet these needs, GP practices have since 2019 been working together with community, mental health, social care, pharmacy, hospital and voluntary services in their local areas in groups of practices as primary care networks.

6) How does this change to the PCN affect us, as patients?

It won't. In a joint statement, Dr Joanna Hobbs and Dr Richard Kershaw, who will be the clinical directors of East Hampshire and Swan Medical PCNs respectively, said: "We would

like to re-assure all our patients that the two PCNs will work closely together for the mutual benefit of all our patients – and there will be no let-up in our existing agenda and priorities to further improve the health and care of the populations that we are proud to serve.”

7) Does it mean I will see a different doctor or nurse?

No. Please do not worry about this. The change in the composition of the PCN does not affect the way your own GP practice operates on a day-to-day basis. The benefits that individual GP practices gain from being in a PCN – in terms of being able to draw on each other’s expertise and a multi-disciplinary team of various other healthcare professionals who can help look after your health needs - will continue as before. You may see a different member of the extended primary care team as some staff that were employed to work for East Hampshire PCN are staying with them – and others are moving to the new PCN. But the PCNs will obviously be recruiting more staff to fill any gaps.

We hope you have found this helpful.