

# POVEREST MEDICAL CENTRE

## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Dear Patients

The NHS is going to be digitalised as announced by the government and additionally there will be changes to the GP Practice contracts in relation to patient access. Therefore, we will be changing how patients can book an appointment with a Doctor and are launching a fully digital system to make appointments which some patients are already using.

This is a significant change to the Poverest Medical Centres' appointment system; we believe this system will improve how our services are delivered to our patients. Demand for appointments has increased hugely in recent years and continues to do so at an alarming rate. We like other Bromley surgeries must address the issue of capacity to maintain patient satisfaction and safety aiming to give everyone fair and equal access to care.

***Therefore, from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025 - we are moving to Total Triage System***

Total Triage is recommended by NHS England to improve access to Primary Care services and is a new approach of quickly assessing patients' needs to decide which patients are the most seriously ill and should be treated first.

### **How does this New System Benefit the Patient?**

We understand that change can sometimes be difficult, we are however confident that Total Triage will bring many benefits to you, our patients – such as:

- **Addressing Clinical Need** – Patients will be seen based on their clinical need and not who contacted the surgery first.
- **Appropriate Clinician** – Patients get to see the most appropriate clinician to help them in a timely way, reducing wait times
- **There is no queue** – No need to call at 8 am or call back the next day, submission of medical requests will be available Monday to Friday 8.00 am to 6.30 pm except for Bank Holidays.
- **Help others** – Digital access will mean phone lines are less busy so those without a smartphone or computer are able to contact the surgery easier by phone. Our staff will help the patients without digital access by completing the on-line form for them. They will also submit the form for those patients telephoning the practice or coming in personally to make appointments.

**So how does Total Triage work?**

The new way to obtain a Doctor’s appointment will be to complete an online request. Patients should give as much information as possible so the request can be triaged appropriately. Patients should only submit one medical issue per triage form.

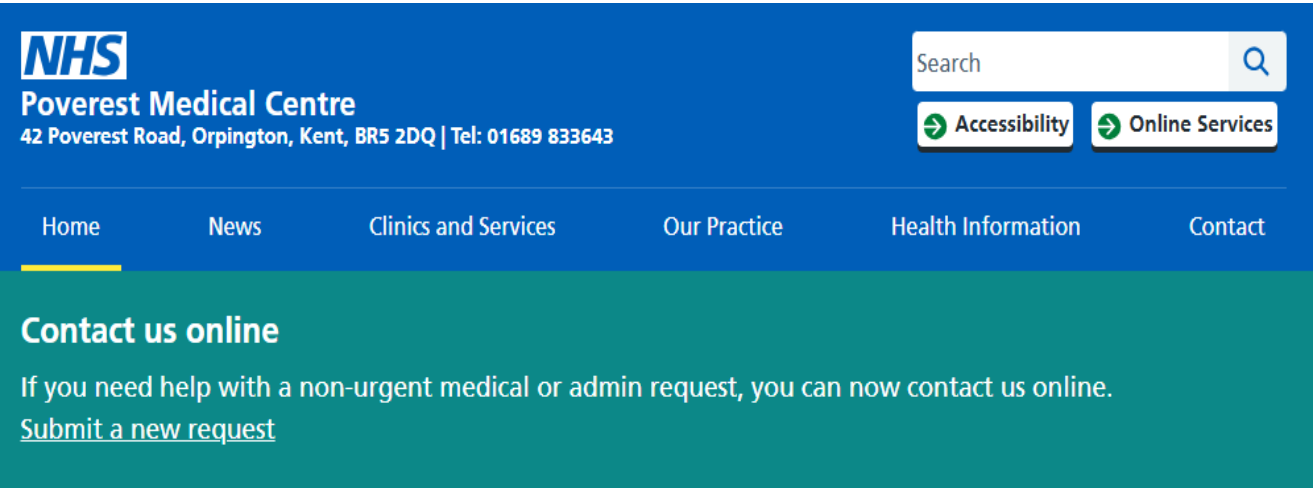
The request will be reviewed by a Doctor in the first instance. You will hear back from the surgery within 2 working days with the outcome of your request. This may result in the Doctor sign posting you to more appropriate services such as directing to the pharmacy, physiotherapy, social prescribers, or other services for a matter that does not require a Doctors’ input.

If you are housebound and think you may need a home visit, please telephone the surgery before 11am, Monday to Friday. We cannot accept home visit requests after that time.

**Access to the online form can be found via:**

- 1. **Our website** - go to [www.poverestmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.poverestmedicalcentre.co.uk) at the top of the first screen you will see “Contact us online”

Click on “Submit a new request” – complete the questions asked and at the end press “Submit Request”



- 2. **NHS App** - The link is in your NHS App in the Services section. Select ‘Contact your GP about a health problem’. After confirming your request is not an emergency complete the ‘Medical request’ for and select ‘Submit Request’. OR

3. **If you have no On-Line access** - Additional support is available for patients unable to use online resources. If you are unable to submit your query online you can contact our team on the phone or in person who can submit the form on your behalf either by telephone or face to face at the Surgery.
4. **Training** – If you do have on-line access but need help pop into the practice and one of our staff members will show you how to submit the on-line access form

You will receive a response sometime within 2 working days either by text, or phone or email. Please ensure the surgery has your latest contact details.

Once a form has been received at the surgery one of our experienced Doctors will triage each request to decide which member of our healthcare team is best placed to help. The Doctor will decide on the most suitable time frame for an appointment and whether the appointment should be via telephone or in person or alternatively an appointment with the 'Out of Hours' service delivered by the Bromley GP Alliance.

When needed, one of our non-clinical staff members may ask additional questions as directed by the Doctor to help us prioritise those patients who need more urgent care.

The system is also available for Admin requests between 8.00 am – 18.30 pm; Mon-Fri. These requests will be dealt with by a team member who will respond within 5 working days.

As well as offering appointments, following assessment, you may be asked to use the Pharmacy First Scheme. Pharmacists can now assess many common conditions and, prescribe antibiotics if necessary. Learn more at: <https://patient.info/news-and-features/pharmacy-first-getting-the-most-from-your-pharmacist#what-is-pharmacy-first>

**We are here to help.** As we roll out these changes our team will be here to guide and support patients and their families/carers every step of the way until they become comfortable with the process over time.

Remember – to request repeat prescriptions and messages via the NHS app; this is a useful tool which you can download now to your smartphone/tablet at <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/>