



Appointment System

The Practice has recently made several changes to its appointment booking system in order to improve the availability of appointments and reflects the changing needs of the Patient population. Unfortunately during the transition period of these changes it has required for a short period of reduced availability whilst we moved from one system to another, but we have attempted to make the transition as seamless as possible and do apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Patients who require a routine appointment with a clinician can now expect to be offered an appointment within a 7 day period, but those who request to see a specific clinician may have to wait for up to 14 days. On the occasions when the clinician themselves believes that providing a patient with continuity of care is important, they will document this in the patient record in order to provide this option for the reception team.

Those patients that require a medically urgent appointment will be contacted back by our telephone assessment team (this team includes Doctors, Practice Nurses and an Emergency Care Practitioner). The assessment team requires for the patient to be present on the phone in order to provide an assessment of the patient's condition in order to provide advice, treatment or an urgent face to face appointment. In order for our clinicians to remain clinically safe, there is a maximum amount of patients that they are able to be assessed each day, once we have reached this threshold patients are signposted to other services that includes NHS 111, where they can request advice in relation to their symptoms and if necessary NHS 111 will refer patients on to other services or ourselves in order to be seen for face to face treatment.

The telephone assessment team will also evaluate requests for home visits. Home visits are only provided for those patients that are truly housebound either as part of their long term condition or due to their current presenting condition. Some home visit requests are refused in favour of being seen face to face in surgery for a number of reasons that include not being a housebound patient, in order to expedite being seen face to face by a clinician or in order to have better treatment facilities available for the clinician than would be available in a patient's home.

As part of the resources available to all Practices across the city, the Clinical Commissioning Group has commissioned the provision of 6 extended access hubs in different locations across the city. The extended access hubs provide a range of different appointments for routine and urgent care from Doctors, Nurses and Physiotherapists. The extended access hubs operate Monday to Friday 6pm to 10pm and some operate on Saturday and Sunday between 10am and 6pm. The locations for the extended access hubs are Palgrave Health Centre, The Flowers Health Centre, Crookes Practice, Woodhouse Medical Centre, Sloan Medical Centre and Burncross Surgery.

The appointments provided by the Practice and other services across Sheffield, are a limited resource. It is therefore extremely important that when an appointment is no longer required this is cancelled and not wasted. **The Practice provides a number of ways in which a patient can cancel their appointment that includes, a 24 hour cancellation line you do not need to speak to a receptionist just press option 1, online cancellation facilities and by text message.** Unfortunately in most circumstances patients that have arrived more than 10 minutes late for their appointment will be classed as failing to attend as this will affect the appointments of other patients. We appreciate that on occasions the clinicians themselves are in fact running behind schedule, this can be due to number of reasons that include patients presenting with multiple problems and medical emergencies. We do apologise for the occasions when patients have to wait for long periods of time to be seen and can assure you the clinician will work as fast and as safe as they can to get back on track.

Patients, who are struggling to get through to the practice on the telephone, can request access to book appointments online. These appointments are the same range of appointments that are available to the reception team and for the same booking period.