

Appointment System

GP Appointments

As a result of your feedback, we have substantially increased the number of face-to-face GP appointments available to book. We take every opportunity to review our appointment system (when making changes we still need to comply with Government and local COVID infection control guidance which does restrict patient flow).

Appointments bookable online

The following appointments are now bookable online (see the online services section on this newsletter for more information):

- GP telephone consultations
- Cervical screening (smear test) appointments.
To book a smear test, you must have received an invitation from the cervical screening service.
- Blood tests will soon be available to book online

Long Term Condition (LTC) Reviews

Long Term Conditions (LTCs) are conditions which need an annual review. These include Hypertension, Coronary Heart Disease (CHD)/Stroke, Diabetes, COPD, Asthma, Learning Disabilities, Dementia and Mental Health. During the pandemic, we prioritised reviews for our most at risk patients.

We will resume routine LTC reviews in your birth month from April

If you have an LTC, please phone to book your appointments the month before your birth month. You do not need to wait for an invitation to book your appointment so put this in your diary now!

www.fireclayhealth.nhs.uk/appointments

Staff News

We have been working very hard to recruit new staff over the past few months. Many of these are brand new roles within Fireclay or the PCN (Primary Care Network) which will directly benefit patients by offering more services. The PCN includes Fireclay Health & Old School Surgery and enables us to work together and recruit to new clinical roles. These new staff include:

- Two Care Coordinators have been recruited from internal candidates. This is a new role looking after the needs of our more vulnerable patients.
- Three new receptionists
- Two receptionists promoted to new reception lead role, to guide and support the team
- An Urgent Care Nurse to support the urgent care team with minor illness appointments (new role)
- A Nurse for respiratory LTC reviews and other treatment room capacity
- A Health Care Assistant with some capacity to see housebound patients
- A Physiotherapist
- An additional GP joining in November (previous trainee with Fireclay)

Some of these staff have already started working in the practice and we are excited to welcome the other new staff to our team!

Leavers

- Nurse Sheila Gay is retiring after 18 years at Lodgeside and 44 years working in the NHS. Sheila will be greatly missed by staff and patients.
- Dr Pippa Stables is currently on a 6-month sabbatical and will return to work in August

www.fireclayhealth.nhs.uk/our-team

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

We are currently looking for new members to join our Patient Participation Group. Our PPG meets every quarter and is important in giving feedback and developing ideas for Fireclay Health. If you are interested in joining the group, please email fireclayhealth@nhs.net and mark for the attention of Alex.

www.fireclayhealth.nhs.uk/patient-participation-and-feedback

Ordering Prescriptions

Prescriptions can be ordered in three ways:

- Online via the NHS App or other patient online service you are registered with
- Directly through your local pharmacy
- Drop a paper request slip into reception at St George Health Centre or Lodgeside Surgery

We no longer accept prescription requests over the phone as we aim to keep our phone lines free for patients to book appointments and for other queries.

When you order a repeat prescription, **please allow 7-10 days for your medication to be ready at the pharmacy.** Although Fireclay process your prescription within 2 days, the medication itself can take a further week to be ready in the pharmacy.

www.fireclayhealth.nhs.uk/prescriptions

Online Services & the NHS App

There are now many services available online. If you register for online services, it will be much easier and quicker for you access our services.

Most patients now have the NHS App (as this is where the COVID pass can be accessed). 54% of patients are now registered on the NHS App which can be used to order repeat prescriptions, book appointments and view test results.

We encourage patients to register and use the NHS App (you can do this on a smartphone or a computer). If you don't have the NHS App, you can still use other online services (such as Patient Access). Please speak to a receptionist or see our website for more details.

www.fireclayhealth.nhs.uk/online-services

Self-Care

Pharmacy First

20% of GP appointments are taken up by minor illnesses which could be better dealt with in other settings, such as pharmacies or by caring for yourself. Many pharmacies are open during evenings and weekends, and you do not need an appointment. Please visit www.bnssgccc.nhs.uk/pharmacyfirst for more information.

Stock your medicine cabinet

For self-care it is important to keep a well-stocked medicine cabinet at home with essentials such as:

- painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen
- antihistamines
- anti-diarrhoeal medicine
- oral rehydration salts
- indigestion treatment
- first aid kit including plasters, bandages and a thermometer

Mental Health Self-Referral

You can refer yourself to VitaMinds for mental wellbeing support at www.vitahealthgroup.co.uk/make-a-referral

Health Apps

There are many health Apps out there, which can be difficult to navigate. There is a website to help signpost you to tried and tested Apps. The Apps that appear have all been scored and those that come up first with the highest percentage score are generally deemed the most relevant. Please visit <https://bnssg.orcha.co.uk/>

www.fireclayhealth.nhs.uk/self-care

Please visit our website at www.fireclayhealth.nhs.uk for more details about anything in this newsletter or you can email fireclayhealth@nhs.net if you have questions

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