



## **SMC Update on Appointment Booking System**

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Dear Patients,

Firstly, we would like to thank you for your patience and support over the last two years. It has been extremely tough on everybody and although we are making steps to move forward Covid is still having a huge impact on the practice, and we are still suffering with staff and Clinician shortages because of it.

As a practice we have decided to continue wearing face masks and will be requesting that our patients do the same. This is to protect our vulnerable patients that must frequent the surgery often and our staff.

We take all the patient feedback we are given and try to work on solutions to enable better patient care and communication.

We want you to know that we have heard you. We were given lots of feedback about difficulty getting through on the phonelines. So, in February of this year, we upgraded to a whole new system which allows us to monitor the calls and provides us with a report each month of our busiest times so that we can ensure more staff are available to answer them when needed.

We have also had lots of feedback about the appointment system and therefore from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July we will be making all appointments bookable on the day and all appointments will be face-to-face unless the patient requests a telephone call as it suits them better. There will be a percentage of Telephone appointments that are bookable on patient access that will be available to book ahead of time as well as still being able to use the online consult tool for all non-urgent problems, this allows the doctor to come back to you within 2 working days.

These new initiatives will be reviewed regularly but to enable for this to be successful and benefit you all we would like to remind you that each appointment slot is 10 minutes only. This means you will only be able to discuss one issue with the doctor.

Our practice clinical team has grown, and we now have a Paramedic, Mark Burstow, that works at the practice twice per week seeing patients in his morning and afternoon clinics. We also have a Clinical Pharmacy team that work with us every day of the week and they can do some of the Chronic Illness reviews, medication reviews and much more. Phone call appointments are available for them, and reception can book you in to talk to them.

We are very hopeful that all these changes will help everyone access the care they need a lot easier and generally have a more positive experience and we thank you again for the support.