

WALFORD MILL MEDICAL CENTRE

GP APPOINTMENTS INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

To keep up with an ever increasing demand for GP appointments whilst continuing to meet our aims of a prompt and appropriate personal service for patients, we are now incorporating telemedicine into our appointments system which has been endorsed by the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement and tried and tested by practices across the UK.

Our appointment system therefore now provides patients with daily Monday to Friday pre-set allocations of 4 different types of GP consultation:

- Same day telephone consultation
- Same day in-surgery
- Pre-book telephone consultation.
- Pre-book in-surgery

Our reception team manages the initial requests for all GP appointments and can check the availability of the different types of consultation for you. **The number to call is (01202) 886999**

Requests for same day in-surgery and telephone consultations are accepted up to 11am. Pre-book in-surgery and telephone appointments can be made up to 2 weeks in advance. We will always endeavour to offer the consultation with the patient's GP of choice whenever possible.



Telemedicine – A New Approach to Clinical Assessment Better Access and Greater Convenience for Patients

We understand that telephone consultations are quite a change from the traditional method of access to GP services, and that some patients may have initial reservations. However, we have had some very positive feedback from our pilot scheme and hope that patients will work with us to help us to provide the best and most appropriate service for the benefit of all.

How it works: With telephone consultations the GP first speaks to the patient via the telephone to discuss their health concerns and to undertake a clinical assessment, often referred to as 'triage'. This method of consultation is also often suited to 'follow up' appointments.

If a physical examination is necessary, the GP will themselves arrange a face to face surgery appointment for the patient taking into account the medical urgency of the situation and the patient's availability to attend.

Patients benefit enormously from this system in many ways:

- Unnecessary visits to the surgery can be avoided thus saving patients time, transport costs and absence from work.
- When they need to speak to a GP that day they can – by phone.
- If it is clinically necessary to be seen by a GP that day they will be. Or if a particular date or time is preferred, this is easier to arrange whilst speaking directly with the GP.
- When a longer appointment is required or further diagnostic tests are appropriate, the GP can assess this at the outset and provide the right level of care.
- Continuity of care with the same GP, particularly if further examination or follow up review is necessary, is another benefit.

Patients can still book directly via reception for nurse and phlebotomy appointments up to 4 weeks ahead. Our reception team can also help patients with repeat medication requests, test results and other administration queries such as referral queries, medication changes by hospital consultants, ongoing sick certification and signing of reports or forms.

Comments and suggestions, either verbally, in writing, via the suggestion slips and posting box in the waiting room or email: walfordmill.reception@dorset.nhs.uk are always welcome.

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