

September 2020

Dear patient,

A message from the GPs of Royal Crescent and Preston Road Practice

Like wider society, General Practice has had to adapt to new ways of working as we work together to manage coronavirus (Covid-19).

We want to start off by saying thank you.

Thank you for adapting so quickly to these new ways of working – it has been the drastic, yet fundamental change needed to ensure the safety of you and our staff.

To slow down the spread of coronavirus, we have worked to reduce the number of people coming into the practice by using online consultation systems like e-Consult (on our website), telephone appointments and video consultations.

Our top priority is, and has always been, to keep you and our staff safe while ensuring you get the care you need. It is likely that this style of working will be necessary for the foreseeable future. GP practices continue to work as hard as ever – just differently.

This is why we ask you to continue what you have been doing to access your GP service:

- Please do not visit the GP practice without an appointment. Instead, go to our practice website where you can use an e-consultation. Alternatively, you can speak to a GP or nurse over the phone or have a video consultation.
- If a doctor or nurse does need to see you in person then you will be given an appointment to attend the practice.
- Only coming into the surgery when you have a pre-booked appointment means:
 - you are reducing your risk of catching/spreading coronavirus by avoiding a waiting room
 - you are helping to keep staff healthy and safe
 - the practice is able to maintain a clean environment and protect you from the virus
 - you will get seen promptly

For GPs and our clinical staff the new ways of working include providing patients with quality remote consultations; putting on and correctly taking off appropriate PPE for face to face consultations and maintaining a clean protective environment for our patients and our staff, all of which take time.

To ensure we have the time for our patients we provide a certain number of telephone or video consultations each day. When you telephone to request a consultation our receptionists will ask you for some details. They are trained to make enquiries and to signpost you to help as best they can. This will include signposting you as appropriate to use an e-consultation.

You will find there is generally greater availability of appointments and therefore more choice for you if you are able to book your appointment in advance – around a week in advance should give you the best choice. If all the telephone and video consultations for that day are full you can contact a GP via an e-consultation.

Management of long-term conditions such as diabetes, asthma, COPD will also increasingly be undertaken “remotely” using electronic communication and video or telephone consultations.

Please also see the patient leaflet “Accessing General Practice” which we hope you will find useful. The leaflet is available in paper form outside our surgeries and on our websites.

If you have any comments, questions or concerns, then please do get in touch with us to let us know how we can support you.

We will, as always, endeavour to continue to offer the timely, appropriate and high standard of care that you have been used to and we thank you for your understanding during this challenging time.

Kind regards
The Partners of Royal Crescent and Preston Road Practice

Useful information:

Outpatient Blood Tests are available at Dorchester and Weymouth

Dorset County Hospital - Booked appointments only

Situated in the Medical/Surgical Outpatients Department, South Wing Level 1.
Please enter the department via South Wing Entrance 1. Turn right and the outpatient department is situated on your right.

Opening hours: Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) 8.30am - 1pm and 2pm - 5pm

There is a separate phlebotomy clinic for Haematology and Oncology patients in the Robert White Centre. Please contact them directly on 01305 254355

Weymouth Community Hospital - Booked appointments only

Situated in the Outpatients Department, Ground Floor, Room 4A.

Opening hours: Monday/ Wednesday/Friday 08:15 - 14:00 (excluding Bank holidays)

Please note: the entry to the outpatient department is kept locked at all times (East entrance). Please ring the bell at the entrance and a member of staff will collect you at the entrance door and direct you to the phlebotomy room.

How do I book an appointment?

Please contact the booking line on 01305 254822, Monday to Friday 11am - 1pm. (excluding Bank holidays). Please have your blood request form with you as we need your Hospital Number to book your appointment.

Weymouth Urgent Treatment Centre

Weymouth Hospital's urgent treatment centre is staffed by a variety of healthcare practitioners, nurses and doctors and cover a wide range of **urgent minor** injuries and ailments.

The UTC is providing telephone consultations, with face-to-face appointments if clinically necessary. Please do not just turn up – you will need an appointment to be seen.

Please call 01305 762541, open from 8am-8pm every day including weekends and bank holidays

Phone NHS 111 if you're not sure what support you need or call 999 for anything life threatening.

Your Surgeries

Royal Crescent Surgery Tel: 01305 774466 Website: www.royalcrescentsurgery.co.uk

Preston Road Surgery Tel: 01305 832203 Website: www.prestonroadsurgery.co.uk