

Statement regarding:	Inaccessibility of GP services at Eltham Medical Practice (telephone contact)
In response to:	Feedback from service users
Statement date:	21/1/20
Statement circulation: For action	Greenwich Clinical Commissioning Group, Eltham Health Primary Care Network, Greenwich Health
Statement circulation: For information	Greenwich Health and Wellbeing Board; Healthwatch England, CQC

Why is Healthwatch Greenwich bringing this to your attention?

We have been contacted by service users from Eltham Park Surgery (now merged with Eltham Medical Practice) experiencing complete inability to contact the surgery by telephone. Those who can do so have been forced to visit the surgery (Eltham Medical Practice) in person to make an appointment. This has caused considerable distress and a delay in accessing medical attention.

Our own investigation has revealed that patients using the Eltham Park Surgery number (020 8850 1030) never get through - as the surgery has now merged.

The old number (1030) is not automatically transferred to the Eltham Medical Practice number (5141).

There is no recorded message on the old number (1030), directing patients to the Eltham Medical Practice number (5141).

There is no information on the 'contact us' page on the Eltham Park Surgery website explaining (due to the merger) the number will no longer be answered and directing patients to the Eltham Medical Practice number.

How is this affecting patients?

- Patients who require medical attention are experiencing unnecessary delays
- Unwell, vulnerable and frail patients may be unable to visit the surgery in person to make an appointment
- Due to the difficulty of making an appointment, some patients may decide not to seek medical attention
- Due to the difficulty of making an appointment, some patients may decide to use urgent care or accident and emergency facilities instead



Next steps and questions raised

This paper will be circulated to Greenwich CCG, Eltham Health PCN and Greenwich Health for consideration and response.

On behalf of patients we would like to raise the following questions:

1. Why are calls on the Eltham Park Surgery number not automatically transferred to the Eltham Medical Practice number, and when will this be rectified?
2. Why is there no recorded message on the Eltham Park Surgery number explaining that callers must ring the Eltham Medical Practice number, and when will this be rectified?
3. Why is there no notification on the 'contact us' page on the Eltham Park Surgery explaining that patients will need to call the Eltham Medical Practice number? Are there any plans to update the information provided?
4. How have Eltham Park Surgery patients been alerted to the change in telephone number?

This statement has been prepared by:

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