

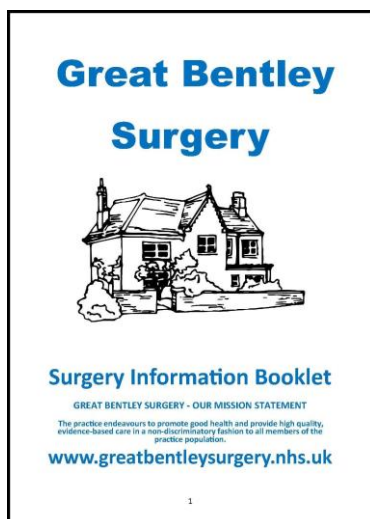


*Here's to a happy and healthy new year everyone!*

With the ever increasing demand that we experience we struggle more and more to provide services from the same pot of money. This can often be more noticeable in the way we try to cope with the volume of incoming telephone calls. Since having the facility to measure our calls, we have noticed just how many times patients hear an engaged tone when they call, particularly during busy times. This can lead to frustration having to keep redialling in order to get through to speak to a receptionist. We take around 5,500 incoming calls each month, but in November we saw **19,300** incoming calls receiving an engaged tone. We hear many, many comments about how hard it is to get through to us. After looking into the costs, we ran a survey to find out if patients would prefer us to have a telephone queuing system. This would enable patients to choose to hold and wait knowing where they are in a queue, or to call back later when it may be less busy. The other benefit is that patients can do other things whilst being on hold knowing that their call will be answered fairly and in turn rather than having to constantly redial and hope for the best. The survey was available online and on paper and we informed as many patients as possible by sending emails, texts and distributing forms in the waiting room. We had a fantastic response with 479 votes. 32% of patients wanted to keep the current system, but an overwhelming 68% wanted to change to a call queuing system. We placed the order on 1<sup>st</sup> December so hopefully the new system will be in place by the time you read this, if not soon after. We hope this will provide a much better patient experience when calling the surgery as a result.

**The first meeting of the Patient Participation Group for 2017 will take place at 6.30pm on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at the Great Bentley Village Hall.**

**Richard P Miller – Practice Manager**



## **New practice information leaflet!**

We've developed a brand new patient information leaflet and had hundreds of copies professionally printed. You can obtain a copy, which is handy to keep at home, from dispensers placed all around the surgery, or you can ask for one at reception. If you don't visit often, then you could download a copy to print yourself from our website using the shortened link below:

<http://bit.ly/2fZnQIv>

The new leaflet covers a wide variety of topics including what's safe to self-care for at home which also helps us manage our limited capacity, a detailed explanation of the appointment booking system, how to get the most out of your appointment and our missed appointment policy. It also covers where you can get help when we are closed, lots of information about how to order prescriptions along with details of all the online services we offer which will make your life easier as well as significantly helping the surgery be more efficient. You'll find details of our zero tolerance policy setting out standards of behaviour that we expect from patients, an explanation of how to complain when you have an unresolved issue, and finally some interesting facts about Great Bentley Surgery thrown in for good measure.