



Contents

Covid-19 Update	1
Surgery Pharmacists	1
Flu Clinics	2
Paramedic Service	2
General Updates	3
Introduction from Health and Wellbeing Advisor	4

Covid-19 Update

Due to Covid 19, all practices across the UK have had to work differently in order to continue to provide GP services. Measures enable us to maintain social distancing, keeping patients and staff Safe. This is still a priority for GP practices and some services are still not able to be offered. I know some patients are finding this frustrating.

Going forward the surgery will continue to adapt to new ways of working, and there are a lot of changes planned for when we emerge from this pandemic.

The surgery plans to implement an electronic triage service to its patients, called Total Triage. This will mean that (where possible) patients wanting an appointment at the practice will have to complete an online assessment form. This will enable patients to quicker and easier access to healthcare. The form will be received at the surgery, reviewed and passed to the most appropriate person. The surgery will then respond to you directly with either advice and guidance, or an appointment with the most appropriate person. This could be the Chemist, Surgery Pharmacist, Nurse or GP either by telephone/video consultation or face to face. We may also send you to the SUCCESS clinics. The purpose of this service is to signpost patients to access appropriate services.

Surgery Pharmacists

Ashington House Surgery and North Swindon surgery will have as part of their clinical team two pharmacists, Mair Robinson and Ilya Clark. They will be working with the practices to improve prescribing and prescription services; this will include medication reviews with patients either face to face or via telephone/video consultation. Their team will also be joined by a pharmacy technician Suman Chilakapati.

The surgery will have a number of new services available to patients during the next few months; and some of these services may be provided at other local surgeries.



Flu clinics

This year the surgery is expecting there to be a large number of patients wanting to have their flu vaccination, our vaccines are due to arrive in September and clinics will be arranged taking into consideration the continual safety of its patients and staff. Patients who are eligible will be contacted by text message initially giving a date and time frame to attend the surgery. Patients will be asked to wait outside until it is safe to enter the surgery, masks will need to be worn and their arms need to be exposed to receive the injection. Patients will be asked to enter the building via the front door and then exit from the rear doors of the building. It is possible that Public Health England may extend this vaccination programme to over 50's but we have been asked for now to only vaccinate our over 65 patients and those under 65 who are at risk.

During these clinics the reception desk will not be open and we will not be taking queries or issuing prescriptions.

Paramedic Service

We are pleased to confirm that our Paramedic Home Visiting Service has been successful and a godsend during the pandemic. We have extended this service to include two other practices and have recruited a 4th Paramedic. This service supports the following surgeries that form the Brunel Healthcare Group (BHG).

BHG comprises of: Ashington House, Park Lane & Phoenix Surgery, North Swindon Surgery, Great Western Surgery, Westrop, Tawhill, Hermitage & Blunsdon surgeries, Elm Tree Surgery & Ridgeway View Surgery.

General Updates

- We are sad to advise that Dr Siddique is leaving us for pastures new at the end of August. We have therefore recruited another GP who will be starting with us in November, Dr Alex Hamilton. We will also be joined by Dr M Arumemi from September.
- To do something positive during the Covid Period, the surgery employees have sponsored two assistance dogs. Coco is training to be a guide dog for the blind and Elton is training to be a dog for the deaf. We will get regular updates on our two pups which we will share with you on our official Facebook page and website.
- We now have an official Facebook page where we intend to share current information with patients.
- Despite only booking telephone/video consultations on the day we are still getting patients who are not available for their booked appointments. We therefore remind patients that if you no longer need the appointment please cancel it by leaving a message on our cancellation line. Tel: **01793 482824**.
- We have telephone/video consultation slots which can be booked online. This will help patients who are struggling to get through on our phone. Face to face appointments are booked once triaged by the GP.
- The surgery will be upgrading its telephone system in the new few weeks; this may cause some disruption during installation. This upgrade will be scheduled at a time to have minimal impact for patients.
- For the moment our main front door will remain closed, this is reviewed regularly. The continued safety of our patients and staff is our priority. We are continuing to provide services as best we can. Anyone attending the surgery for a face to face appointment needs to attend alone, only arrive 5 minutes early for your appointment, wear a mask and use hand sanitizer on arrival. We have spread out our face to face appointment slots to limit the number of patients in the building at the same time.
- Keeping records up to date, the practice would be grateful when patients change their telephone numbers and email addresses that they let us know. This helps us keep your records updated.

Introduction from Health and Wellbeing Advisor

"Hello my name is Caitlin and I am the new Health and Wellbeing Advisor at the surgery. My role the majority of the time is to provide you with support around your wellbeing and to help you to access the community support that is available in your area. Patients can be referred to me for a host of reasons such as helping to combat isolation and loneliness, to help support someone through a bereavement, finding ways to get help for debt or housing issues, developing strategies to manage low mood, for support around a long term health condition and so much more.

The goal of my service is to provide a form of medicine that doesn't come in a bottle but instead is shaped around helping you find: 'What Matters to Me'. If you feel you would benefit from some extra support please call the surgery and request a call back from me or ask your GP during your next appointment. Not sure if it's right for you? I'm happy to answer any questions you may have and to talk you through the ways in which I can support you to find the right service to help."

We would like to thank all of our patients for their patience and understanding during this difficult time. It has been a very unsettling time for everyone, please continue to social distance and keep yourselves safe and well.

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