

Patient Charter

The following statements are the standards set within the Acorn Surgery for the benefit of our patients. It is our role to provide you with care, treatment and advice. You will be involved in discussions about the most appropriate care for you and it will be provided by appropriately qualified staff. No care or treatment will be given without your informed consent. In your best interests, it is important that you understand all the information given to you so please ask any of our staff members questions if you are unsure of anything.

Our Responsibilities to you:

We will endeavour to always treat you at all times with courtesy, respect and sensitivity. Patients will be treated as individuals irrespective of their ethnic origin, religious and cultural beliefs, gender, social class, disability or age. We strive to maintain the highest standards of medical practice and all doctors and health professionals maintain strict standards via appraisal, audit and professional development.

Access:

You will have access to a doctor or nurse rapidly in the case of an emergency. The clinician will arrange a home visit as appropriate for those who are too ill to be brought to the surgery or permanently housebound. We will try to offer all patients access to a doctor or nurses within 2 weeks for general, routine medical problems although it will not always be possible to offer an appointment with the doctor or nurse of your choice or to meet these waiting times for non urgent matters. You will be referred for appropriate investigations, specialist opinion and care at a hospital and will be offered choice of hospital, when both you and the doctor or nurse treating you agree it is necessary and would be of benefit.

Telephone:

We will try to answer the telephone promptly and ensure that there are sufficient staff members available to do this. Should the call volume be very high we advise callers to use the call back service. All calls are placed in a queue before being answered by the next available member of staff. With your consent we will send SMS text messages or emails to your mobile number or email, including appointment confirmation and reminders, alerts and messages regarding your healthcare. Where appropriate there is a function to respond to those messages

Waiting time:

We run an appointment system at this Practice. You will be given a time at which the doctor or nurse hopes to be able to see you though sometimes factors occur which causes the appointment system to run late. You should not wait more than 30 minutes in the waiting room if this happens, please ask at the Reception Desk and we will endeavour to ascertain a reason and estimated time until you will be called.

Test results:

If you have undergone blood tests, x-rays or other tests organised by the Practice, we will follow up any abnormal results as soon as appropriate and inform patients of any need for additional investigation or treatment. You can access your own results via the NHS App.

Health promotion:

The Practice will offer patients information and advice on steps they can take to promote good health and avoid illness. Guidance will be given on lifestyle changes with referral to an appropriate practitioner when required. Advice on self-help that can be undertaken by the patient without reference to a will be offered where applicable.

Information:

We will give you full information about the services we offer and those offered locally that you can access yourself. Every effort will be made to ensure that you receive the information which directly affects your health and the care being offered. We will provide this in a range of ways, including via our website, social media, text messages, emails, notices and advertising boards within the surgery waiting areas.

Complaints and Suggestions:

We will provide a full and prompt reply to any complaints you might make about our service and, if appropriate, will change our ways of working to improve care or standards. In the rare event of the need to complain, patients will have prompt access to the Practice's Complaints Procedure and all complaints will be handled in a professional manner by the Practice Manager who has responsibility for managing complaints.

Medical records:

Information contained in your health records is only disclosed to others for purposes related to your health care (except when you have given permission to share your record with other health related organisations.) Everyone working in the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential. If you have any concerns or objections about your records being inspected for any purpose, please notify us and your wishes will be respected.

How your medical records are used to help you

Your records are important to help ensure that you receive the best possible care and are used in the following ways to support this process;

- to ensure that the clinician has accurate and up to date information to assess your health and decide what care you need when you visit in the future
- to ensure that full information is available should you see another doctor, change doctors, or be referred to a specialist or another part of the NHS system
- to ensure that there is a good basis for looking back and checking on the type and quality of care you have received
- Whilst always preserving your confidentiality, your records can also help to:
- assist with the teaching and training of health care professionals such as medical students attached to the Practice and GPs in training and you can choose whether to be involved personally
- assist with health research if you are invited to take part in a study trial and decide to take part

Keeping your records confidential

Our doctors and staff, and everyone else working for the NHS, have a legal duty to maintain the highest level of confidentiality about patient information. In some instances, you may receive care from other people outside of the NHS. We may need to share some information about you with them, so that we can all work together for your benefit. Anyone who receives confidential information from us about your care is also under legal obligation to maintain confidence. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, for example, when the health or safety of others is at risk, we will not disclose your information to third parties without your permission. We will only give your relatives and carers information if you give your explicit consent, and this is documented on your medical record.

In certain circumstances we are required by law to report information to the appropriate authorities. This information is only provided after formal authority has been given by a qualified health professional. For example:

- notification of new births
- where we encounter infectious diseases which may endanger the safety of others (e.g., meningitis or measles, but not HIV/AIDS)
- where a formal court order has been issued
- child safeguarding concerns
- However, our guiding principle is that we are holding your records in strict confidence.

How you can arrange to see your own records

Everyone has the right to see the information that is kept in their medical records. If you want to see these, you should make a request in writing by completing a form available on our website or from Reception. We are normally obliged to let you see the information and to explain any part of the record which you do not understand. You are also entitled to receive a copy of the information you have seen and that there will be a charge applied for accessing your record and for any copies printed from them. Should your doctor decide that seeing your records might put your health at risk, you may only be shown part of them. You can request access to your full prospective medical record online via the NHS app (and NHS website) access is granted following receipt of your informed consent and if you have a suitable NHS login.

Your responsibilities to us:

- Please remember, you are responsible for your own health and the health of any of your children. We will give you our professional help and advice and would expect you to act on it as given in good faith.
- We ask that you treat all our Practice staff with courtesy and respect. Abusive, threatening or inappropriate behaviour of any kind will not be tolerated under any circumstances and may well result in removal from our list.
- Please let us know if you change your name, address, telephone number or other relevant details.
- Please do everything you can to keep appointments. Tell us as soon as possible if you cannot; give at least 24 hours' notice if possible, cancelling online via the NHS App or via our dedicated appointment cancellation line.
- If you are referred for a hospital outpatient appointment, we would expect you to keep it or if you cannot, to inform the hospital department direct as soon as possible - not the surgery. It is also very important to tell the hospital of any change of contact details if you are on a waiting list for an operation.
- Test results take time to reach us, and you will be given guidance how long this may be by the clinician. All results can be accessed via the NHS App. Calls enquiring about results should be made after 2pm.
- Patients treated for drug addiction may will be required to sign a Contract Agreement.