

## Beacon and Exmoor surgery merger

- In July 2020, we wrote to you, our patients, to inform you that we were considering merging two local surgeries, The Practice Beacon and Exmoor Surgery to create one larger practice. In this letter, we asked for your feedback about the proposed merger.
- Thank you to all patients who feedback to us about the proposed merger.
- Your feedback has been summarised within this document, we hope that you will find this information informative.

## Patient demographics

- 106 patients gave us feedback about the merger via the paper and online surveys during the patient engagement period. 8.49% of surveys were submitted electronically and 91.51% via the paper survey.
- 13% of patients who completed the survey were from Exmoor and 87% from The Practice Beacon.
- 40% of respondents were male, 58% female and 2% of respondents preferred not to say.
- 20% of respondents considered themselves to be disabled, 73% did not and 7% of respondents preferred not to say.
  - Of the patients who considered themselves to be disabled, 70% of them had a physical disability or mobility issue, 12% had a heart condition, 12% had a mental health condition and 6% were diabetic.
- 4% of respondents lived in NW10, 45% in W10, 35% in W11, 11% in W2, 3% in W6, 1% in W7, 1% in W8, 2% in W9 and 2% in W12.

## Beacon and Exmoor surgery merger

The breakdown of age ranges and the ethnicities of our respondents can be seen in the below tables. We feel the range of respondents are sufficient enough to have a representation of the demographics of both practices.

Ethnicities of respondents	Response Percent
Asian/British Asian: Bangladeshi	0%
Asian/British Asian: Chinese	4%
Asian/British Asian: Indian	4%
Asian/British Asian: Pakistani	1%
Black/British Black: African	2%
Black/British Black: Caribbean	5%
White: British	39%
White: Irish	9%
White: European	14%
Mixed Race: Black & White	2%
Mixed race: Asian & White	2%
Gypsy or traveller	0%
Rather not say	9%
Another race or ethnicity	9%

Age ranges	Response Percent
18 - 24	0%
25 – 34	10%
35 – 44	6%
45 - 54	19%
55 – 64	20%
65 – 74	27%
75 or older	17%
Rather not say	1%

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### About the proposed merger

- 93.14% of surveyed patients understood the reasons why The Practice Beacon & Exmoor Surgery are proposing to merge together.
- We asked patients what their views on the merger, 75 patients answered this question.
- 55% of the comments received about the merger were positive, 30% were negative and 15% were 'neutral'. Those negative response mainly surrounding location of the Exmoor surgery.
- The main themes of the negative comments were:
  - The distance between the surgeries.
  - Continuity of care.
  - Perception of smaller practices providing better/more personalised care.
- 34.04% of patients who responded to this question (30.47% of all surveyed patients) said that the merger would create challenges for them in accessing healthcare, 67.02% of patients who answered this question said it would not.

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## About the proposed merger

- 34.04% of patients who responded to this question (30.47% of all surveyed patients) said that the merger would create challenges for them in accessing healthcare, 67.02% of patients who answered this question said it would not.
- We asked those patients that told us it would create challenges for them accessing healthcare how we might solve this. Patients said:
  - Allowing for online services.
  - Increasing the numbers of staff and Doctors so that appointment waiting times aren't too long.
  - Improving The Practice Beacon to keep it open.
- We gave patients the opportunity to ask us further questions through our survey. We received 57 responses to this question, 54% of which we're "no".
- The main themes of these questions were around:
  - Access to appointments
  - Access to online services, medical records and prescriptions
  - Continuity of care
  - Pandemic response



## Beacon and Exmoor surgery merger

You concern	We will	By when
<p>Increased patients numbers will result in increased waiting times for appointments</p>	<p>The merged surgery will carefully matches our number of appointments to our list size, patient needs and demographics to ensure that we have a suitable number of appointments available to patients.</p>	<p>Already in place and will be ongoing. During October 2020 we will review this once more to ensure that the Exmoor site has enough appointments for the increased number of patients.</p>
	<p>You will be able to book a range of appointments, on the day, 24 hours, 48 hours, advance appointments up to six weeks, as well as telephone/video consultations and specific clinics for Diabetes, Respiratory and Mental Health.</p>	<p>Already in place and will be ongoing.</p>
	<p>Exmoor Surgery have recently appointed a full time Physicians Associate to increase the number of appointments that we can offer you.</p>	<p>1 October 2020</p>
	<p>Exmoor have recently recruited a salaried GP for six sessions per week to increase the number of appointments that we can offer you.</p>	<p>1 August 2020</p>

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You concern	We will	By when
<p>It will be harder to get through to the surgery on the phones with more patients</p>	<p>The practice has decided that we will commission a new telephony supplier to ensure that our telephone technology is fit for increased numbers of call.</p> <p>During the interim period until the new telephony is installed, practice team have organised a meeting with the current telephony provider to see what adaptations can be made on an interim basis, to provide additional capacity and scope to handle the increased volume of calls post-merger.</p> <p>Staff modeling has taken place to ensure a proportionate number of additional staff will be available to take calls after the merger, joining to two teams and additional recruitment has taken place in advance of the merger, for both clinical and non-clinical personnel to ensure that there are suitable numbers of team members available to assist our patients.</p>	<p>End of January 2021</p> <p>October 2020</p> <p>Already in place and will be ongoing.</p>

## Beacon and Exmoor surgery merger

You concern	We will	By when
Continuity of care	<p>You will continue to see many of the same people as you currently do, at the newly merged site. All employed team members at The Practice Beacon will be transferred to the Exmoor Surgery site.</p> <p>We will create a 'rota' to be placed on the surgery website, in addition to the information currently on the staff area of the website, highlighting when each clinicians usual working days are, should you wish to speak to a specific clinician.</p> <p>One of the GP partners at The Exmoor Surgery, Dr Brannick, has previously worked at The Practice Beacon.</p> <p>Your medical records will be safely and seamlessly transferred from The Practice Beacon to Exmoor so that all clinicians delivering your care will have access to your medical history, diagnosis, treatment plans and prescriptions.</p>	<p>1 November 2020</p> <p>1 November 2020</p> <p>1 November 2020</p>
Not being able to access to online medical records and or order your prescriptions online.	You will still be able to access your medical records and order your prescriptions online via the surgery's website.	Already in place and will be ongoing

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You concern	We will	By when
<p>That I will not be able to get my prescriptions sent to my normal pharmacy after the merger</p>	<p>The merged surgery will ensure that all patient's prescriptions are sent to their pharmacy of choice. This can be done electronically through the clinical system so patients will not need to change anything themselves, unless their preference has changed.</p> <p>We have informed local pharmacies of the proposed merger.</p>	<p>Already in place and will be ongoing</p>
<p>That increased numbers of patients in the merged surgery will make it a COVID-19 risk</p>	<p>Both surgeries have comprehensive measures in place to manage COVID-19 and have worked with other local practices and the CCG to ensure that the surgeries can continue to provide high quality care to our patients during the pandemic. This will continue for the merged practice.</p> <p>The surgery will have a Business Continuity Plan in place to deal with any disruption to services and this covers pandemic response.</p> <p>We will continue to manage the surgery's response to COVID-19 and adapting our services to local and national guidance as and when it is released.</p>	<p>Already in place and will be ongoing</p> <p>1 November 2020</p> <p>As new guidance is released</p>

We have created some patient Frequently Asked Questions that may also help you if you have any further questions about the proposed merger. This can be found [here](#) on the surgery websites.

## Beacon and Exmoor surgery merger

### Why are we proposing this merger?

- We will be able to offer you more services by utilising clinician's expertise and special interests in dermatology, mental health and women's health as well as additional services for phlebotomy and wound care.
- Exmoor Surgery is also co-located with a number of other local services such as radiology, physiotherapists and the local My Care My Way Integrated Care hub.
- It will be easier for you to get an appointment as the surgery will have a wider range of clinicians and more available appointments available to you.
- It will provide a more welcoming environment with a larger, modern building.
- We will be able to provide further training and development opportunities for our staff.
- It will help to reduce the pressures on smaller GP Practices by sharing resources, knowledge and skills as one bigger practice.

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### What happens if the merger goes ahead?

- If the merger goes ahead, it will mean that the Practice Beacon site will close. All services will be delivered from the Exmoor Surgery site (St Charles Centre for Health & Wellbeing) by an expanded practice team offering a greater range of services.
- There will be improvements, like finding it easier to get an appointment due to there being an expanded clinical team and more staff.
- Opening hours will stay the same.

## Beacon and Exmoor surgery merger

### What happens next?

- NHS North West London Clinical Commissioning Group will review the merger proposal, including your feedback and make a decision on the proposal in late September 2020. If they agree it is a good idea, then the process will begin to merge the practices.
- We will let patients know of the outcome of the proposal and what the next steps for you would be.
- We know that if the surgeries were to merge, patients registered at either practice will not have to re-register or do anything if they wish to remain registered at the practice.