

## **THE NEW TRIAGE SYSTEM EXPLAINED**

Our appointment system is split such that approximately 50% of our GP availability is bookable up to six weeks in advance (this is important for patients who have a long-term condition and/or need to see their GP regularly) with the other 50% being allocated to the same day triage team.

### **WE STILL OFFER PRE-BOOKABLE APPOINTMENTS & PATIENTS CAN STILL REQUEST TO SEE THEIR PREFERRED GP.**

The key points to this system are as follows:

- Patients requesting an urgent appointment or advice will be put on the Triage List.
- The Triage team of GPs and Nurse Practitioners will contact each patient and discuss the issue to determine a course of action.
- If the issue cannot be dealt with on the phone, an appointment with a GP, Nurse Practitioner or Practice Nurse will be made, usually for the same day.
- At this point patients can request to be seen by a specific GP or Nurse Practitioner.
- If patient demand is excessive, only Emergency Issues will be placed on the Triage List. This is essential in order to manage patient demand and ensure safe and effective clinical care.

The Patient Services team will not be able to give a specific time though a Triage Clinician will phone back within four hours (usually quicker). The Triage team will continuously monitor the list and call back patients in order of clinical priority.

If a patient has restrictions on when they can be called the Patient Services Adviser can annotate the appointment with “phone before” or “phone after” a specific time, however this is not a guarantee that it will be possible.

### **Un Answered Calls**

If a patient fails to answer their phones on 2 separate occasions they will not be called again unless they phone in and ask to be put back on the list. The GP

cannot leave a message on answer machines unless they consider it appropriate to do so. If you have not had a call back within four hours, please contact the surgery.

### **Advanced Nurse Practitioner**

If the problem falls within the remit of a Nurse Practitioner, either the Patient Services Adviser or a member of the Triage team will offer the patient a face-to-face appointment with either of them. Our Nurse Practitioners are fully trained and capable of managing many medical issues.

### **Third Parties**

A third party may book a triage appointment for someone else, but the GP will not be able to divulge any medical information to the third party unless the patient's record indicates that they have consented to allow the third-party access to their medical information. Parents will have access to their children's medical records unless the child has specifically asked for them not to and a GP has agreed the child is competent to make that decision.

### **Withheld Number**

For Confidentiality reasons our phone number is always withheld so if your phone does not accept calls from withheld numbers please provide an alternative that does.

### **Home Visits**

If you wish to request a home visit, please try and contact the Surgery before 11 am on that day. Home visit requests after this time may not be possible due to pre-existing patient demands.

The doctors are required to manage their clinical workload efficiently in order to benefit the maximum number of patients.

On rare occasions the demand for home visits may exceed capacity. In these instances, vulnerable patients such as cancer sufferers or those in nursing homes will be prioritised. Patients will be contacted should this apply to them.

### **When Demand Exceeds Capacity**

The triage system seeks to match the daily patient demand with practice capacity, whether it is practice nurse, nurse practitioner or doctor. There will be occasions, such as over the winter months, when patient demand exceeds

practice capacity. The doctors have a responsibility to ensure safe and effective clinical care at all times. On these rare occasion's patients may be signposted to suitable alternative providers of primary care services, such as the minor injuries unit or a pharmacy.

### **DID YOU KNOW WE NOW OFFER AN E-CONSULT SYSTEM?**

Get in touch with your GP from home, work or play, day or night without the hassle of waiting for an appointment or phone call. You may not even need to come in for an appointment. If you need advice, we have lots of self-help information on how to treat hundreds of conditions or you can consult with a GP online.

1. Visit the practice website [www.thegrovedcentre.co.uk](http://www.thegrovedcentre.co.uk) and click on "consult our doctors online", make your choice of how you wish to get help and follow the simple on-screen questions. Your GP only gets sent information about what you've searched for if you choose to send it to them and require a response from them.
2. If you have chosen to consult with your GP, the practice will contact you by the end of the next working day with a response. If you choose a specific GP to respond, then this may take longer if that GP is unavailable. In this instance another GP will contact you. PLEASE NOTE that this service is not for any urgent needs.

If you would like some advice on a medical condition initially, please use our E-Consult service on our website to 'consult our doctors online'. [www.thegrovedcentre.co.uk](http://www.thegrovedcentre.co.uk) or you can ask for a telephone consultation. If the GP feels they need to see you to discuss your issue, then you will be invited in.

The main telephone numbers are:

**01935 810900 / 01935 813438**

You can book an appointment by:

- Calling the practice to speak to a Patient Services Adviser between 08:00 and 18:30 Monday to Friday.
- Online booking is available for routine appointments with your GP using the new NHSApp (available from July) or your current online login. If you don't have a login or have forgotten your login details, then please speak to the patient services team.
- Using the E-Consult service for advice, administration queries or to have an online conversation with your GP.



Dear Patients

We are continually looking to make improvements here at The Grove Medical Centre. We are very sorry for any inconvenience caused to patients whilst we continue to renovate and update facilities. Over the past few weeks the nurse's treatment rooms have all been refurbished. We hope to have these all up and running by the beginning of October.

The plans are being finalised for a brand-new entrance to the building which will provide greater accessibility for all patients to the surgery with clear hatched for either reception or dispensary. The two waiting rooms will remain but there will be one check in point to make the system easier for patients.

We have listened to views on the telephones and are in discussion with the providers to ensure our system is fully integrated and working efficiently. We are also recruiting more staff to allow for greater interaction with patients and reduce waiting times and queues.

We envisage further building work until the end of the year and ask you to bear with us while we complete this. We appreciate that there has been considerable disruption to patients and thank you for your patience and understanding while we finalise the building work.

If you would like to make a complaint or compliment regarding the service, you have received please do not hesitate to contact us. We value all feedback received from patients good and bad in order to improve our services.

If our patient services team are unable to help, please ask to speak to Mrs Debbie Ryalls, Patient Services Manager or Mrs Alex Kimber, Managing Partner. Should you wish to write to us, our address is The Grove Medical Centre, Wootton Grove, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 4DL. You can find our full complaints policy and process on our website, including how to get support for your complaint.