

Stickney Surgery May 2021 Newsletter

We know everyone has had a difficult year, and we are keen to give you some information about the service, we are doing our absolute best to provide. As ever, it is the aim of the practice staff, many of whom have been with us for a long time, to provide the best possible care to our patients regardless of circumstances.

Current Working

- The practice has never closed and never stopped seeing patients for face to face appointments. We have staffed our clinics in such a way that if staff got covid the surgery would be able to continue to provide the service as only a proportion of staff are in contact with each other; precisely so we would never close. We are following **national guidance** for when you have a medical need by booking you in for a telephone consultation, following a risk assessment, the clinician will then ask you to attend the surgery if your condition cannot be dealt with over the telephone.
- Some services have been suspended or limited as per national guidance these include Spirometry and Travel vaccination, please be assured we are reviewing this regularly and have plans in place for these to be re-introduced once it is safe to do so!

Service Issues

We understand from your communications with us that some patients do not feel our service has been of its usual high standard. We also recognise that the service has had to be provided in a very different way, there are several reasons for this:

The pandemic

- The pandemic has impacted on our service capacity – we have had absent staff or staff working from home due to shielding, isolation, quarantining or illness. Our resources are finite!

The Covid vaccination programme

- The practice must provide staff to the Covid vaccination Hub meaning our staff are working evenings, weekends, and bank holidays, often on top of their normal roles. We are given very little notice of the vaccine deliveries and because of this we must reprioritise our workload to allocate those staff.
- The practice has had to telephone thousands of patients to book them for their Covid vaccines, and now for their second vaccines, we have had lots of queries to deal with either at the desk, by telephone, by email or online services, we have been overwhelmed.

How you can HELP us and other patients

- Remember about self-care – Often minor illnesses can be effectively and safely treated with over the counter measures from the pharmacy.
- Care Navigation – Our reception staff will ask questions regarding appointments to ensure you are seen by the right person.
- Only contacting us if you need to – have a look on our website, the government or NHS websites – often we cannot answer the questions you have about NHS Apps; the vaccination programme, guidance on shielding or the rules related to lockdown but these websites can.
- If your query is relating to a hospital / secondary care encounter, can the hospital help rather than the practice? You should contact the hospital regarding results from tests that they have requested.

Zero Tolerance

- **Be kind to our staff** – we understand that you get frustrated when things are not working as effectively as you would like because we do too! Our staff have all worked incredibly hard throughout the pandemic and we would like to thank those who have sent messages of thanks and support, this is appreciated. However, they do not deserve to be spoken to in the way **some** patients speak to them.

Thank you for bearing with us and taking the time to read this.