

High quality, friendly service

On 1st October 2019 we will be changing the appointment system at both St Peter's Road and the Avenue. This is to streamline the service we offer – enabling our patients to access the appropriate healthcare professional at a time most convenient to them.

We will now be offering the same appointment system at both St Peter's Road and the Avenue, which will make it easier for patients to make an appointment on either site. We believe it will enable you to access a GP or other health professional of your choice at a time that suits you best.

It will also help the practices make the best use of doctors', nurses' and other staff time and provide better continuity of care for patients.

Why do we use this appointment system?

We need to respond to the increasing demand for appointments from patients with acute illness and also from the increasing number of patients who have complex on-going health issues.

Patients told us that they sometimes struggle to get an appointment or make themselves available for a phone call. This led to a feeling of frustration for patients and we agreed that the situation was unsatisfactory – time for change.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What if I need urgent advice?

If you feel that your health concern cannot wait until the next available routine appointment slot, please tell the receptionist and they will arrange for the duty clinician to telephone you.

2. What about making other appointments at the surgery, for example, to see a nurse?

All appointments to see other clinicians are made in the same way by speaking to a receptionist.

3. How do I request a home visit?

A home visit request will be dealt with by a telephone consultation with a clinician. Please make it clear to the receptionist you speak to that a home visit may be necessary so that they can alert the duty clinician as soon as possible. Visit requests should be made before 11am (unless it is an emergency).

4. Is this about making doctor's lives easier?

No. The new system is improving patient care. The use of telephone consultations enables GPs to safely establish who needs to be seen at the surgery and in what time frame. Offering a range of pre-bookable appointments (telephone and face to face) improves fair access for patients.

5. Is this about diagnosing over the phone?

No. The clinician will only offer advice or a prescription without seeing you if it is clinically safe to do so. If you wish to be seen in the surgery please make that clear when speaking to the receptionist.



INFORMATION ABOUT THE NEW APPOINTMENT SYSTEM

Starts 1st October 2019

Patient information leaflet

How does the appointment system work?

In the first instance, please visit our new website: www.cirencesterhealthgroup.co.uk or contact the surgery as normal. The receptionists have been trained to work as Care Navigators, ensuring that you are offered the right type of appointment with the right member of the team.

The receptionist you speak to will ask you some general questions to better understand your health concern. This conversation is completely confidential. We assure you that **all** our receptionists have been trained to do this and the system works best if you can be as detailed as possible in your response.

You will be offered an appointment or advice on what to do next. It may be that your health issue can be dealt with straight away. The appointment may be by telephone.

If your appointment is on the telephone please provide a telephone number on which you will be available for your appointment slot. The clinician will attempt to contact you on 2 occasions, after which you will need to make a new appointment through reception.

Routine appointments with the clinician of your choice can be made through reception. These appointments will become available up to 6 weeks in advance and are booked on a first come, first served basis. A small number of appointments are held in reserve and will be made available a week before.

Prioritising urgent problems

To ensure that every patient is seen by the most appropriate healthcare professional our receptionists will need to ask you some questions about your health concern. For urgent problems the duty clinician is available to call you back within a few hours to discuss the problem in more detail and offer you an appointment on the same day if it is necessary.

We have decided to introduce the new appointment system because we believe it will help us provide more accessible and better care for all our patients. We have listened to patient and staff feedback and hope that these changes will make a positive difference to your patient experience.

The NHS App

The new NHS App is a simple and secure way to access a range of NHS services on your smartphone or tablet. You can use it to check your symptoms and get instant advice, book appointments, order repeat prescriptions and much more. For more information visit www.nhs.uk.

Feedback

The Patient Participation Group (PPG) will be monitoring the new system. Please let them know if you have any thoughts – both positive and negative. Alternatively ask reception staff for a suggestions form. We will be reviewing the system on a regular basis and will review all the comments and suggestions we receive.

Fit notes (sick notes)

These can be requested via our website, www.cirencesterhealthgroup.co.uk. Don't forget that for the first 7 days of any illness when you cannot work, you do not need a fit note (just self certify on your return to work).

Fit notes can always be back-dated, but try to remember to organise your note in plenty of time. Fit note requests are not considered to be 'urgent' and the duty clinician will not be able to issue one on the day that you request it.

If your request is a continuation of a previous note then the person who wrote the previous note should write the new one. The clinician may wish to speak to you on the telephone before a new note is issued, but this is unlikely to be done on the day of your request.

Prescriptions

To order repeat prescriptions, please use our website www.cirencesterhealthgroup.co.uk or the Prescription Ordering Line (POL) by calling **0300 421 1215**.

If you would like to request a medication that is not on your repeat prescription, this will need to be discussed with the clinician who usually treats you. Please ensure you leave plenty of time to arrange this telephone consultation. We do not consider these requests as 'urgent' and the duty clinician will not be able to deal with these queries on the day you ring to request them.