

MAY 2021 NEWSLETTER

Vaccine Roll Out

As a practice we have committed to completing the over 50 and at risk under 50 vaccination programme but we have opted out of the 18-50 group. This is because NHSE made it perfectly clear we would be expected to fulfil all contractual requirements in addition to the vaccination programme and we simply do not have the time or staff to do both. General practice has to come first. We simply have to get back to the day job.

Our involvement with cohorts 10-12 (which were never part of the original enhanced service) will be to advise to book on the national programme (upstairs at Saints ground) in the order allowed by NHSE. You can visit the gov.uk website to get updates.

Practice commitment to working at Saints should be complete by the end of May – it has been a long 6 months.

Increase Patient Demand

The last 12 months has been a steep learning curve for all and we have been overwhelmed by the support from our patients and the embracing of new technology. However, this has backfired spectacularly with an additional 50-100% increase in demand on a daily basis. This is not sustainable moving forwards. It is not going to be possible to deal with all requests within a 48 hour period.

You can help us greatly in managing this demand by ‘choosing well’ – see website.

For minor ailments, self-treat or speak to pharmacy.

For acute eye conditions, use the CUES eye service and book directly with a local optician.

For dental conditions, simply don't call us – just don't. Emergency number for those without a dentist is 0161 476 5651. They will arrange local emergency treatment.

Patient Triage

It is either a telephone appointment or an e-consult. Please do not fill in an e-consult if you know you will need a telephone appointment as this is duplication of work.

Accept the first routine appointment offered even if you then phone daily for same day appointments – these are diminishing rapidly as we have to fill some the night before as we work our way through the e-consults.

We are looking at ways to improve efficiency but demand is out-stripping man-power.

Chronic Disease Management

We are starting to roll out invitations for annual health checks – some of which were postponed due to COVID-19. If contacted, please do your best to attend at first invitation to reduce duplication work sending invitations a second time.

Sample Drop Off

Please do not drop samples off which have not been requested or without clinical details. These will not be processed.

Star of the month

Huge congratulations to Ali MacRae for being awarded ‘Star of the month’ by the CCG. This is in recognition of her work across all practices in St.Helens in setting up the COVID-19 vaccination IT part of the service. It was awarded in recognition of her support given to other practices, rapid rearrangement of clinics when vaccine supply took us by surprise and in ‘keeping her cool’ whilst being inundated by requests for help. We certainly could not do what she is doing and are grateful to simply be ‘at the sharp end’ of the service (which is the easy bit)! ★

