

# Northgate Village Surgery

## Meeting Medical Students

### Advice for patients

Northgate Village Surgery is a training practice. We occasionally have medical students working with us to further their education to become doctors. During their time with us, they are required to sit in to observe during consultations and see patients under supervision. It is important for medical students to talk to people about their health and illnesses. This helps them understand how illnesses affect people and how they cope.

We would be grateful if you could help us in this teaching. However this is entirely voluntary.

At no time are you under any obligation to agree to this if you prefer not to. If you do not feel comfortable with this, please inform a member of staff when you book your appointment or as soon as possible on arrival.

No one will mind if you would rather not see a student or if you change your mind or want the student to leave at any time. You can also refuse to see particular students, such as those of a different sex or those you have met outside of the practice.

Of course, the care provided to you by the practice will not be affected in any way.

*If you are prepared to see a medical student, this leaflet may help answer some of the questions you may have.*

**Remember you can always say “No!” or change your mind and ask the student to leave at any time.**

#### When might I see medical students?

- Students may be sitting in during consultations with doctors or nurses at the practice to observe. The receptionist should warn you about this and will tell the doctor if you would rather not see a student. Saying “No” will not have any effect on the care you receive.
- You may be asked if the student can do the consultation whilst the doctor or nurse supervises. The student may be asked questions. If something is said that you do not understand, please ask for clarification.
- You may be asked to see a student before your appointment with the doctor or nurse, or to attend a student surgery. If you are asked to attend a student surgery a doctor will **always** be in charge and will also see you to make sure that your problems are dealt with appropriately.
- You may be asked to come in to the surgery to talk to a student about a problem which has been dealt with by the practice on an earlier occasion. You may also be asked to see students about a long standing problem to help them understand how it is effecting your life.
- You may be asked for consent for a medical student to video record your consultation. This recording will be viewed by the doctor and student. With your specific permission, it may also be taken to a teaching session at another practice where a group of four to eight students and a GP tutor will view the recording and give feedback to the student. This is a valuable learning tool for both medical students and experienced doctors.
- You may also be asked if medical students can visit you at home.

## Will medical students want to examine me?

Medical students need to learn how to examine patients sensitively. Your doctor or nurse may ask if a student can examine you during a consultation. If it is too painful or embarrassing you can of course say “No”. By declining this, the care you receive will not be affected.

If a student sees you before a doctor does, they may ask to examine you. We hope that you would be happy for them to look at your throat, ears, hands and feet.

You may be asked to undress so that a student can examine your trunk or limbs: this is entirely your decision whether you do so or not. No one will mind if you refuse or would prefer to wait for the doctor to join or even take over the consultation.

*Students should not ask to do a sensitive or embarrassing examination unless a doctor or nurse is present.*

## Can medical students do tests or treat me?

Medical students are not fully qualified doctors and cannot treat patients or carry out any procedures unsupervised. They may however carry out a simple urine test as part of an examination.

A doctor will always check on the need for, and sign, any prescriptions or requests for investigations suggested by the student after discussion with you and the student.

Students have been or are being trained to do simple procedures like taking blood. If the doctor has checked a student's ability, then if you agree, they may be allowed to carry out a procedure under supervision.

**You may say “No” at any time before or during the consultation. You can also tell us to erase the recording at any time either immediately after the consultation or weeks later. Such a request will not affect the care that you receive from the practice.**

## How will I be sure they are in fact medical students?

They will always carry photographic identification: usually a University Identity card.

If you have any concern please ask to see identification if the students are visiting you at home.

## What should I disclose to the medical students?

If you are coming to see a doctor or nurse about an illness or problem, tell the students about it; how it affects your daily life, what worries you have and what you hope to gain from the consultation.

*It is important that students learn about illness from the perspective of the patient.*

If you are seeing students by special arrangement, then they will want to know how your illness was discovered, how it has developed and how it affects you, and those around you.

They will also be interested in the investigations you may have had, what they were like, what treatment you had and any side-effects you may have experienced.

## Are my views about student behaviour useful?

**Yes!** It is always very helpful for us to receive any feedback, both positive and negative regarding any aspect of patient care.

We like to know when students have been friendly and helpful as much as we would like to know if they have seemed cold or muddled.

Please tell the doctor or receptionist your feedback whenever you feel it appropriate, or put it in writing if you prefer.

## Do medical students have access to my medical records?

Agreeing to see a medical student implies permission for students to look at your medical records. For medical students to assist you with the best level of care possible, it will help them to help you if they can access the history of your problem. Being able to see previous findings and what actions may have been put into place.

**Students are, of course, bound by the same rules of confidentiality as our doctors and nurses.**

*If you do not want students to have access to your medical records, please let us know.*

Please also be aware that even if you do not agree to be seen by a medical student, they may see the records of any patient when working with a doctor or nurse or whilst sitting in during consultations for observation. This may include looking at test results, dealing with hospital letters or reviewing medical records as part of an audit. Students will not be given unsupervised access to your medical records without your explicit permission.

## Can I ask medical students to explain things to me?

Students often have more time available to them during consultations in comparison to clinicians and may be able to explain things to you in simple language.

However, they are still learning so may not have the answers to all of your questions.

What they can do is listen to your questions and ask a doctor or nurse to intervene if they are unsure of anything, or to give you fuller more knowledgeable answers.

## What happens if a student upsets me?

It would be very unlikely for this to happen but if a medical student along with any other visitor or member of staff happens to upset you, please inform the doctor supervising or another member of staff right away.

*Be assured your concerns will be investigated and appropriate action taken.*

## Finally!

Medical students learn an enormous amount from the patients they meet so we would like to thank you for your help and contribution.

Seeing a medical student is very important in making sure that we have excellent doctors in the future who are both knowledgeable and caring.