

THE ARLINGTON ROAD MEDICAL PRACTICE NEWSLETTER



April 2020

Keeping our patients and staff as safe as possible, as we all face the Coronavirus Pandemic together, is our top priority. If you have had reason to contact us in the last few weeks you will be aware that we are working very differently to normal to ensure we continue to provide essential healthcare to our patients, whilst protecting them and us from unnecessary contact.

So you may be wondering how we achieve this balance – after all, other illnesses and conditions don't go away just because we are dealing with a global pandemic.

To help us help you we will outline below how we are dealing with different aspects of patient care...

Appointments and Telephone Advice

The Surgery door is closed - the only patients entering the surgery will have been triaged by a clinician first and given an appropriate appointment. If you arrive without an appointment, you will be asked to return home and call the surgery so that your problem can be triaged appropriately by a clinician.

If you have symptoms of coronavirus (a high temperature or a new, continuous cough), use the 111 coronavirus service. **DO NOT** attend the Practice or go directly to a Hospital. If you do not have access to the internet, then please call NHS 111 by dialling 111 from your telephone keypad.

If you need an appointment or telephone advice not related to Coronavirus, please telephone the Surgery on 727531 (see also 'Contacting the Practice' for alternative methods). A receptionist will take your details and a clinician will call you back. We are finding that the vast majority of problems can be dealt with over the phone or by video consultation. This means very few patients are needing to be seen face to face, keeping patient footfall in the surgery to a minimum

Another service which was recently launched prior to the Coronavirus outbreak, which continues to be available is Livi. You may have been sent information in the post about this Video Consultation Service. Using the service requires you to download an app on your smart phone or tablet and registering. The doctors running this service are not from Arlington Road Medical Practice, but your medical record can be accessed and will be updated. You can book an appointment and the GP will phone you using the app to begin the appointment.

Pre-booked appointments with our Practice Nurses and Clinics:

If you have a pre-booked appointment, somebody from the Practice will be contacting you to

inform you whether or not the appointment will still go ahead or whether alternative arrangements have been made.

Please remember that although we are very busy and having to adopt new ways of working, sometimes on a daily basis, we are still here for you. If you have a health concern which cannot be self-managed with pharmacy advice, please contact us and we will ensure you speak to a clinician who can advise you and arrange a face to face consultation if they feel it is necessary.

Prescriptions

Regular prescriptions requests continue to be issued by the Practice. However, if you normally collect your prescription from the surgery and have not given us any different instructions following the SMS message we sent on 11.03.2020, then your prescription will now be sent directly to Arlington Pharmacy. This is because all prescriptions are now being sent electronically to reduce handling between surgery and patient then patient and pharmacy. If after using Arlington Pharmacy for the first time, you would prefer to nominate another pharmacy, please let us know and any further electronic prescriptions will be sent to your nominated pharmacy.

Please allow extra time for the surgery to issue and the pharmacy to dispense your prescription. Both parties are extremely busy and leaving your prescription request too near the time you will run out, not only puts added pressure on the surgery and pharmacy but causes you unnecessary stress.

We will not be issuing multiple months of prescriptions at a time as this puts more strain on the supply chain and leads to wastage if your medication is changed.

Ways to order your prescription:

- We have **three** online methods for ordering – one is via the surgery website at www.arlingtonroadsurgery.nhs.uk another is for you to register for Patient Access, an online service for patients, that is linked to your medical record at the Surgery and finally we have just launched a new service called Engage Consult – please see separate article regarding this.
- You can post your prescription request to us.
- You can ask your regular pharmacy to request your prescription on your behalf.
- We have an external post box on the wall to the right of our front door where you can post your prescription request.



**Engage
Consult**

NEW—Contacting the Practice Online

We have just introduced a new way to contact the Practice for both non-urgent medical advice and administrative queries.

This is called Engage Consult and can be accessed from the home page of our practice website. You can use this service from any mobile phone, tablet or computer. You will need to have an email address. Registration is a simple process and the website has been designed in a straightforward, user-friendly way. Step-by-step guides are available on our website.

[Continued over leaf...](#)

We would encourage patients who are comfortable with using online services to give this a try, instead of waiting to get through to us on the telephone. Not only will this reduce your frustration during our busy periods but will also free up our phone lines for our more vulnerable patients, who are not able to use alternative services.

Please remember this service is for **non-urgent** problems/requests only.

Current Government Guidance EVERYONE must follow

(Taken from Government Website 20.04.2020 - to ensure you are following the correct guidance at a later date, please follow the link on the homepage of our Practice website)

Stay at home

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- Do not meet others, even friends or family.
- You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

Current Government Guidance for those with symptoms or living with someone with symptoms

(Taken from Government Website 20.04.2020 - to ensure you are following the correct guidance at a later date, please follow the link on the homepage of our Practice website)

Symptoms

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

Main messages

- if you live alone and you have symptoms of coronavirus illness (COVID-19), however mild, stay at home for **7 days** from when your symptoms started.
- after 7 days, if you do not have a high temperature, you do not need to continue to self-isolate. If you still have a high temperature, keep self-isolating until your temperature returns to normal. You do not need to self-isolate if you just have a cough after 7 days, as a cough can last for several weeks after the infection has gone
- if you live with others and you are the first in the household to have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), then you must stay at home for 7 days, but all other household members who remain well must stay at home and not leave the house for **14 days**. The

14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill. For anyone else in the household who starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for 7 days from when the symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14 day isolation period.

- staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community
- if you can, move any vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) out of your home, to stay with friends or family for the duration of the home isolation period
- if you cannot move vulnerable people out of your home, stay away from them as much as possible
- reduce the spread of infection in your home: wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser; cover coughs and sneezes

If you have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms:

- do **not** go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital
- you do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home
- testing for coronavirus (COVID-19) is not needed if you're staying at home

If you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse, or your symptoms do not get better after 7 days, then use the NHS 111 online coronavirus (COVID-19) service. If you do not have internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999

If you develop new coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms at any point after ending your first period of isolation (self or household) then you need to follow the same guidance on self-isolation again.

Support Groups This is a challenging and anxious time for all walks of life and depending on our circumstances different issues will affect some more than others. Some may be feeling overwhelmed with how their workload has increased as we face up to new challenges, whilst others may be laid off from work with financial worries and not enough to occupy their minds. Some may have everyone at home all the time and feel that in supporting their children's education, running the house, feeding their family and fulfilling all of their normal responsibilities, they are being pulled in all directions and long for some quiet time alone, whilst others are isolated alone in their own homes and are longing for the company of those who would normally visit them. These are just a few examples of the challenges we are facing and although we know everyone is in the same metaphorical boat, it can make us feel very alone and unsupported.

There are a number of support groups out there – some already established, others developing to aid the current crisis and we felt it might be helpful to list some of the services we have been made aware of at the Surgery. **Please note that Arlington Road Medical Practice does not in any way endorse the services listed below.**

Remember feeling lonely, low, stressed and overwhelmed does not make you a failure. Talk to others about how you feel and seek help when you feel you need it. Although we are not able to meet socially at the moment, talking things through with a friend, family or a support group may help.

Turnover for support groups...

Eastbourne Borough Community Hub Phone: 01323 679 722 (press option 1)

New community hubs have opened in response to coronavirus emergency. The community hubs will focus their help on people who do not have an extreme medical condition but are vulnerable because they are isolated from help, too unwell to buy food or have other pressing difficulties. The hubs will also bring together volunteers, donations and projects to co-ordinate East Sussex's community response to the virus.

Age Concern Phone: 01323 638 474 for advice between 10am-midday or email - info@ageconcerneastbourne.co.uk

Everycare Care Agency Phone: 01323 720 254 "If you are isolating and haven't anyone visiting you and you are feeling lonely, give us a ring and have a virtual cuppa tea and a chat, we will always have 10 mins for you."

Call-A-Cab Eastbourne Ltd Phone: 01323 746 746 Collecting prescriptions and groceries.

Local Adult Mental Health Service visit www.healthinmind.org.uk or **Phone: 0300 00 30 130**

Mental Health Charity for Children - www.youngminds.org.uk or **Parent helpline 0808 802 5544** or **Children text YM to 85258**

Samaritans Phone: 116123

Citizen's advice Phone 03444 111 444 or visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk for national site or www.eastbournecab.co.uk for local site.

Care for the carers Phone 01323 738390 or 07860 077300 (if you'd prefer to send a text message) Email: info@cftc.org.uk Website: www.cftc.org.uk

This is by no means a complete list of the different support agencies out there - just a few that we have been made aware of as a Practice.

If you need help, please do contact the Eastbourne Borough Community Hub at the top of this list, who will be able to put you in touch with the service most suited to your needs.

A little light relief! **N**ow we thought you might enjoy hearing some 'normal' news that isn't about Coronavirus!

It's been a while since we last did a Practice Newsletter, so we'll give you a summary of the happenings in the Practice over the last year...

2019 saw a lot of new comings and goings. Dr Rob Deery and Dr Debra Davison both retired and this followed Dr Lofts' retirement the previous year. Dr Higgs also resigned as a partner and no longer has his own list of patients but does still help us out from time to time. This has been the biggest reduction in Partners in a short space of time that the Practice has ever experienced and for a few months meant we were struggling with clinician numbers. However, we are pleased to be able to report that we have now recruited four part-time GPs. One as a partner, Dr Adam Zacks and three as salaried GP's, Dr Miriam Malak, Dr Nicola Beck and Dr Rose Moore-Moffatt. We are delighted to have them all on board and feel to be in a better position staff-wise, which we are extremely thankful for at the present time.



From left to right: Dr Adam Zacks, Dr Miriam Malak, Dr Nicola Beck & Dr Rose Moore-Moffatt

The Nursing team has also seen some changes with Nurses Kate and Catherine (joint Head Nurses) resigning last year. We wish them well in their new pathways and welcome new Head Nurse Paul Lambirth, who has begun leading his team in these unprecedented times.

We have recruited several new admin members of staff, who you may have already met on reception. They have all settled into their new positions well and have adapted admirably to the current situation we find ourselves in.

A time for celebration!

Dr Williams, Senior Partner and Shirley Moth, Practice Manager have both completed 40 years' service at Arlington Road! Dr Williams in December 2019 and Shirley in March 2020. We would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank them both for their unstinting dedication to the Practice and the NHS.

Dr Williams also reached a milestone birthday in February this year, and we were able to go out as a Practice to celebrate Dr Williams' 70th Birthday as well as his and Shirley's 40 years' service, a fantastic evening at Pomodoro Mozzarella was enjoyed by all.



A Word about Our Amazing Team

The Coronavirus Pandemic has seen all members of the Practice team having to adapt the way they work and fulfil different roles. Each individual, from the newest member of the admin team to the most senior clinician, has risen to the challenge admirably and we couldn't be prouder of the amazing team work and support that has been displayed on all levels.

We'd also like to thank patients for their kind words of appreciation and encouragement, they really do mean a lot.

Now finally we can't stress enough the importance of adhering to the Government advice...

