

## We are not closing down

The government has suggested that GP practices should close their doors during this most recent upsurge in the infection rate

It has also been suggested that all routine appointments should be cancelled/refused and that we should only offer 'clinically urgent' appointments

### We don't want to do this

However, we do need to do something as we cannot afford to lose doctors, nurses, and admin staff due to infection or contact with Covid patients

Therefore, we are making some temporary changes to the way we operate until this madness is over

- Firstly, we will not offer face-to-face as a first option (we are probably the only surgery in the area who does this anyway). This does not mean that we will not have any face-to-face appointments
- Secondly, we do need to restrict appointments to those that need to be seen

### What are priority urgent appointments?

Ask yourself – 'is this really something I need to speak with a doctor about?'

#### Coughs and minor chest infections:

For example, it is winter, and people get coughs & chest infections, they always have, and they always will, but there is nothing much anyone can do about it. The average cough lasts for 7 days, so waking up with a cough or having a cough for a couple of days does not merit an 'urgent appointment' to see a doctor

**In general, antibiotics are useless** against viral illnesses. Viruses cause many of the most common ailments, such as sore throats, ear infections, coughs, colds, and stomach flu.

Viral illnesses such as these take time to run their course, and our body's own immune system will eventually cure the illness and eliminate the virus that caused it. Therefore, we will not issue them.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/antibiotics/>

However, if you are a patient with COPD, and you are having respiratory problems, then maybe you do need to speak with a doctor

#### General anxiety.

Lots of people are anxious at the moment, but does that need a same day so called urgent appointment?

Same-day appointments are for 'clinically urgent' matters, but unfortunately, these are being clogged with non-urgent matters

#### What is clinically urgent, you ask?

This small list of examples is not exhaustive and is only an indicator of the most common ailments that would justify an urgent appointment

- A sick/unwell small child
- Severe pain
- Mental health emergency
- Severe flare up of long-term condition

It is a medical condition (*not a request for a prescription or a sick note*) that cannot reasonably wait until the next available routine appointment or until the matter worsens and requires intervention.

**Let's be sensible – don't be a toilet roll hoarder – don't take it unless you really need it – someone else may need it more**



We put on a Covid clinic last Tuesday (public holiday), to avoid impacting on normal clinic times.

We sent out over a thousand invitations and got 250 takers. Unfortunately, 64 people did not turn up!

