

What has the Practice been doing during the last 6 months?

Unfortunately some media outlets seem to think that General Practice have closed their doors during the COVID Pandemic and we thought now was a good time to let you know what we have been doing and the changes we have put in place to ensure we keep you and our staff safe and well cared for.

In the 6 month period from March to August, we have provided:



13,124 telephone or video consultations



3,990 face to face consultations with a GP



5,925 consultations with other members of our Practice healthcare team



267 home visits to the very elderly and housebound



26,208 individual patient prescriptions authorised & issued

We have always kept access open to our patients, whilst at the same time have we have implemented NHSE mandated processes and policies, which have included:

- Telephone and video consultations.
- eConsult, an online system enabling patients to contact the Practice 24 hours a day, 365 days a week.
- Accuryx – a system that integrates without clinical system allowing the use of quick SMS text templates and patient questionnaires, especially useful when the guidance was changing so rapidly
- Financially invested in a new 'cloud based' telephony system to allow for more telephone lines and better access for our patients
- Remote working – with the onset of shielding for high risk patients and staff, we enabled staff to work from home when necessary with access to secure laptops, VPNs and telephony

- Bank Holidays – we opened to ensure we were able to support our 111 and secondary care colleagues
- New services specifically commissioned to provide more support to patients in care and nursing homes, shielding and patients identifying as BAME
- Microsoft teams was installed enabling the practice to continue with important clinical meetings remotely with our own staff and fellow community and hospice colleagues
- In conjunction with our other Haywards Heath Practice colleagues we set up from a scratch a 'Hot Hub' to enable patients with COVID symptoms a safe place to be seen by a GP. This included arranging all of the on-site logistics, infection control processes, staffing, IT, telephony and equipment.
- Completed multiple risk assessments for premises, staff and new procedures
- Changed flooring in clinical rooms to be compliant with updated infection control processes and adapted each site to ensure patient and staff safety

With the winter period coming, we are now planning for and inviting patients to our flu clinics. This year, due to COVID, the cohort of patients eligible for the flu vaccine has been increased, although the social distancing and infection control processes are still relevant. Therefore this year we will be scheduling at least 12 flu clinic sessions from September onwards, where we normally operate 3. All patients this year, will be given an appointment, instead of having a drop in clinic. Again, this is to ensure correct social distancing can be adhered to and we keep patients and staff safe. We encourage all eligible patients to keep their flu appointment.

Going forward, we will continue to operate a 'covid safe' Practice. This means:

- We ask patients not to attend unless they have a pre-booked appointment
- Patients must wear a mask/face covering before entering the Practice
- We limit the number of people in the practice at any one time
- We've re-arranged waiting rooms to ensure at least 2 metre distance
- We've implemented a one-way system for all non-clinical areas
- All staff temperature tested before starting their shift

If you feel safer doing so, patients are encouraged to wait in their cars before they come in for their appointment, again to limit the number of patients in the building.

The Partners and staff wish to thank all our patients for the support they have shown us during this unprecedented time and throughout the last 6 months. We assure you all, that the Practice will continue to provide the very best possible care through the next 6 months and beyond and have the safety and well-being of our patients and staff at the heart of everything we do.

