

March 2019

Open Letter

The Practice has collated feedback from a number of different sources that include the NHS patient survey, the friends and family test, NHS website (formerly NHS Choices), Patient comments & Complaints, etc. Firstly we would like to assure you that we are aware of many of your concerns, and we by no means intend to add to patient's frustrations by the decisions that are made.

We would like to take this opportunity to address two of the main themes that have been apparent from your feedback and let you know what actions we have already taken or plan to make in the near future.

Appointment System

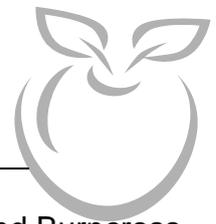
The Practice has recently made several changes to its appointment booking system in order to improve the availability of appointments and reflect the changing needs of the Patient population. Unfortunately during the transition period of these changes it has required for a short period of reduced availability 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.

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 Physio therapists. 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,

Chapelgreen Practice



Crookes Practice, Woodhouse Medical Centre, Sloan Medical Centre and Burncross Surgery.

We would like to encourage Patients to use the comment forms/cards available in the waiting rooms to provide us with feedback on this new system so that we are able to consider further changes that may be required.

Telephone System

We have made several changes to our telephone system in order to try and expedite the answering of telephone calls. The telephone system and call handling processes remain under a high level review. We have already taken action in order to increase the number of available call handlers, move some work items to other departments, change settings with the telephone system itself and in depth investigation to the peaks and trends of call volumes throughout the day and week. We have found that the amount of calls received by the Practice is continuing to increase and that there is very little predictability in relation to when patients choose to call with the exception of the first hour of the day when between 100 & 300 calls can be received.

Average Number of calls received;

- Per Month – 13,600
- Per Day – 485
- Per Hour – 51

We have been investigating a number of options in relation to the telephone system and we are currently in discussions with the system provider to upgrade the system and centralise the call handling function. As you will appreciate significant changes such as this cannot be rushed in to, and implementation plans need to be formulated and approved in order to minimise disruption and ensure that any change results in an overall improvement and not additional frustrations.

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind patients that we do offer a range of services via our online portal (systmonline). This service is available on request from the Practice and provides access to appointments, cancellations, repeat prescriptions, test results and medical records.

Thanking all patients on behalf of Chapelgreen Practice

BD Foster

Blake Foster
Practice Manager