**MERA**

**Maiden Erlegh Residents’ Association**

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Dear Mr Parting

**ACCESS TO BROOKSIDE SERVICES**

We have been picking up from our members some dissatisfaction with the services currently provided by the NHS during the COVID-19 emergency - in particular, their inability to get surgery appointments and the care they require to manage their medical conditions.

We are advised that the recorded messages they receive when telephone calls finally get through to the Brookside Surgery and entered into the queue are long and confusing. Your patients are being advised to book appointments online and some are in despair because they do not have the means to do this and just want to be able to make arrangements over the telephone. I know that it is possible to do this, but it is not clear from the message that is received by your patients.

As a residents' association, we understand the pressures that this emergency has caused for NHS staff, but there is a growing feeling that things need to get back to some sense of normality, particularly given that the number of cases in this area are relatively small at present. Our members cannot understand why it is not possible to see their GPs more quickly and on a face to face basis when required, and why they are not receiving their regular medical reviews while the virus is impacting Earley at such a low level at the present time.

As you know, we issue a magazine to our members three times a year, and I think it would be remiss of us not to say something about the increasing number of people flagging up these concerns.

We wondered if you would like to write a short article on this to explain how Brookside is trying to cope with these emergency measures, and to reassure our elderly patients that they can still book appointments over the telephone if they do not have access to a computer.

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Anything you can do to help us to communicate the position to our residents would be most helpful. Our next publication deadline for the MERA Magazine is 20 October.

Yours sincerely

**STEVE FELTHAM**

MERA Secretary

Maiden Erlegh Residents' Association

Mr J Parting

Practice Manager

Brookside Surgery

Brookside Close

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READING

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