

PATIENT NEWSLETTER



Autumn 2020

CODFORD | FOVANT | SHREWTON | WILTON

DEAR PATIENTS -

Over the last few months, it is likely that you've noticed a difference in the way things are being carried out at The Orchard Partnership as we manage coronavirus (Covid-19).

From the outset, we want to say thank you! Thank you for adapting so quickly to these new ways of working - it's been drastic, yet fundamental change but much needed to ensure the safety of you, our patients, as well as our staff.

To slow down the spread of coronavirus, we have worked to reduce the number of people coming into the Practice by using more telephone appointments and video consultations using AccuRx. We are also using AccuRx for you to send images to us as requested by clinicians. Therefore we kindly ask that you *do not* email photos or images unless they have been requested by a clinician. For more information on how to use AccuRx please visit <https://support.accurx.com/en/collections/2279595-accurx-for-patients>.

The doors will remain locked to ensure there are a minimal number of people in the Surgery and that we can maintain social distancing. Our top priority is, and has always been, to keep you and our staff safe while ensuring you get the care you need. This is why we ask you to continue to use our online services to order medication and obtain your test results. To book a telephone appointment, please phone the surgery. This will often mean you get to see the right person to help, much quicker.

PLEASE DO NOT VISIT US WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT

We would also like to take this opportunity to introduce Dr Edward Rendell who joined us at the beginning of September. Dr Rendell will be based at The Old Orchard Surgery, working on a Friday morning.

Finally, we hope you will find the following FAQ information informative and helpful. However, if you do have any comments, concerns or questions, then please do get in touch.

Once again, we thank you for your support and understanding as we all adapt to a new way of working.

Best wishes, Drs Meader, Macready, Banfield, Pickup, Corke, Bond, Butcher & Kinlin

The way we access GP services has changed. Here are some frequently asked questions that may help you to understand these changes:-

Why can't I walk into my GP practice?

The Covid-19 pandemic has forced us all to work differently to help slow down the spread of the virus. All healthcare settings are taking special measures to protect you, the public and their staff. GP practices are working as hard as ever, but differently.

Where possible, we want to avoid people having to wait inside a waiting room together, as we know this increases the risk of the virus spreading. Like hospitals and dentists, we have also had to change how we offer our services to you.

If you do need to come in, then we can ensure there are a minimal number of people in the practice, we can maintain social distancing and keep patients and staff safe.

Why can't I book a face-to-face appointment?

We have adapted the way in which you can get an appointment quickly and safely.

Most patient's health concerns can be managed over the phone or via video consultation. This is why we are providing you with either an initial phone call or video consultation to decide what would be the best way to help. If we can support you without needing you to come into the practice then we reduce the need for you to travel and reduce the risk of the virus spreading.

If you do need a face-to-face appointment, you will be invited to attend the practice.

This helps to keep both our patients and our staff safe.

What if I don't have access to a smartphone or web camera?

While technology has evolved and supports us all in many different ways in our day-to-day lives, we appreciate not everyone will have access to a smartphone or web camera for a video consultation.

We can still talk to you on your mobile phone or landline.

How do I get a repeat prescription?

Please continue to order your medication online or by putting a repeat request in an envelope through our surgery doors.

Do not visit the Practice to make a request.

How do I cancel or move a booked appointment?

Please book appointments online or over the telephone.

DO NOT VISIT US TO DO THIS

A clinician will call or text you with the details to set up a video consultation when necessary or speak with you over the telephone.

What if I'm not registered with a GP practice?

You can call any GP surgery to get emergency treatment for up to 14 days if you are not registered with a GP or are away from home.

If your treatment will last longer than 14 days, you'll have to register as a temporary or permanent resident. You can find more information about this via www.nhs.uk and search 'how to register with a GP practice'.

If you are a resident in the area and need to register with a practice, then it's best to look at practices where your home falls within its geographical boundaries. You can check a GP practice boundary by visiting their website.

Once you have selected which practice you would like to register with, make contact with them either by calling or visiting their website.

You will be asked to fill out a registration form and once it is completed and returned, NHS England will transfer your medical records to your new practice. They will also write to you to confirm your registration with your chosen practice.

How do I see a GP during the evening & weekends?

For evening and weekend access to GP's, please either visit 111.nhs.uk or call NHS 111.



Will I need to wear a face mask if I come into my practice for an appointment?

To help limit the spread of the virus, we are asking for all patients aged 12 and over to wear a face covering when they come into the practice. This doesn't have to be a face mask, but a cloth covering which covers your mouth and nose while allowing you to breath comfortably. It can be as simple as a scarf or bandana that ties behind the head. You can find additional information by visiting:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering>

What do I do if I think I have coronavirus (Covid-19)?

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- High temperature (this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back).
- New continuous cough (this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours) If you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual.
- Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste (this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.)#

If you are experiencing one or more of these symptoms then **DO NOT** visit your GP practice. You should visit 111.nhs.uk/covid-19 or call NHS 111 if you cannot get help online.

You must self-isolate for 7 days from when your symptoms started. Anyone you live with, or in your support bubble, who does not have symptoms must self-isolate for 14 days from when the first person started having symptoms.

You must also ask for a test as soon as you start showing symptoms. You can do this online by visiting:-

www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test

