

## Orchard Surgery



## Patient Information Leaflet

## BOOKING AN APPOINTMENT

**This information leaflet has been produced to explain to patients the best ways for booking an appointment**

### APPOINTMENTS

The Surgery employs a policy of easy patient access to appointments. We provide a choice of different ways of consulting with a clinician and can offer doctor and nurse appointments at least 4 weeks in advance.

You may book any of the appointment types listed below by telephoning **01403 246860**. Alternatively you may book in person at the reception desk.

Please be aware that we operate an advanced access appointment system and not a fully 'book- on-the-day' appointment system. Therefore there is no advantage in calling the surgery immediately after it opens. It is better to book your appointment in advance. Our receptionists are at their busiest between 8am and 9.30am and you may find it easier to call after this time.

Our reception staff are specially trained to book the most appropriate available appointment for you. They are requested by the doctors to ask as to the nature of your appointment, in order to establish what appointment is most suitable to your needs. Please do not feel offended if you are asked medical details. All our staff are required to adhere to strict confidentiality at all times and our reception staff receive ongoing medical training from the clinicians to enable them to advise you appropriately. This policy allows the surgery to manage the doctors and nurses' valuable consultation time

effectively, without compromising patient care.

### FACE TO FACE CONSULTATIONS

These appointments are at 10 minute intervals during the doctors' surgeries or nurse clinics and are booked in advance. On occasion, due to high patient demand or because of doctor annual leave, it may not be possible to book with your preferred GP. In this instance you will be offered an appointment with another doctor or clinician, on or as close to the date you requested, or offered an appointment with your preferred GP for a later date.

You may book a same day appointment where routine availability allows. However, you will be advised if an appointment is not available.

Please remember to keep your appointment. If you cannot, then please ensure you notify the surgery at the earliest opportunity on the cancellation line 01403 246862. If you are running late or have not checked in, then, again, you must let the reception desk know, otherwise you may not be able to be seen. Please be considerate so that we may offer your cancelled appointment to other patients.

### URGENT/EMERGENCY APPOINTMENTS

If, because of high demand, you are unable to book an appointment for the same day, the receptionist will ask the reason for the appointment and take

some medical details. These will be assessed for priority and medical need. The Doctor of your choice cannot be guaranteed and the appointment may be with the Duty Doctor of the day. Appointments will deal with just one urgent problem and be short (5 minutes).

Please understand these appointments are for urgent /emergency problems only.

### **HOME VISITS**

The doctors provide home visits during core hours for patients who are usually housebound. You should telephone before 10.30am if possible. The receptionist is required to ask the reason for the request and take some medical details. Therefore please be understanding toward the receptionist.

Whenever possible you will be asked to come to the surgery as the facilities are better suited for examination and any subsequent treatment; in addition it is a more efficient use of the doctor's time. Urgent requests are passed to the duty doctor on call and triaged accordingly. Any visit is arranged subject to the deemed immediate need of the patient.

### **MESSAGES**

Our clinicians do not take direct telephone calls during their working day. However, you may call the surgery and ask to leave a message for your doctor or a nurse, if it is concerning a minor medical matter. If it is an administrative matter, such as chasing a referral

appointment or a form, you should speak with one of our receptionists or a member of our administration team. If you need advice about your medication you can ring the Pharmacist in the first instance.

Staff make every effort to return messages the same day. Please understand that on occasion this may not always be possible.

### **OUT OF HOURS CONSULTATIONS**

The surgery doctors are not contracted by the NHS to provide immediate health need services to patients outside of the core hours of 8.00am - 6.30pm. The Out of Hours Service for our practice is provided by Harmoni, on telephone number: 0300 130 1313.

### **TEST RESULTS**

These are available over the telephone only after 11.30am Monday to Friday during the surgery's core hours. Because of the sheer number of results we receive the emphasis is with the patient to call the surgery. You must allow at least 5 working days for the result to be returned to us. Some test results may take longer to be returned and the clinician should advise you accordingly. If your test was carried out at a hospital at the request of a consultant or specialist you should contact the hospital you attended, in order to get your test result. This is because we do not receive these results so please do not call the surgery.

Very often test results are within normal ranges and in these instances our fully trained receptionists are able to inform you of your result. They are also able to inform you if the doctor has made a comment for action and what that action may be; such as a prescription for medication. Otherwise the doctor will have commented that they would like to discuss the result with you may need to see the doctor. All our staff are required to adhere to strict confidentiality at all times. Please respect the receptionist's role and understand that they are in a position to assist you.

To ask for your test results telephone 01403 246860