

The Bedford Park Surgery

Covid Newsletter

Dear Patients

Please have a read of the information below related to current Covid events and how this is impacting the General Practice and patient access.

VACCINE

We have started to send our patients aged over 80 years to the Ealing Town Hall to get their first vaccine done. Patients are being sent in batches of 12 per practice to allow all practices in Ealing to send patients across. We have had two weeks of this already including this week and we hope for more appointments for this vaccine to be rolled out in the coming weeks. All the patients in this category are being called by a clinician to discuss consent and whether they would like to have the vaccine and discuss any side effects or suitability based on health conditions. Once consent has been given the patient is contacted by an admin member of the team to book an appointment. This is a slow process due to the way the Pfizer vaccine has to be stored and administered however, with the positive news of the Astra Zeneca vaccine being approved, we hope to work with the CCG to start vaccinating more patients and perhaps at GP surgery level, as this new vaccine can be stored on site in the GP surgery.

We advise patients to be very patient with us as we have to do all the checks with each patient before an appointment is offered. If you still have not been offered an appointment please do not worry, you will get one as we move on.

This is a very fluid situation so we need to work very quickly as things change on a daily basis.

Please see some information from Ealing CCG below:

- Please don't contact your doctor or the NHS asking about vaccination; this is not a service that you are able to book in advance.
- The NHS will contact you when your turn comes in the months ahead. If you are contacted, please do attend the appointment.
- We would encourage those over 80 and in the government's priority list to be ready to accept their invite when called by their GP.
- In the meantime, it is vitally important that we all continue to follow the national public health guidance: wash your hands regularly, wear a face covering in enclosed spaces and maintain safe social distancing. Covid-19 is still very prevalent and highly infectious: the risk of catching it is the same as ever for people who have not been vaccinated.

For more information from the Covid website via the government please click below

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/>

A PPOINTMENTS OVER THE NEXT TWO WEEKS

From 31 Dec for the next two weeks we have been advised by NHS England that we are in level 5 Emergency response and for that reason General Practice is open but for very restricted services until further notice.

We are going to disable the online appointments system for this duration so patients cannot book any appointments online.

All calls to make an appointment MUST come through to reception and will be booked if they are high priority or acutely urgent. Please see examples below of what we will continue to see patients for:

- Acutely unwell adults and children both covid and non covid related
- Any patient who has been advised by NHS 111 to make an emergency appointment.
- COPD or Asthma patients who have been admitted in hospitals in the last 12 months or exacerbations on more than 2 occasions
- Cancer care with symptoms with new or ongoing concerns.
- Smears with the nurse
- All childhood vaccinations with the nurse
- Palliative care and end of life support
- Blood test or investigations for immediately necessary conditions that make a difference to treatment
- Seasonal vaccines such as flu, pneumonia etc. for high risk or other eligible patients.
- Essential injections e.g. prostap
- Safeguarding issue related to child or adult
- Wound management and dressings and removal of stiches
- Acute home visits only for housebound patients following remote triage and only if clinically necessary

Any face to face appointments will be booked for things like lumps or rashes or via the GP on triage only.

REFERRALS AND PLANNED PROCEDURES

Public messaging - Pausing planned procedures – due to rise in Covid-19 numbers

Like the rest of the capital, hospitals across North West London are now very busy. At a sector and trust level, we've launched plans to care safely for this increase in patients and actions include standing up additional critical care capacity with some staff redeployed and on standby for redeployment to support patients.

With admission rates still rising due to Covid-19, we have made a decision to reduce our levels of non-urgent, planned care and some outpatient appointments. This will allow us to continue to provide all urgent and emergency care, including cancer care.

Patients who are affected by this decision will be contacted directly as soon as possible. If they do not hear from us, patients should visit their hospital or attend their phone/video appointment as planned.

We are already taking every precaution to ensure our patients, visitors and staff are safe in our hospitals and encourage patients that require urgent or emergency care to access the support they need.

We know this will be disappointing news for those waiting for planned treatment, and we are sorry for this. We will monitor this position on an on-going basis so that we can stand back up non urgent care as soon as possible.

Visiting

To keep patients on our wards safe, visitors will not be able to attend any of our sites; however, compassionate visits to vulnerable individuals can still be arranged with ward teams.

We are currently prioritising 2 week cancer referrals and TIA and Rapid access Chest pain clinics which will continue to be seen.

INFORMATION LINKS FOR PARENTS WITH CHILDREN

For parents who have small children and with concerns on what to do in the current times, please check the information we have on our website under Coronavirus page titled Covid and Children or click on the link below. We have some very useful helpful information that you can check.

<https://www.bedford-park.co.uk/coronavirus/children-and-covid/>

WEBSITE

For any up to date information please do refer to our Coronavirus page on our website on the link below. Hopefully this may help answering some of your questions.

<https://www.bedford-park.co.uk/coronavirus/>