



FAQs for Patients

As you know, we have announced our plans to merge the Swan Surgery (Petersfield) and Liphook Village Surgery (Liphook) from April 2017, to form The Swan Medical Group. We strongly believe that this merger will not only provide long-term sustainability for both practices – but it will also open the doors for some further improved services which will benefit all our patients. However, we also appreciate that change can unsettle some people. So we have compiled a list of the 20 top questions which we think you might want answered – and we hope that this helps address any concerns that you might have. But of course, if you have other questions please do get in touch.

1. Will I still be able to visit my current surgery?

Yes, there are no plans to change access to your preferred surgery. You will also be able to access the other surgery, if it is more convenient or should you wish to do so.

2. Will I still be able to contact the surgery directly?

Yes, you will still be able to contact the surgery directly. A new phone system is being introduced at Swan Surgery and we await to see how best to set this up for The Swan Medical Group, but you will still be able to request to speak to your surgery should you require to do so.

3. Will I still be able to see my usual GP?

Yes, you will still be able to see your preferred GP. All staff and partners will be based at their original site but will work across both sites as appropriate so that we ensure the best practices are used across the whole new organisation. This should be very beneficial to staff and patients.

4. Can I see another doctor if I want?

Patients will be able to request appointments with any doctor. Across both sites we will have 7 male GPs and 8 female GPs on a regular basis.

5. How will the merger benefit patients?

A larger practice can offer earlier and later appointments – for example, appointments are offered at Swan Surgery from 7am - 8am and at Liphook Village Surgery from 6.30pm - 7.30pm twice a week. There are also Saturday morning appointments available every week at Swan Surgery which will be accessible for all patients.

6. Will any service currently offered be removed or stopped?

No – as a result of the merger all previous primary care services offered by the practices will either remain unaffected or will be extended.

7. Will any new services be introduced?

We strongly hope so. We are still in the early stages of investigating what services would be appropriate and helpful to our patients but are all committed to improving access to and delivering the best healthcare possible.

8. How will the merger benefit the medical staff at the practice?

Medical staff will have a wider pool of knowledge to draw upon and will have more opportunities to specialise; annual and sick leave should be better covered leading to lower stress levels of the remaining staff. Partners will be able to share the ever increasing administrative work load required of them by the Government.

9. Will administrative processes be compromised during the merging of the practices?

Merging practices may involve a change of routine for staff. However we would hope to keep inconvenience to patients to a minimum. Please bear with us over the next few months, if you find things take a little longer than usual. But please raise your concerns to the Practice Manager if you are worried about the service you receive.

10. Will staff lose their jobs?

No staff will lose their jobs as a result of this merger.

11. Will the other practice have access to my Medical Records and where will these be stored?

Both practices use the same clinical software, EMIS WEB. The merge of this data is intended to take place in April 2017 at which time your electronic medical records will be available to clinicians from both sites as appropriate for patient consultations. You may also have older, paper medical records (which are summarised into your electronic records) and these paper notes will continue to be stored at your local practice.

12. Will becoming a larger practice mean losing that friendly family feeling?

No, the Swan Medical Group wants to ensure that patients can continue to see their preferred clinician if they want to. The merging of the practices hopes to make available more services and skills across the sites. The same staff will be on hand to help you access the best possible health care, we believe therefore that it is possible to be a practice that can offer patients a broader range of services, but in a way that preserves the family practice feeling.

13. Do I need to do anything as a patient to remain on the list?

No, all patients will remain on their usual GP's list.

14. Will the phone number remain the same?

At the moment each practice retains their usual number. However, at some point in 2017, the surgery number will change to enable calls to be handled across the merged practices.

15. Will I still have on line access and get text message reminders?

Yes, both practices use the same clinical software and will continue to offer on line access through the existing provider, Patient Access. It may be that during the merger of the medical data that this system becomes unavailable for a short time. We will inform you in advance if this is the case. You will still receive text message reminders, if you have signed up for this service, for booked appointments and other health campaigns, eg. flu clinics. The text message reminder service will be available to all patients of The Swan Medical Group from April 2017, please speak to reception staff to find out more information.

16. Will there be more appointments available?

We prioritise patient access and review the availability of appointments regularly so all patients have access to the care they need. We will continue to do this to ensure appropriate access for all patients. There will be a greater range of opening hours on offer across all the sites; all registered patients will have access to these appointments.

17. Will the Nurses and Healthcare Assistants be available as often as they are now? Will they also work at the other sites?

Yes, we have no intention of reducing appointments. We plan to make available more expertise and skills across the sites for all registered patients.

18. Will I have to go to one of the other sites for particular consultations or treatments?

If we feel that one site may provide a more appropriate service – for example, Family Planning clinics held at the Swan Surgery in Petersfield - you may be asked if you are able to attend there.

19. Will the merger affect access to other services such as Community Nurses, midwives, health visitors, counsellors etc.?

No, patients under the care of community based services at home or within the practice will not be affected.

20. How will we be kept informed of the merger and changes?

Regular newsletters and information will be displayed in surgery and on our practice websites. We hope to keep you as informed as we can with the merger and any changes. We also plan to hold regular Patient Participation Group Meetings and patient surveys to get your feedback on our progress. If you are interested in joining our Patient Participation Group, please ask at Reception.