

IG MEDICAL

NEW APPOINTMENTS BOOKING SYSTEM

In response to extensive patient feedback and In consultation with our Patient Participation Group (PPG) we are introducing a new appointment system, whereby a doctor personally triages all requests for an appointment with a doctor.

The new triage-led appointment system addresses many of the problems identified with the earlier system e.g. patients (including the elderly) finding themselves queuing outside the surgery at 8 o'clock in the morning in order to secure an appointment and difficulty in maintaining continuity of care with a particular doctor.

The new system enables us to talk directly with our patients on the same day on which they call, placing us in the best position to allocate an appointment according to clinical need (both in terms of urgency and with the most appropriate doctor), arrange investigations prior to an appointment, direct the patient to another health care professional (nurse, health care assistant or specialist pharmacist), or simply to provide advice. With this appointment system, by speaking directly with a doctor, patients have improved access to a GP and problems can be dealt with more effectively and appropriately.

We do endeavour to offer appointments with the clinician of patient choice but, as with any appointment system this is not always possible, being dependent on the availability of the clinician concerned. Patients who have other commitments can specify a window of time in which to receive a call back from the triage doctor.

In the eventuality of a patient requiring immediate access to a doctor, this will be flagged as an urgent problem and dealt with immediately. We will continue to review the system on a regular basis.

What do you do if you simply want to speak to a named doctor or nurse on the phone, but don't need a 'face to face' appointment that day?

If you need to speak to a doctor or nurse on the telephone please inform our receptionist, who can book you the first available telephone appointment in advance. The doctor or nurse will then telephone you at a pre-arranged date and time.

Patients can help to reduce the demand for appointments in several ways

- Avoid running out of medication by requesting prescriptions well in advance and checking that your medication review date is not overdue. On most occasions, if you have run out of medication and your review is overdue, the doctor will be happy to issue enough to tide you over for a couple of weeks until you have your appointment. This reduces demand on urgent appointments
- Consider whether the Nurse or Health Care Assistant could deal with your problem. Consider consulting a Pharmacist for minor ailments
- If the doctor arranges investigations / blood tests for you, clarify with them whether you need a review after the results have come back or whether you only need to telephone for the results. In any consultation discuss with the GP the need for a follow up appointment and when or under what circumstances that should be.
- Make sure we have your mobile number and email address. We can now send results/advice as e-mail or SMS messages.

Cancelling Appointments

It is important that if you are unable to attend any appointment, you inform the surgery as soon as possible, so that your appointment can be given to another patient.