

Highparks Medical Practice – Latest Update

A review of the past 9 weeks

The current coronavirus worldwide pandemic has had a significant impact on how Highparks Medical Practice continues to provide medical service to its 15500 registered patients. At the end of March the practice followed national guidance and closed its doors to visiting patients. The practice has remained open to continue to provide regular medication to patients and has continued to provide telephone and video consultations for patients with doctors and nurses. We have been supporting the NHS in identifying and supporting those patients who have been identified as the highest risk from the virus (Shielding Patients). Our nurses set up special face to face clinics to monitor these and other patients we have identified in terms of urgent blood tests, ECG's or other long term condition monitoring.

At this point it is worth stating that the partners at the practice are extremely proud of our staff who have continue to come to work to provide these services whilst most of their friends and families have self-isolated at home. We have had some staff who have been off work through illness or as a result of self-isolating but on the whole we have been fortunate to minimise the risks of infection.

The practice would also like to pass on a huge thank you to the local volunteers that have been in contact with the practice and provided support to some of our most vulnerable patients. There have been lots of examples of volunteers collecting and delivering medication and in some case even escorting patients to the surgery for appointments. These volunteers have been invaluable over the past 8-10 weeks and the practice would like to thank them all for their generous support.

So what is available now?

The following services are currently available:

- Daily **urgent** request for **medical support**
 - Phone lines open at 0800hrs daily Mon to Fri
 - Return calls from a GP or supporting clinician with telephone or video consultation
 - A face to face appointment where clinically appropriate
 - Urgent 2 week wait referrals are provided as normal
 - Signposting advice to access other services such as; Pharmacy, Urgent Care Centre, Minor Injury Clinics, Social Prescriber etc
- Daily **routine** request for **medical support**
 - Return calls from GP, Physicians Associate, Pharmacist subject to availability
 - A face to face consultation where clinically appropriate
 - Routine referrals are being carried out where clinically appropriate but are subject to the availability of hospital services and additional delays
- Daily **routine** request **for health monitoring**
 - Return call from one of the nursing team
 - Face to face appointment where clinically appropriate (blood tests, Blood pressure, ECGs, chronic disease reviews etc)
- Daily **Home Visits**

- Request are to submitted am only and are subject to availability
- **Prescription Requests**
 - Submitted online through Patient Access or My GP App or paper format at your local surgery
 - Please provide a minimum of 3 clear working days (Mon-Fri) not including the day you submit it for it to be processed
- **Surgery Sites – To minimise the risks to patients and staff the practice has made adjustments to site opening times and usage:**
 - **Cliffe Woods Surgery (Main Site)**
 - Provides face to face appointments with a GP where clinically appropriate following a telephone triage call
 - Provides health monitoring face to face appointments following a call from one of the nursing team (Blood Tests, Blood Pressure, ECGs, Chronic Disease Reviews etc)
 - Prescription requests
 - **Higham Surgery (Branch Site)**
 - Provides face to face appointments with a GP where clinically appropriate following a telephone triage call
 - Processes prescription requests
 - **Wainscott Surgery (Branch Site)**
 - Processes prescription requests
 - **Cliffe Surgery (Branch Site)**
 - Processes prescription requests
 - Provides a dispensing of medication service between 0900-1400 daily (Mon-Fri)

What can we expect for the future?

As the government issues further instructions to lift some of the restrictions for the general population, the practice is also expecting guidance on how the practice and our Hospital and Community colleagues will operate and provide their services in the future.

We are anticipating minor changes to ways of working to ensure we continue to protect patients and staff. We anticipate social distancing to continue until a vaccine has been developed and a programme of vaccination completed. We also expect that practices across the country will be encouraged to continue to use methods of remote consultations such as telephone/video calls and forms of triage prior to face to face appointments.

As always Highparks Medical Practice will continue to follow national guidance and adjust our services accordingly. We will continue to review demands on the practice and listen to our patients so that when changes are implemented we try to do in the best interest of our registered patients where we can.

Finally, the practice remains “open for business” so please contact us when you require general medical services. If you have concerns or have further questions please contact our reception team for advice. We may not have the capacity to respond immediately but we do remain committed to provide the best possible service we can with the resources we have, so we appreciate your constructive feedback.