**ELM TREE SURGERY NEWS June-July 2021**

Thank you to all our patients for their co-operation, common sense, and patience in helping us to provide safe and effective primary health care. We have continued to offer full services since March 2020, and indeed have had nearly as many consultations per month than before the lock downs: 2595 in May 2019 and 2566 in May 2021.

It seems that the Covid vaccination programme has been even more successful than we could have hoped and we strongly urge everyone to take up their offers of vaccination when invited.

We are all looking forward to the easing of the Covid restrictions but it is important that we continue to follow the emerging government advice.

As the restrictions ease, we all need to be aware of the continuing issues relating to biosecurity and, here at Elm Tree Surgery, being mindful of this whilst providing our services in our very small building.

We plan to unlock the front door later this summer; however we ask that most patient contact continues to take place through the front window because we will have very limited waiting spaces for elderly and vulnerable within the building, compared to pre-pandemic times, as we have had to make changes in the building to accommodate the extra services that we are offering.

Telephone consultations will continue to be the preferred consultation method, thus allowing us to provide a more efficient and quicker service and enabling patients to remain at home or work, rather than travelling to the surgery, arranging time away from work, or sorting out child care.

Our receptionists will continue to ask for the reason you are requesting an appointment as this enables us to offer timely appointments with the most appropriate clinician, which could be our nurses, physiotherapist, clinical pharmacist, midwives or social prescribers rather than a GP.

Whilst you may have read in the papers that GPs are required to offer face to face consultations on request this is not actually correct - face to face consultations, as now, will be offered if clinically appropriate. This enables us to keep the surgery as clean as possible, to reduce the risk of infection for our patients and staff, and to avoid congestion in communal areas.

Prescriptions and dispensing will continue as it is now. If you can, please use on-line ordering as this is the easiest way to request your medicines.

Rather than coming to the surgery we would request that you use the telephone or on-line services to:

* make or change appointments
* order medicines
* collect medicines, unless you have been advised by us that they are ready for collection
* make general or other enquiries

If you do have a face to face appointment with one of our clinicians please do not arrive too early for your booked appointment and come alone if possible and safe. Obviously we would expect a parent to bring a child but, if at all possible, please just bring the child who has the appointment.

We want to open up the surgery without being overwhelmed, overcrowded and unsafe.

The doctors would also like to pay tribute to everyone in the surgery for their dedication and adaptability and sheer hard work during the pandemic.

**SUMMARY**

Only come into the surgery for:

* pre-booked face to face appointments

Go to the Front Window to:

* collect medication when you have been advised that they are ready
* collect or deliver specimens and letters
* collect or deliver registration forms

Use the telephone or on-line for:

* all prescription requests
* booking or altering appointments
* all other enquiries

Appointments can be booked with:

* Nurses
* Midwives
* Physiotherapist
* Clinical Pharmacist
* Social Prescribers

**USEFUL NUMBERS**

111 for medical advice or treatment; call this number when the surgery is closed

119 for all Covid vaccine-related queries

999 for medical emergencies - especially chest pain, severe shortness of breath or possible stroke

01793 783336 Shrivenham Pharmacy for advice and treatment of minor ailments and illness

**OTHER NEWS**

The COVID-19 vaccination status service is now live.

People in England can access their vaccination status via the NHS App, through [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://generalpracticebulletin.cmail20.com/t/d-l-qdjjrjy-jlddotldr-y/) or by telephoning 119 and requesting a letter (COVID-19 vaccination service).

Please do not ask the surgery for this information.