

CONTACT

KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE THROUGH THE PATIENTS PARTICIPATION GROUP



PRACTICE NEWS SUMMER 2020



Clinical Team

We have decided to further increase our GP team with the appointment of Dr Aimee Lambert for 3 sessions per week from August 2020. Aimee has just completed her GP training with us and is already a valued member of the surgery team.

We are pleased to welcome 3 more GP Registers, Dr Waqas Ahmed, Dr Yahaya Maiza and Abiola Osuntogun, who are all due to start in August.

Dr Grace Monnery has completed her Foundation Doctor session with us and will be replaced by two new Foundation Doctors; Madeeha Anwar and Fatima Ali, both who will be with us until February 2021.

Impact of COVID-19

The impact of the pandemic has, of course, been felt by everyone. It is particularly sad when we see a patient's life end prematurely, and to see the impact it has had on everyone's families.

Surgery life has changed dramatically. Whilst we have remained open throughout, we have had to put in necessary restrictions on patient visits to the Surgery. Our clinical staff have had to get used to using PPE and sticking to new infection prevention regimes, and our ways of working in Reception and Administration have changed greatly to ensure social distancing.

The majority of appointments are now by telephone or video consultation, but where we need to see patients face to face, we do. The Nurses have continued to do immunisations, smears, dressings and so on. GPs are inviting in people in who need to be examined.

Patients are asked to wait outside for their appointments and wear masks in the Surgery. We know this is inconvenient, but it is the most sensible way we can reduce risks of spreading the virus. This arrangement will continue for the foreseeable future.

Patients who report Covid symptoms have attended the Covid Hub site at the University. This site has now closed, but as winter nears we expect a similar site to be opened up in the Town.

This way of working is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. We hope to be able to see more patients in the surgery gradually.

The key message is that we are NOT CLOSED. Although we are managing activity carefully you must contact us in the normal way and we will find the best way to help you, whether face to face, on a video call or a telephone call. We can still arrange blood tests and refer you to the hospital if required.

We have received a great deal of praise from patients during this time, which has had a positive impact on our staff, as they too have

personally and emotionally been struck by the impacts of Covid-19.

We do our best to praise our staff and make work a happy environment for them but hope you too can contribute to this by having patience and understanding when having to face new challenges at the surgery.

If you wish to offer feedback, we encourage you to go onto NHS choices by following this link <https://www.nhs.uk/services/gp-surgery/king-edward-road-surgery/K83012/leave-a-review/visit-date>

Your feedback is important to us and praise is greatly appreciated.

Improving Access

We would like to draw your attention to two new systems which will help you access to GP services.

1. LIVI GP Video Consultations

The practice now has a link to the LIVI system, a free online GP consultation service. From your smart phone/tablet/pc you can access a GP on line 24 hours a day at: -

<https://www.livi.co.uk/>

You will need to download the LIVI app and provide proof of id for security purposes before you can use the systems. Once you have been set up, you can request a consultation and within 30 minutes a GP will contact you by video consultation. They will have access to your medical record, if you give the permission before the consultation, otherwise they cannot see your records. The GPs you see will not be employed by the Practice, but they are all qualified GPs.

Use of LIVI is a good alternative to 111, and may also suit those with straightforward problems, when you may not wish to wait to see one of our GPs.

2. Doctorlink

With the aim of improving access to our services we have introduced a new optional online system called Doctorlink. You can enter details of your symptoms and Doctorlink acts as a virtual triage, which reports to our Reception. Reception will respond that day by giving you an

appointment, or other help. The system can also give you advice about alternative ways to deal with your problem which may not need an appointment, e.g. go to a Pharmacy.

The advantages for you are that you can save time on the telephone and get good advice, without needing to speak to anyone, at a time convenient to you.

The advantage for the Surgery is that it may reduce unnecessary appointments and traffic on our phones.

Simply download the free app, or go to our website, or doctorlink.com. You will need to register once.

Flu Vaccinations

We are preparing for the regular flu season. The Government has advised us to prepare for “an expanded flu season” involving all over 50-year olds, but as yet we have no details as to how these will be carried out. As usual, the following will be eligible:

- pregnant women
- anyone living with long term medical conditions
- everyone aged 65 and over
- people with caring responsibilities

The usual full criteria can be accessed via the attached link.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/who-should-have-flu-vaccine/>

More details of our flu clinics will be available in late August.

Our Telephones

Over the last few months we have had a serious of technical problems with our telephone system, which has meant longer waits and on some occasion no service at all.

We apologise for the problems these faults may have caused you. We have had a fundamental review of our system with our supplier and key improvements have been made. We are now confident of trouble-free phone lines from now on.

Blood tests

Covid19 has reduced capacity for blood tests both at the Surgery and the Hospital, as more time is needed for each patient to allow for cleaning, PPE changes, and social distancing.

We are continuing to invite patients for essential blood tests but as capacity at the Surgery is much reduced, we encourage you to book at the hospital if you can, as wait times should be shorter.

Appointments for both paediatric and adult blood taking can be booked Monday to Friday between 9am and 3:30pm by phoning on 01604 523303 or 01604 544190.

The **adult phlebotomy** service will be from 8am - 4pm Monday to Friday and 8am – 12:30pm on Saturday.

The **paediatric phlebotomy** service will return to the blood taking unit at 8am – 11:30am, on Monday – Friday.

Patients must wear **face coverings, maintain social - distancing, and must attend alone** where possible

The **waiting area has limited spaces**, so please only attend at the time of your appointment. If there are any reasons why wearing a face covering or attending alone is not possible, please inform the team when booking your appointment.

Patient Participation Group

It is very much regretted that, due to the current situation, the PPG is unable to function as normal and cannot make any plans at this time.

We will, therefore, not be able to host the usual Macmillan Coffee Morning and are unable to make any arrangements as to whether we shall be able to hold a Christmas Raffle.

As some of you will recall, we were unable to hold a Christmas Raffle in 2019, due to illness within the PPG, and we are unable to see the possibility of arranging a Christmas Raffle this year, making this the second year when we have been unable to raise funds.

The PPG is self-funding, with the monies it raises used to donate towards items for the surgery, not covered by the NHS, and for the printing of the quarterly newsletter, Contact.

Over the past 10 years the PPG has purchased or contributed to a wide array of items. These have included 2 large activity centres for children's play; a Pharma Refrigerator for the storage of flue injections; a Hyfrecator to be used in the small operations room; 4 high backed arm chairs; 2 Otosopes for the Nurses rooms; various blood pressure machines for the Nurses use.

The PPG paid towards necessary repairs to the couch in one of the Nurses' rooms; donated 50% towards the cost of the new chair for the Phlebotomy service (Abington Surgery donated 50%, as it shares the service); 4 Paediatric Sats Probes and a Thermometer for the nurses rooms. We contributed towards the purchase of a new Spirometer for use within the surgery; we purchased 50% of the replacement chairs required for the waiting rooms, and purchased the custom made oak bench for the foyer area for use by patients awaiting taxis etc.

We take the liberty, therefore, of asking if anyone would care to make a small donation to help boost funds over the coming weeks. The PPG would be very appreciative of your support.

Muriel James

Chair KERS PPG

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