

## **Your usual GP at Laurel Bank Surgery**

At Laurel Bank Surgery, every patient is registered with a usual GP. This is the doctor who takes overall responsibility for your care and who will normally be your first point of contact for routine health needs.

## **Why Having a Usual GP Matters**

Seeing the same GP over time means they get to know you, your medical history and what matters to you. This continuity of care often makes consultations more meaningful and sometimes quicker, because you do not have to repeat your story each time. It also helps your GP to spot changes early and to coordinate your care more effectively.

## **Booking Appointments with Your Usual GP**

For routine issues, we ask that you book ahead, ideally two to three weeks in advance, so that you can see your Usual GP wherever possible. If required, our reception and care navigation team will guide you towards your Usual GP when booking.

If you have an urgent problem that needs attention the same day, you may be seen by another GP at the practice, and this may be at a different site. This ensures you receive timely care while keeping routine continuity with your Usual GP.

## **When Your Usual GP is Away**

GPs work closely in a “buddy” or “sharing” system whereby another GP covers for them when they are not in the practice. This ensures your care continues safely and consistently, even when your Usual GP is on leave or working at another site.

## **How Your Usual GP Oversees Your Care**

Your Usual GP is responsible for the majority of your ongoing medical care. This includes:

- Reviewing your test results, including hospital investigations such as radiology
- Signing off your prescriptions and overseeing your medication
- Reading and acting on your hospital letters
- Writing referrals to hospital and community services
- Completing private work that you request, where accepted, such as gun licencing, insurance reports, driving medicals etc.
- Contributing to multi-disciplinary team meetings if your health needs involve wider services or professionals

This oversight helps ensure that your care is joined up, safe and consistent.

## **Why Most Former VSG Patients Have Been Allocated a New Usual GP**

Previously, at Village Surgeries Group, patients were registered only with the Partners, Dr Freeman and Dr Siddorn. As part of the merger and the move to a safer, more sustainable model, patients have now been allocated a Usual GP based on:

- Where you live
- Where your GP works across our sites
- The need to keep each GP's list at a safe and manageable size

This approach supports better continuity and safer care for all patients.

### **Requests to Switch GP**

As the new Usual GP lists have been created through a careful allocation process that balances geography, working patterns and safe list sizes, we ask that patients do not request to switch GP based purely on traditional preference. Keeping lists stable and evenly distributed helps us provide safe, timely and consistent care for everyone. If patients have significant or ongoing health-concerns that would benefit from continuity with a different GP, this can be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.