



## **MERGER of Trinity Medical Centre PMS & Plumstead Health Centre PMS**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

We are delighted that Plumstead Health Centre PMS and Trinity Medical Centre PMS are planning to merge with effect from 1st April 2021.

This list of frequently asked questions is designed to provide you with all the information you may need as a patient.

### **Why are Plumstead Health Centre PMS and Trinity Medical Centre PMS proposing to merge?**

There have been many changes in recent times in the provision of Primary Care Services. The introduction of Primary Care Networks have brought local practices together to work in a more collaborative way to provide a more consistent service for the local registered patients and to have a more collective voice in the shaping of services.

Both Trinity Medical Centre PMS and Plumstead Health Centre are providing primary care services from the same site at Garland Road Clinic. The practices have linked and supported each other very closely over the years and have, in recent months, been in discussion about merging practices to provide an improved service to our patients in terms of patient access, with more sites, more clinicians available and more effective back office functions being able to take advantage of larger scale. In considering the age of the GPs at Trinity Medical Centre the merger addresses the issue of practice succession to ensure sustainability and continuity to its patients, and also allows patients improved access across the new group. Patients of Plumstead Health Centre will also benefit from these improved efficiencies and access.

The Covid-19 Pandemic has led to the need for General Practice to adapt in the way services are provided, with the introduction of video consultations and more remote style of working, whilst still providing essential face to face consultations when clinically needed. Both practices are responding to the situation and are also introducing online consultation methods and adapting processes in order to respond to the needs of our patients, in order to ensure those in need are supported whilst maintaining the safety of staff and patients.





The practices are also aware of the very real risk of clinical and admin staff potentially being temporary or permanently unavailable due to the situation and therefore destabilizing services and therefore they would like to progress the merger of the practices in order to provide the resilience to ensure the continuity and stability of services to our patients.

Therefore Plumstead Health Centre PMS Practice is planning to merge with Trinity Medical Centre PMS and will take over the management of the practice and provide primary care medical services from its current premises which are Plumstead Health Centre, Tewson Road, Plumstead SE18 1BH and Garland Road Clinic, 2 Garland Road, Plumstead SE18 2SB.

**Is the merger supported by the Primary Care Contract team at South East London CCG and the borough based board at NHS Greenwich?**

We have discussed our plans with Primary Care Contract team at South East London CCG and the borough based board at NHS Greenwich both of whom are supporting the proposed plans for our practices to merge.

**When would the merger be completed?**

Following meetings with all stakeholders the plan is that the Practices will merge with effect from 1st April 2021.

**Would I still be able to see my usual GP or Nurse?**

Yes, once the proposed merger is complete, patients will still be able to book an appointment with their preferred clinician at the location of their choice.

**Will I still be able to collect my medication from my usual pharmacy?**

There will be no change to where you collect your prescriptions or medication from. We will continue to request and suggest patients use the Electronic Prescribing service so prescriptions can be sent direct to the pharmacy of your choice.

**How will the proposed merger benefit patients?**

By merging the practices patients will benefit as it will allow us to introduce new systems, which need to be done at scale; it will also enable us to harmonise back office functions and will not only bring sustainability and resilience to the practices. The new systems, more sites will also improve access whilst maintaining continuity of care in the locations you know with the people you know.





### **What will change?**

The staff at both practices both Clinical and admin will remain the same; however there will be some crossover to ensure consistency and continuity across the practices, so you will still be able to see and speak with people you know.

The phone number of Trinity Medical Centre PMS will change so that the merged practices have the same cloud based system enabling patients to have the benefit of more phone access across all sites. This will be done in a timely way to allow the transition, however for a period of time patients would still be able to use the current number. Patients will be notified of this change in due course to allow them to update their details.

### **Would I have to go to another site for my consultations?**

The benefit of the proposed merger is that patients will still be able to access care at their preferred surgery.

### **Would there be improved access to appointments?**

We will continue to review the availability of appointments regularly to ensure patients have access to the care they need. We will also introduce an increase in telephone video and online consultations.

### **Would the proposed merger affect access to other services such as community nurses, midwives or health visitors?**

No, patients receiving care from community based services either at home or in practice will not be affected.

### **What would happen to my medical record?**

Both practices will shortly be using the same clinical system and both practices have access to all their patients' medical records. The service provider will be notified and plans will be put in place to merge into one clinical system and all records will be available to all the clinicians across the merged practices.

### **How are you planning to keep patients informed of the progress of the merger?**

Both practices are working very closely with the respective Patient Participation Groups on communications. Updates will be available in the form of postings on the websites, posters in the waiting room, and patient participation group meetings.





**Would I have to stay with the merged practice?**

No, if you do not wish to remain with the proposed merged practice you are free at any time to register with another GP practice, provided you live within their practice boundary. The NHS website provides information on other local practices [www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp)

**Phone lines are already busy, won't this get worse?**

The introduction of the cloud based telephony system across all sites will enable us to utilise staff more efficiently and so increase the number of reception staff available at busy times.

**What will be the name of the merged Practice?**

To be determined.

