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Tamar Tag Action Group
Via email

Ref: 240827_TT

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Dear Tamar Tag Action Group

I am writing to provide an overview of the healthcare services that residents of Saltash often need to travel to Plymouth for, which results in them incurring the bridge toll. We understand that the additional travel and associated costs can be a significant concern for our patients, and we appreciate your ongoing efforts to address these issues within the community.

Services Requiring Travel to Plymouth

1. **Pharmacy Services on Weekends and Bank Holidays**

While Saltash has several pharmacies, they may not always be open during the weekend and bank holidays. In such cases, patients often need to travel to Plymouth to access essential pharmacy services, such as obtaining urgent prescriptions or over-the-counter medications.

2. **Phlebotomy Services at Future Inn Plymouth**

Blood tests and other phlebotomy services are crucial for many patients with chronic conditions or those undergoing regular monitoring. While some services are available locally, there are instances where patients need to travel to Plymouth, particularly to the Future Inn, to access specialised or timely phlebotomy services.

3. **Specialist Referrals and Diagnostics:**

Certain specialist services, such as advanced imaging, specialist consultations, or treatments, may only be available at larger facilities in Plymouth. While efforts are made to provide as many services as possible locally, some patients must travel across the bridge for specific diagnostics or care that is not available in Saltash; such as ECGs

4. **Out-of-Hours Medical Care:**

During times when local GP surgeries are closed, such as weekends or late evenings, patients may need to travel to Plymouth for urgent care or to visit the nearest out-of-hours GP service. Although there are some provisions

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locally, Plymouth often serves as the closest alternative for comprehensive out-of-hours medical services.

Impact on Patients

The necessity to travel to Plymouth for these services can be burdensome, especially for those on a limited income or those who require frequent visits. The bridge toll adds to this burden, and we understand that it can create a financial strain, particularly for patients who require regular access to these services.

Moving Forward

We are committed to exploring solutions that can reduce the need for our patients to travel and to improve local access to essential healthcare services. This includes ongoing discussions with healthcare providers, commissioners, and local authorities about how best to meet the needs of our community in Saltash.

We value the work of the Tamar Tag Action Group in highlighting these issues and advocating for the needs of the local population. We hope to continue working together to find ways to mitigate the impact of travel and toll costs on patients.

Yours sincerely

Avril Tozer

Avril Tozer
Practice Business Manager