

# PARKLANDS SURGERY

## NEWSLETTER

November 2020



### Thank you

We would like to thank all our patients for their support and help during this difficult time for the NHS. As we move toward a difficult winter period we thank you in anticipation, for your continued support. Whilst General Practice has remained open throughout the COVID Crisis we really appreciate those of you who have maximised your self-care, to reduce the demand on the surgery, and hope that you will continue to do so in the forthcoming months. However, if you have a real concern then please continue to contact us. Thank you to everyone in our community who have sent messages of support – it is very much appreciated.

### Why can't I see a Doctor?

As a result of the COVID pandemic and in line with Government guidance we have changed the way that we are working. Currently, we are using telephone triage to help make a clinical decision about whether a patient needs to be seen face to face. This is to reduce the risk to patients, surgery staff and the local community by limiting their contact with others. Our clinical team will decide whether a patient needs to be seen, based on the information that is provided.

The surgery remains open – the way that we are operating has changed and it means that the Doctor or Nurse will decide to see you if there is a clinical reason for doing so.

For those who do have a face to face appointment at the surgery it will appear that we are very quiet. We wish you to know that we remain as busy as normal, dealing with several hundred patients per day, but as most of our consultations are being conducted remotely, there are less patients in the surgery. All our work is still taking place but behind closed doors.

### eConsults

One major change in the way we are operating is that we are asking that our patients make use of the eConsultation service when they need help from the surgery.

The service can be accessed via the link on our website home page at:



<https://www.parklandssurgery.nhs.uk/>

You can use this service to get help with particular conditions such as back pains, mental health concerns, skin problems, etc. You can also use it for administrative help, such as requesting sick notes or GP letters.

It is easy to use, you complete a simple form about your problem or request; you can even include photographs. Your GPs decide on the best treatment for you and then we respond with advice, a prescription or an appointment.

Except for routine administrative requests, all eConsults are triaged by a GP within one working day of it being received. You will then hear from a clinician within 24-48 hours for more urgent requests and normally within seven days for less urgent matters. If your matter is less urgent, we will send you a message informing you when the clinician will deal with your concern.

### Telephone Appointment Booking

Whilst we ask patients to use the eConsult wherever possible, those who are unable can still telephone the surgery to book an appointment. Our Receptionists will take details of your concern and this will then be put through the same Triaging process as the eConsult and you will hear from a Clinician in due course.

**Please use eConsult or the telephone to book appointments rather than coming to the surgery. This is so we can avoid too many people queuing at Reception.**

## Face to Face Appointments

If you have a face to face appointment booked please check in at Reception. Depending on the level of risk from COVID in the locality, we will be operating our reception service either through the front reception window to the left of the Surgery's main entrance or across the normal internal Reception front desk. If we are using the internal front desk we will use a traffic light system to control access into the Reception lobby. Please queue outside and only enter one party at a time, when the traffic light shows green. If someone has just entered ahead of you, please wait until they come back out, even if the light remains on green.

When you have checked in, please wait outside in the car park or in your car. You will be issued with one of these pagers. When the pager flashes, beeps and vibrates, please walk from the car park, taking the path



to the right and behind the surgery, following the yellow signs. You will be met by your clinician just inside the rear fire door.

Our Waiting Room is closed to maintain social distancing and to reduce the chance of COVID being brought into the surgery. Therefore if you are not coming by car, please be prepared to wait outside, even in inclement weather.

## Flu Vaccinations 50-64 Age Group

We are still awaiting instructions on the provision of the Flu Vaccine to those who are aged 50-64 years and who do not have any other additional medical risk factors. We do not even know whether we will be providing the vaccine or some other health provider. As soon as we know, we will send text messages and update our website accordingly.

We are still providing flu vaccinations to those in the higher risk groups and those aged 65 and over. Please contact the surgery to book. We have a waiting list for those aged under 65. This is while we acquire more vaccine as there was a higher demand on this vaccine this year.

## COVID Vaccinations

Work is ongoing to determine the best way to deliver COVID vaccinations across the wider Chichester area, when they become available. Due to the nature of the vaccine, the quantities in which it will be delivered and other complexities, it is unlikely that we will be able to provide this vaccine in the same way as we would run a Flu Vaccination Clinic. We will update our website with details of how this vaccine will be provided once a plan has been finalised.

## New Telephone System

We have recently had a new telephone system fitted to help improve our service. While there have been a few teething problems, especially connected to call queuing, we believe these issues have now been resolved and so you will hopefully find the queuing system works and that you rarely hear an engaged tone. Our lines remain incredibly busy so we recommend that you use the eConsultation service mentioned earlier, to avoid waiting on the telephone.

## Polite Request

Please treat our staff with respect. Recently we have been having increasing occasions where patients are being rude and abusive to our staff, including our Receptionists, Nurses and Health Care Assistants. Our surgery is working under unprecedented strain at the moment due to excessive demand and a reduction in capacity because of COVID precautions. All our team try their best to help but sometimes solutions are not immediately available.

Please treat our staff with the respect they deserve as they have worked very hard throughout this whole COVID crisis and are continuing to do so under very difficult conditions. Thank you.

**We would like to reiterate our request for you to use eConsult or the telephone to book appointments (or for other questions to Reception) rather than coming to the surgery. This is so we can avoid too many people queuing at Reception.**