

# Patient Newsletter

January 2021

WELCOME



Stay at home if you have Coronavirus symptoms

## Happy New Year and welcome to our first newsletter of 2021

In Sunderland and Washington GP practices are working together to vaccinate patients as quickly as they can. We are pleased to share some of the detail and background below, but first...

**Important message for patients who had a  
CORONAVIRUS JAB IN DECEMBER**  
**Your second vaccination date  
IS RESCHEDULED FOR mid-MARCH**  
Anyone to whom this applies will be contacted personally as well, but for now, please delete the January vaccination appointment from your diary.

The primary care networks (PCNs) of Sunderland and Washington started running vaccination clinics from 'hubs' – Grindon Primary Care Centre and Washington Primary Care Centre before Christmas.

We needed sites to accommodate a large throughput of patients because, unlike flu jabs, which patients usually receive from their practices, the new vaccine needs more specialist storage and preparation.

**PLEASE REMEMBER YOU CAN ORDER MEDICATION VIA ONLINE SERVICES**

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Practice Telephone  
Number

New Silksworth Medi-  
cal Practice

0191 521 0252

South Hylton Surgery

0191 534 1007

Pennywell Medical  
Practice

0191 543 8807

Barmston Medical  
Practice

0191 543 8807

Galleries GP Alliance

0191 543 8807



Galleries  
Medical Centre



Pennywell  
Medical Practice



Barmston  
Medical Practice



South Hylton  
Surgery



New Silksworth Medical Practice

## How are appointments made?

Practices are contacting patients, mainly by telephone and SMS Text Message, to make the vaccination appointments. They can only do this according to strict NHS England guidelines on patient priority and when we have confirmation of vaccine delivery. Patients over 80, of which there are lots in our area, are being invited first, in age order, along with health and care workers for whom protection is vital to maintain local services.

Care and nursing home residents are now included in this first group as the equipment to transport the vaccine safely has been received.

Once patients in these priority groups have been given their first dose, practices will start contacting patients in the next priority group – and so on down the age profile.

## One dose or two, and what interval?

Both the vaccines currently licenced for use in the UK (Pfizer and Astra Zeneca) require **two doses** to maximise the protection against Coronavirus that they provide. The Chief Medical Officer, supported by Government scientists, advised on 1 January 2021 that, due to the intensity of the current infection 'spike', the interval between doses should be 12 weeks rather than the three weeks originally advised for the Pfizer vaccine, to enable more people to have a first dose sooner.

This means that everyone who had a vaccination at one of our hubs in December, and who was told to return three weeks later for their second jab, will now have this second appointment postponed until early/mid-March.

They understand the debate and confusion that the changes in national guidance have created, but they back the decision to prioritise the delivery of a first dose to as many people as possible, whilst ensuring that planning for the second dose for all patients is also in hand.

Everyone who has had their initial vaccination will be contacted to advise them not to attend for their second dose in January, but we are urging anyone reading this newsletter to share this information within their community, to help us with this important communication.

## HANDS... FACE... SPACE

**Please, please** continue to follow all national and local guidance for keeping safe and well.

## Did Not Attend Figures

Over the month of December we had **262** appointments that were missed.

New Silksworth Medical Practice—**107**

South Hylton Surgery—**42**

Galleries / Barmston / Pennywell—**113**

This significantly affects access to GP appointments for other patients.

If you have booked an appointment that you no longer require please remember to cancel it in good time so that your appointment can be given to another patient.

This can now be done **24 hours a day** via our automated phone service or online access.

Please remember the value of appointments for all Patients.

## PPG Meeting Dates



**All Dates to be Confirmed prior due to COVID**

## KEEP CALM and BE KIND

GP practices in the Sunderland area are exceptionally busy at the moment, with a **high demand** for appointments. As a result, it may take a bit longer than normal for your call to be answered when you ring your surgery. Please be a **patient patient**.



Better health for Sunderland



**KEEP CALM AND BE KIND**

## Medication Reviews

All patients on repeat prescriptions need to have their medication reviewed regularly. The purpose of the review is to check that you are still taking the most appropriate medication for your condition and that your condition is being effectively controlled. It is also a good opportunity to adjust your prescription if required, removing unnecessary items or making changes if you aren't getting on well with the current medicine.



You can find out when you are due for a review by checking the printed prescription sheet that is attached to your medication when you collect it from the Pharmacy.

If you are overdue for your medication review you may be contacted by the pharmacist or the surgery, but we hope that you will take responsibility for keeping up to date by calling us before then.





## Thank You

For taking the time to read our Patient Newsletter

If you have any thoughts, feedback or ideas for content  
please get in touch via email:

[sgpa.info@nhs.net](mailto:sgpa.info@nhs.net)

[www.sgpamedicalpractices.co.uk](http://www.sgpamedicalpractices.co.uk)

Telephone: 0191 543 8807 Galleries / Barmston / Pennywell

Telephone: 0191 521 0252 New Silksworth Medical Practice

Telephone: 0191 534 1007 South Hylton Surgery

or Register for ONLINE ACCESS