

YMG Update for Patients

We wanted to update you on some of our current systems during the pandemic.

We continue to assess all requests for a GP/UCP or nurse appointments with a phone call initially. If necessary a video call or face to face appointment can then be arranged.

Some patients will be asked to text in a photograph to help with assessment of their condition – this is for example particularly useful for rashes and other skin conditions.

Video consults work through your mobile phone. You will be texted a link and clicking on the link sets up a secure face-time /skype type connection. We can also offer e-consults for certain conditions – this is a kind of email consultation with a clinician.

What to expect when you come for an Appointment

At our sites things are running in a different way from 'usual'

- Please arrive as close to your appointment time as possible. You should wait outside the building.
- At your appointment time you will be called on your mobile and asked to make your way to the door. The clinician will then come and collect you from the door and escort you the clinical room they are working in. They will open doors etc.(this saves you touching the door handles).
- They will be wearing gloves and apron, facemask and visor or goggles. We ask you to wear a face covering when visiting our sites –this is an added layer of protection reducing the likelihood of viral transmission.

Once in the clinical room your appointment can continue as it usually would. You may though be seated further away from the clinician than before the Pandemic. It may well be that the doctor or nurse just needs to examine you or carry out the procedure you have come for – most of the information we need from you will have been gathered on the phone so we are likely to need to talk to you less than we usually would. The aim is to reduce the time you are in contact with us as Health Care Professionals.

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Information for specific patient groups

Some of our sites are open for specific groups of patients at certain times – for instance patients who are shielding or young children attending for vaccinations. Some sites have only been open for staff to work in to allow social distancing.

If you have a 'long term condition' (for example COPD diabetes or hypertension (amongst others) and usually have a regular review appointment (often near your birthday) we will contact you as close to when your review is due as we can. We will talk to you on the phone initially to carry out as much of the review in that way as we can. We may then need to make a face to face appointment for you if you need for instance a blood test or your blood pressure checking. If we feel it is safe to do so we may defer this part of the check up until later in the year.

What can you do to help us to help you at the moment?

- 1) Make sure we have up to date contact details for you. Please let us know if they have changed.
- 2) Consider if other services may be able support or advise you – could you visit your local pharmacy for advice for instance? Have you checked our website to see if the answer to your question is on there? Signing up for online access to your own medical records allows you to check results etc
- 3) Think about when you call us – if your problem isn't urgent for a Monday then please ring later in the week – or avoid the morning rush of phone calls (when you are likely to wait longer for your call to be answered.
- 4) If you have a long term condition like diabetes or hypertension then consider borrowing or purchasing a machine to check your own blood pressure. This may reduce your need to attend the surgery now and in the future

Thank you for bearing with us in these challenging times.

We know change is difficult but the changes we have had to make have been to protect you our patients whilst minimising risk to our team (that's important too because if we get sick then we can't continue to provide the services we do)

We are here for you – call us if you need to.

We apologise if you miss your usual visits to 'see' us – but currently it is lots safer for us to work like this.

Dr Jane L Inwood, GP Partner, York Medical Group

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