

The way we access and use services is changing.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, services have changed due to government & NHS England guidance. This may have affected the ways you can get in touch with health staff and services. The changes have been put in place to support and protect you and our NHS staff to reduce the spread of infection, in order to get you the help you need more quickly so that you may not need to **visit the GP surgery** or go into the hospital.

We appreciate that some of these changes may be a bit more difficult for some people but it is for your safety and to reduce waiting times. You will be helping us to help you.

Changes to appointments

As well as being able to get health advice from 111 online <https://111.nhs.uk/> and 111 by phone, many GP surgery services are now accessed via eConsult (<https://carepointpractice.webgp.com/>) rather than telephone or online booked appointments. In many cases coming into the practice is not needed and you may be able to get the health advice you need over the phone; online or via a video consultation without having to leave your home. You will still be able to come into the GP surgery for appointments if the clinicians need to see you face to face.

Changes to referrals

The way your GP refers you for hospital care is also changing. **Before any referral, your GP will** now be able to get advice and guidance directly from the hospital consultants in the first place, so hopefully you may not have to go into the hospital at all. **If the hospital consultant then decides that they want to see you in person, the GP will refer you and you** will then be made an appointment to attend the hospital. Our aim is to make sure you have shorter waiting times and better outcomes for you.

The practice is here to help you so if you have any concerns about the care you are receiving please do contact us directly.

Please also remember that we have a **Zero Tolerance** when it comes to disrespecting or being rude to our staff. They are here to help you so please treat them with respect.

Thank you for working with us to work differently to help us to help you.