

## **The Future of General Practice in New Milton and Barton on Sea**

The challenges facing the NHS as a whole, and GP Practices and their staff nationally are well known. We are living longer, and people are surviving previously life-threatening illnesses. This is fantastic news! This also means that more and more people need their local GP, and the services we provide.

**The Arnewood Practice, Barton Webb-Peploe Practice and New Milton Health Centre Practice intend to merge to improve patients' ability to see their usual doctor and to provide additional services in the community. The three surgeries intend to become one practice, Coastal Medical Partnership, with over 20 GPs and 34,000 patients.**

As three practices, we have been working together for some years to try and improve the service that our patients receive. After careful consideration we agree that a merged partnership gives us the very best opportunity to give you high quality care and develop services for you locally in the future. It will also attract more great medical professionals and support staff that are so vital to General Practice.

Subject to all regulatory approvals and appropriate levels of engagement with our patients, and our staff, it is anticipated that the merger process will commence in April 2019. The full merger will be complete by April 2020.

Once approved, the surgeries will become one united practice with the aim of improving access to health care, and provide additional specialist health and care services. We want the merger to provide flexibility for patients to access services at any of the three sites in the future. We will develop this in the years to come, but to start with you will notice little difference. A priority for us is for our patients to be able to see their usual GP where possible.

Merging practices will improve health and social care closer to home, create more opportunities for patients to book urgent care appointments, embed long term condition care as a cornerstone of future well-being, and provide more opportunities for greater staff training and development, including research.

We will also be best placed to work with partner agencies such as the community nurses, to support our patients in the community. It will both allow patients to continue the one to one relationship with their own doctor and to access more services.

The British Medical Association recently reported 200 practice closures across the UK last year. We are determined that this should not happen in New Milton and Barton on Sea and are convinced that this merger is the best way to protect your General Practice. We are excited about the future for health care in New Milton and Barton on Sea, along with our patients at Webb-Peploe in Lymington.

We would like to have the opportunity to hear from any of you who might have questions and we will be arranging a community event which will facilitate this. Event details will be publicised nearer the time.