

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

New data shows rise in GP appointments

Over 34,000 more GP appointments were held in December than before the pandemic, new data for the Black Country and West Birmingham has revealed.

The latest figures for GP access show that 592,866 appointments took place in December 2021, up from 558,382 in December 2019.

Of these, 61% of appointments were face to face, while 48% took place on the same day as they were requested (up from 44% in 2019).

Sarb Basi, Director of Primary Care for NHS Black Country and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group, said: “Recent data shows that the total number of appointments delivered by GPs in December remains higher than pre-pandemic levels.

“This is extremely encouraging, especially alongside the increased demands that general practice continues to face, whilst also delivering almost half (44%) of the 2.5million local doses of COVID-19 vaccinations.

“Our teams are working extremely hard to ensure people get the appropriate care they need and in the way they want, and whilst it's good to see the number of face-to-face appointments increasing, it is important to note that some people also find telephone appointments very convenient too.”

The vital role of the wider teams working alongside GPs was also clear in the statistics, as 247,406 of all appointments in December were with other trained health professionals such as practice nurses, advanced nurse practitioners and pharmacists.

Sarb Basi added: “Many GP practices have a range of health professionals and trained clinicians available who can also diagnose and treat health conditions too. This ensures patients see the right person at the right time more quickly, and ensures GPs can spend more time with patients with the greatest needs.”



The new statistics have revealed that DNAs – where a patient fails to attend an appointment but does not cancel so it can be rebooked by the practice – are slightly down, from 8% of all appointments in 2019 to 7% today.

However, with over 40,000 appointment slots still missed in December, people are encouraged to make every effort to cancel unwanted appointments so somebody else can have the slot.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- Black Country and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) was established on 1 April 2021 following the merger of Dudley, Sandwell & West Birmingham, Walsall and Wolverhampton CCGs
- The CCG decides how to spend the NHS budget on the majority of health services, including planned hospital care, urgent and emergency care, community health services, and mental health and learning disability services, as well as delegated responsibility for commissioning general practice services
- We serve a local population of 1.5 million and our vision is for a healthier place with healthier people and healthier futures
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