

CHARLBURY PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

INFORMATION NOTE ON THE APPOINTMENT SYSTEM AT CHARLBURY MEDICAL CENTRE

1. Appointments with a GP or Nurse

Appointments with a GP or Nurse may be made as follows:

- by telephoning 01608 811680, or by visiting the Medical Centre, between 8:00am and 6:30pm Monday to Friday
- online (GP appointments only), if you have registered for Patient Access, by going to the Medical Centre website or direct to Patient Access (see Section 7 below)

2. Same day appointments

- a) You will need to phone the Medical Centre as soon as possible from 8.00 a.m. There is usually a rush to phone at 8.00 a.m., so you may find that you have to try several times to get through to a receptionist, if the line is engaged. Please bear with the Practice and keep trying. The receptionists will be doing their best to deal with all the calls as soon as they can.
- b) If you work and cannot phone at 8.00 a.m., you can phone the Practice from 3.00 p.m. on the previous day to request an appointment for the following day.
- c) Emergencies always take priority over routine booked appointments. When phoning for a same-day appointment, if your problem is urgent, please tell the receptionist. Reception staff are trained in managing sensitive information appropriately and often need to know the nature of the complaint in order to allocate an appropriate time slot, or to decide whether a patient needs a same day appointment. If in doubt they will discuss with medical colleagues.
- d) If you need to be seen urgently by a doctor you will be asked by a member of the reception team if you need a telephone or a face to face appointment.

A number of telephone appointments are made available every day. Your medical problem may be capable of being resolved without the need to come to the surgery. A doctor will then phone you to assess your medical problem and advise whether you need to come to the surgery to be seen or whether you can be helped via a telephone consultation.

- e) Please note that your consultation may not be with your usual doctor..
- f) Alternatively your need may met by an appointment with a Practice Nurse.
- g) If you do not feel that a telephone appointment will suffice, you may be referred to the Neighbourhood Hub at the Windrush Health Centre in Welch Way, Witney for a same-day appointment. The Hub is staffed by a variety of health professionals, including a GP, a Nurse Practitioner, an Advanced Paramedic and, on some days, a Physiotherapist.

The Hub is not a walk-in centre, so you have to be referred by the Surgery. The Hub serves a number of practices in this area and has been set up on their behalf to widen the availability of same-day visits for people who should be seen that day.

- h) If you wish to speak to a GP but do not want to book a face to face appointment, you can call and leave a message which will be passed on to the GP. The GP will read your message and they may call you back. Alternatively the GP might ask another member of staff to return your call with the information requested, or to deal with the question you have raised.

3. Other appointments

- a) If a patient rings for an appointment and does not need one on the same day, they will be offered the next available appointment with their 'usual doctor' where possible. If you do not know who your 'usual doctor' is, please ask the receptionist when you next contact the surgery. She will be happy to tell you the name of your 'usual doctor' or, if you do not as yet have a named doctor she will in most cases be able to arrange for you to be allocated to the doctor of your choice.
- b) Whilst patients are free to see whichever doctor they would like, the Practice recommends that you try to consult with the same doctor each time you visit the surgery. Seeing the same doctor improves the continuity of care and should reduce the number of times you will need to visit the doctor.
- c) A number of the GPs work at the Medical Centre part-time and, as is the case for all Surgeries around the county, the demand for appointments is high. A non-urgent appointment with your chosen GP may result in a wait of up to 4 weeks. This is in line with other Practices in the county and at the moment there is little that the Medical Centre can do to avoid this.

4. Preparing for an appointment

When booking an appointment you will be asked a number of questions by the receptionist which are designed to ensure that any necessary preparation is made before the visit in order to make best use of the appointment time.

5. Length of appointment

Normal or routine appointments are for 10 minutes but, if you know you have more than one issue on which to consult the GP, please ask the receptionist for a double appointment. Double appointments are also available, if you are a regular carer for someone.

6. Nurse Appointments

- a) Please tell the receptionist what the appointment is for so that enough time is allowed, and the appointment is booked with the right person.
- b) If you need an appointment before 8.00 a.m., it is possible to see a Nurse from 7.30 a.m.

7. Online booking

- a) Patients wanting to use the internet to book appointments with a GP, request repeat prescriptions and view their medical record and blood test results, can register for Patient Access by filling in a form available from the Medical Centre. Photo ID and proof of address is required, when returning the completed form to the Centre.
- b) When registered, patients can book GP appointments online. When visiting the Patient Access service at any time, available appointments can be viewed and booked for the following week and for 2 weeks beyond that.
- c) Same day appointments only appear online at 8.00 a.m. on each working day – only appointments for the day in question can be booked. Appointments for the remaining working days in the current week are not shown –each day's appointments will appear on the site at 8.00 a.m. on the day.

- d) When booking an appointment patients are asked to tell the Practice the reason why they want an appointment, so that the Practice can assess the appropriate way of dealing with the booking.

8. Dealing with appointment requests

As you will see, there are a number of different ways in which same-day and other appointments can be booked. Patients can be assured that the Practice staff take steps to juggle all the requests received, in order, as far as possible, to be fair to every patient requesting a slot, whichever way they have submitted a request.

9. Cancellations and missed appointments

Although there is always a lot of discussion and comment about what is involved in making an appointment, there is less public attention paid to the problem of missed appointments – especially missed Nurse appointments, which are a particular problem for the Practice.

If you cannot attend an appointment for any reason please inform the Practice as soon as possible in order that they can give the slot to someone else.

10. GP availability

As a guideline, the GPs are generally available for consultations as follows:

Dr Helen Bayliss – Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
Dr Pippa Brookes-White – Monday, Thursday, Friday
Dr Jacqui Maroni – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
Dr Kate McIntyre – Tuesday, Friday

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