

# Dr K K Chan & Partners and Elmfield Surgery Practice Merger

## Summary of patient opinions & feedback



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## 1. Background

Dr K K Chan took over Elmfield Surgery when the previous GP, Dr Sharma, retired last April 2017. A practice merger has been proposed to enable us to run both practice more effectively and efficiently.

Throughout March 2018 we have been speaking to patients about a proposal to merge Elmfield Surgery and Dr K K Chan on Church Street. The aim was to understand any initial patient concerns or benefits.

## 2. How we gathered the feedback and opinions from patients

<p><b>Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Leaflet</li> <li>• Survey (paper and online)</li> <li>• Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)</li> <li>• Poster</li> </ul>	<p><b>Patient Participation Group (PPG):</b></p> <p>Combined PPG meeting of patients from both practices on 15<sup>th</sup> May.</p>
<p><b>How can people have their say?:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Leaflets and surveys given out by reception</li> <li>• Information leaflets and link to online survey on the website</li> <li>• Text out to patients with link to information on website or to come and get it from the practice</li> <li>• Practice poster and TV screen advertising the survey</li> </ul>	<p><b>Drop in Sessions:</b></p> <p>Practice Mangers and officers from NHS Wigan Borough Clinical Commissioning Group available in the practices on the following;</p> <p>Elmfield Surgery: Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 10am-12noon, 2pm-4pm</p> <p>Church Street Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May, 10am-12noon, 2pm-4pm, Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> May, 6pm-7pm</p>

## 3. The number of contacts we had

Patients from Elmfield Surgery	15 completed surveys 34 people spoken to
Patients from Dr K K Chan	7 completed surveys 41 people spoken to

We also held a combined Patient Participation Group (PPG) meeting with 13 people in attendance from across Elmfield Surgery and Dr K K Chan.

Elmfield Surgery has 1776 of registered patients and Dr K K Chan has 4288 registered patients. We recognise the number of people we got comments from during this initial phase of engagement was low. This engagement was carried out over separate days in each surgery and at different times., in an effort to engage as many patients as possible. We will keep the noticed up and will be happy to speak to any patients who want to discuss this or give feedback.

#### **4. What people said – a summary**

##### **a. Question - Have patients registered at Elmfield Surgery noticed a difference since Dr K K Chan took over the practice in April 2017**

All the responses to this question came from patients registered with Elmfield Surgery. The overall sentiment was positive, although some patients had some concerns about changes to the practice.

The positive comments related to:

- General improvements since Dr K K Chan took over; feeling happier, better atmosphere and communication
- The benefit of now having a Practice Nurse available at Elmfield Surgery (one patient mentioned the benefit of being able to get a smear test)
- Several compliments for the receptionists (caring, courteous, helpful)
- An improvement in clinical care and having more doctors
- More services on offer now at Elmfield Surgery
- Use of technology such as text message reminders and Patient Online (to book appointments, order repeat scripts and see summary record)

There were some negative comments which mainly related to:

- It being harder to get an appointment at Elmfield Surgery now and the practice being busier
- That since Dr Sharma retired they had seen different doctors (and sometimes Locums)
- That patients are no longer able to order repeat prescriptions over the telephone which isn't as convenient

##### **b. Question – Any concerns about the proposed merger of Dr K K Chan and Elmfield Surgery**

The majority of patients who commented from both practices did not have any concerns about the proposed merger.

Where patients at Elmfield Surgery did have concerns these mainly related to:

- Making sure they can still attend the preferred surgery (Elmfield Surgery or Dr K K Chan at Church Street)
- Concerns about it increasing the time to get an appointment
- Concerns about it being harder to get through on the telephone
- Some people would like to be able to see the same doctor
- Wanting to make sure that children would still get quick access to appointments
- Concern that the practice would get inundated from patients at other practices who want to join

Where patients at Dr K K Chan had concerns these mainly related to:

- Concern about it increasing the time to get an appointment
- Making sure they can still attend the preferred surgery (Elmfield Surgery or Dr K K Chan at Church Street)

**c. Question – any potential benefits of the proposed merger of Dr K K Chan and Elmfield Surgery**

Patients from Elmfield Surgery saw the potential benefits of a merger as being:

- Being able to access more service, such as minor surgery
- Getting improved access and choice, such as the evening and early morning appointments (particularly for someone who works)
- Being able to attend either site. If people live closer to Church Street it would be easier for them to get there
- Generally think it would be a good idea
- The opportunity to offer more staff training and develop more services in the future

Patients from Dr K K Chan on Church Street saw the potential benefits as being:

- Being able to attend either site. If people live closer to Elmfield Surgery it would be easier for them to get there
- Less waiting time to see a doctor – several people mentioned Dr Chan in particular
- More choice
- Generally think it is a good idea and the way forward
- Good to offer more services and appointments
- Elmfield Surgery is in a newer building with more space
- Good to have access to two practice nurses

**d. Question – any other comments**

Some of the things people said:

- That Dr K K Chan is fantastic and they would like to be able to see him more
- Some issues using Patient Online
- Some people did not know Dr K K Chan had another practice
- Improvements since Dr Sharma retired and Dr K K Chan took over and long may improvements continue
- Don't know what Community Link Workers are
- Cannot understand the new appointment system and having to ring at 8am for an appointment
- Positive comments from staff; GPs, receptionists and practice nurse
- Would prefer to be able to ring for repeat prescriptions
- Would it be possible to do an open surgery
- It would be helpful for the online booking system to show the name of the GP
- Would like 15 minute appointments
- One person wanted more information to be able to form an opinion
- Could the practice provide a mental health service in the future

**5. Patient Participation Group**

The feedback from the PPG meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2018 has been incorporated into the summary above. We do plan to arrange a further PPG meeting and 6 people who responded to the survey indicated they would be interested in joining us in the future.

## 6. Practice Response to what patients said

We would like to thank all the patients who took the time to give us feedback. We have reviewed all the comments and have put the following response together to demonstrate how we can take things forward.

You Said	Our Response
Lots of positive comments for staff and the way services have improved at Elmfield Surgery since Dr K K Chan took over in April 2017	Since taking over Elmfield Surgery in April 2017 the entire team has worked really hard to improve the services on offer to patients. It is really heartening to get positive feedback, bar a few niggling concerns. We will make sure that the positive comments get shared with the practice team and individuals where they were named.
It is harder to get an appointment at Elmfield Surgery since Dr K K Chan took over in April 2017 & concern about system of having to ring up at 8am	The reason that patient perceive it is harder to get an appointment at Elmfield is due the fact that there has been far greater demand for appointments. Dr Sharma used to see 6 patients per session; we are currently, across an ANP and a Doctor, offering 30 appointments per session. We also have employed a practice nurse and healthcare assistant which were unavailable to patients of Dr Sharma. We try to balance the need for same day appointments and pre bookable appointments which we constantly keep under review.
When Dr K K Chan took over Elmfield Surgery some patients saw different doctors and some Locums	We recognise that at the beginning we did have a few different doctors in the practice and we are sorry for any concern this caused. We are pleased to confirm that we now have permanent staff in place at Elmfield; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr H Hunting and Dr M Malook</li> <li>- 2 Advance Practitioners.</li> <li>- 1 Practice Nurse</li> <li>- 1 Healthcare Assistant</li> </ul>
Patients at Elmfield Surgery are no longer able to order repeat prescriptions over the telephone and this	When we took over the practice in April 2017, the process for ordering repeat prescriptions is something we changed. We only have 2 reception

is less convenient	staff to answer the telephone and due to the increase in demand we feel taking telephone calls for repeat prescriptions would be detrimental to the overall service we provide. From a safety point of view we feel it is better to receive a request in writing from the patients.
Patient want to have flexibility to attend Elmfield Surgery or Church Street	We would like to assure patients that they would have flexibility to attend either site and there are certainly no plans to close one of the sites. Patients will be able to choose which site they attend depending to availability at each site.
Patients are concerned that merging the practices would make it harder to get an appointment or harder to get through on the phone	At the moment there are no plans to change the telephone numbers and we intend to keep the existing surgery telephone numbers.
Would like Children to still get quick access to appointments	As a practice we are required to offer access to on the day appointments for children under the age of 12 years. There are no plans to change this. We are flexible to our approach to emergency appointments for any age and if they need to be seen urgently.
Concern that the practice would be inundated with new patients	Since taking over Elmfield Surgery we have had a growth in the list size. Whilst we don't anticipate a big rush of patients registering with the practice we do think we have the resources to cope and we would review any resources we need should our list size grow significantly.
What is the Community Link Worker?	<p>The practice can refer patients to see the Community Link Worker if we feel like they would benefit from some extra support or signposting to voluntary community groups.</p> <p>Sometime patients attend the practice with a problem that can't be fixed by medication or treatment. For example someone might be experiencing stress as a result of housing issues or debt, or bereavement. Social isolation is also a big problem.</p>

	The Community Link Worker has become a really important member of the team who can spend more time with patients and help to resolve the underlying problems for some of these issues.
Would it be possible to introduce an open surgery?	At present this is not something the Practice will offer but we constantly review the appointments system.
It would be helpful for the online booking system to show the name of the GP	As we have only had permanent clinicians since September 2017 we preferred the appointment system not to specify the name of the GP as the GP's worked over both sites and not on set days. We are currently reviewing our clinicians' timetables and once we have settled on a system we are happy with this could be reviewed.
Would like 15 minute GP appointments	The practice already offers 15 minute appointments.
Could the practice provide a mental health service in the future	We are aware as a Practice how this would benefit our patients and it is something we would definitely like to offer in practice. If the opportunity arises which allows to bring this service in practice we would be open to the opportunity. We can also discuss this at the next cluster meeting.

## **7. Next Steps**

- a) This report will be published on our website and made available in the practice so patients can see the feedback.
- b) We will also share and discuss the report at the next Patient Participation Group meeting.
- c) The feedback from patients will be included in our application to merge the two practices.
- d) We will keep patients up to date via notices in the practices, the website and the Patient Participation Group will continue to be involved.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further please contact the practice and we would be happy to help.