

# Online Clinical Triage

## OUR NEW TRIAGE APPOINTMENT SYSTEM

In response to the modern-day pressures faced by the NHS and our patient needs, the Practice will now be transitioning to a new model of working from 4<sup>th</sup> August, 2025. This is also part of the NHS England's Modern General Practice model with more integrated, digitally enabled, and patient-centred approach to primary care. This new triage system will enable us to assess your medical enquiries and ensure you are seen by the appropriate clinician in a suitable timeframe. The clinical triage process will be conducted by Clinicians to ensure we offer appointments based on medical need rather than our demand and availability.

### What is Clinical Triage?

Our reception team will no longer be able to directly book a GP appointment for you. The triage model asks you to complete an online form stating the reason for contacting the practice, which will then be reviewed by a Clinician and categorised according to need. Where necessary, we might ask you to answer a few additional online questions to help our clinicians prioritise those patients who need more urgent care.

You will then be contacted by our Patient Services Team and offered one of the following:

1. An appointment on-the-day (face-to-face or telephone) with an appropriate clinician
2. A routine appointment with an appropriate clinician e.g. GP, Advanced Care Practitioner, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Clinical Pharmacist, Mental Health Practitioner, Practice Nurse or First Contact Physiotherapist
3. Referral to another service e.g. Pharmacy

Our telephone lines and reception desk will remain open as usual, but if you do visit or call the surgery, we will politely request that you still complete the online form. If your personal circumstances mean that it is impossible for you to do this, or for someone you know to complete the form on your behalf, our reception team will complete the same online form with you. **Whichever way you contact us, whether online, in person or over the phone, all requests will go into the same 'triage' queue.**

All **non-clinical queries or requests** will be handled in the normal way. You can still book appointments with our nursing team in the normal way.

### What are the benefits of this model?

- **Quick and Efficient:** The system allows us to prioritise urgent cases and better manage routine appointments. This should reduce waiting times and ensure you get timely care.
- **Personalised Care:** By understanding your needs upfront, we can direct you to the right healthcare professional. This could be a GP, Advanced Care Practitioner, Nurse, or another specialist.

- **Easy Access:** You will be able to share your symptoms or requests online. This will make it easier for us to understand your needs before your consultation.
- **Better Communication:** Our team will be better equipped to provide you with the information and support you need. This will ensure a smoother and more satisfying experience

### **Steps to Booking an Appointment at Our Practice – Simple as 1, 2... 3!**

**Step 1:** Patients or carers will need to provide information regarding their condition/enquiry. They can do this using our preferred method of filling out an online consultation form via our website or NHS App.

If the patient has two health issues, they will need to complete a form for each problem.

If the patient is unable to complete a form online, they can call or come into the Practice, and our Patient Services Team will fill out the form with them. All forms, whether filled out online, over the phone, or in person, will be treated the same way but you will always be asked/requested to provide information so a clinical triage form can be completed. **Calling us will not get a quicker response.** The receptionist will not be able to book an appointment until an online consultation has been completed and reviewed by a clinician. However, there are some exceptions for our palliative end-of-life care and our most vulnerable patients.

**Step 2:** The online consultation will be assessed by a clinician who will evaluate the condition/needs. They will then provide a booking timeframe for an appointment or offer information for an appropriate service. This will be communicated to you via our Patient Care Navigator Team. We aim to have a response to patients within two working days.

**Step 3:** Our Patient Care Navigator Team will contact the patient to offer an appointment or provide the information given by the triaging Clinician. This contact will be in the form of a text, telephone call or self-bookable appointment link. If the Clinician has assessed the issue as urgent and requiring a same day appointment, we will always call the patient.

### **Response Times**

Submissions via our online options (Website/NHS App) will be from **8.00am** each working day. Outside these core hours signposting guidance will be provided. **We request that, where possible you send any requests in by 10.30pm on the day.** This will help us to manage the same day requests. Once you have submitted your request, please do **NOT** call our Patient Care Navigator Team to confirm they have received the form.

### **What will happen now and the start of the new system?**

There will be a few weeks transition period leading up to the go-live on the 4<sup>th</sup> August, 2025. Our clinicians and admin teams are working really hard (as they always do) to manage all of your requests and to also go through this period of change, so we would request all patients to be mindful of this.

### **What do you need to do?**

- **Stay Informed:** Keep an eye on our website and the NHS App for updates on how to access our services and use the new system.
- **Ensure your contact details are up to date:** You can do this via our website or in reception.
- **Be Open to New Methods:** Whether it's a video consultation or completing an online form, these new tools are here to make access to care easier and safer for you.
- **Feedback:** Your feedback is invaluable. As we transition to this new system, we want to hear about your experiences and how we can improve. We also want to hear any questions so we can update this advice on any areas that are unclear.

If you have any questions, then please do contact speak with us at reception.