

# AVON VALLEY PRACTICE

19<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Patient

## **Please read - APPRECIATION AND INFORMATION**

Over the last few months, it's likely that you've noticed a difference in the way things are being carried out at Avon Valley Practice as we manage coronavirus (Covid-19).

From the outset, we want to say thank you! Thank you for adapting so quickly to these new ways of working – it's been drastic, yet fundamental change but much needed to ensure the safety of you and our staff including the temporary closure of Durrington Surgery.

To slow down the spread of coronavirus, we have worked to reduce the number of people coming into the Practice by using more telephone appointments and video consultations using AccuRx. Given the increase in telephone activity, we have upgraded the capacity and capability of our telephone system and changed our settings so that you can see our number when we call you. We are also using AccuRx for you to send images to us as requested by clinicians. Therefore please do not email photos or images. For more information on how to use AccuRx please visit

<https://support accurx.com/en/collections/2279595-accurx-for-patients>.

Importantly, we are pleased to inform you that, from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020, you will be able to see a clinician in Durrington Surgery for pre-booked appointments. The clinician will meet you at the front door, screen for COVID-19 symptoms and walk with you to the consulting room. The clinician will accompany you from the premises at the end of your appointment. The doors will remain locked to ensure there are a minimal number of people in the Surgery and that we can maintain social distancing.

Our top priority is, and has always been, to keep you and our staff safe while ensuring you get the care you need. This is why we ask you to continue to use our online services to book appointments, order medication and obtain your test results. This will often mean you get to see the right person to help you, much quicker.

**Please do not visit us without an appointment.**

Collecting medication from Upavon Surgery between 1230 and 1730 and from Durrington Surgery between 1000 and 1300 will continue. However, we have applied for planning permission to install a 24/7 medication collection dispenser in Durrington Surgery. Please see our website for more information

<https://avonvalleypractice.co.uk/practice-information/donations/>

Please can we also take this opportunity to introduce three new doctors who have placements with us from August 2020; Dr Anna Woodman, Dr Vanessa Hayden and Dr Asher Naik.

Enclosed with this letter is a frequently asked questions document, which may help answer any further questions you have.

If you have any comments, questions or concerns, then please do get in touch with Nina Hammond, our Practice Manager, to let us know how we can support you.

Thank you once again for your support and understanding as we all adapt to a new way of working.

Kind regards

Dr Fiona Ross Russell and Partners

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## Frequently Asked Questions

**The way we access GP services has changed. Below are some frequently asked questions that may help you understand these changes:**

### **Why can't I walk into my GP practice?**

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has forced us all to work differently to help slow down the spread of the virus. All healthcare settings are taking special measures to protect you, the public and their staff. GP practices are working as hard as ever, but differently.

Where possible we want to avoid people having to wait inside a waiting room together, as we know this increases the risk of the virus spreading. Like hospitals and dentists, we have also had to change how we offer our services to you.

If you do need to come in, then we can ensure there are a minimal number of people in the practice, we can maintain social distancing and keep patients and staff safe.

### **When will Durrington Surgery re-open?**

As of the 1<sup>st</sup> September, Durrington surgery will be open for pre-booked appointments ONLY. You will be met by a clinician at the front door who will undertake COVID-19 screening before taking you through to the consulting room.

Please be aware that Durrington Surgery front doors will not be open for general enquires but please be assured that we will continue to provide services in accordance with our current arrangements from Upavon Surgery.

### **How do I order and collect my medication?**

Please continue to order your medication online or over the telephone. **Do not visit the Practice to make a request.**

You will be sent a text message when your medication is ready for collection. The text message will include instructions of the collection point and timings.

- **Durrington** - We will be delivering medication to Durrington surgery on a daily basis. You may collect your medication from the Durrington window between 1000 to 1300 Monday to Friday
- **Upavon** - Medication will still be collected from Upavon Surgery front desk between 1200 to 1730 Monday to Friday
- **Netheravon Shop** – Medication will continue to be delivered on a Tuesday and Friday morning
- **Home delivery** – Medication will be delivered on a Monday afternoon and a Thursday morning

### **How do I book an appointment?**

Please book appointments online or over the telephone. **Do not visit us to do this.**

A clinician will call or text you with the details to set up a video consultation when necessary or speak with you over the telephone.

If a face to face appointment is required we will make arrangements for you to be seen at Upavon or Durrington Surgery.

By only coming into the Practice with an appointment, it means:

- you will get seen promptly
- you are reducing your risk of catching / spreading COVID-19 by avoiding a waiting room
- you are helping to keep staff healthy and safe
- The practice is able to maintain a clean environment and protect you from the virus

### **Why can't I book a face-to-face appointment?**

We have adapted the way in which you can get an appointment quickly and safely.

Most patients' health concerns can be managed over the phone or via video consultation. This is why we are providing you with either an initial phone call or video consultation to decide what would be the best way to help. If we can support you without needing you to come into the practice then we reduce the need for you to travel and reduce the risk of the virus spreading.

If you do need a face-to-face appointment, you will be invited to attend the practice.

If we can ensure there are a minimal number of people in the practice, we can maintain social distancing and keep patients and staff safe.

### **What happens if I do not have a smartphone or web camera?**

While technology has evolved and supports us all in many different ways in our day-to-day lives, we appreciate not everyone will have access to a smartphone or web camera for a video consultation.

We can still talk to you on your mobile phone or landline.

### **Will I need to wear a face mask if I come into the practice for an appointment?**

To help limit the spread of the virus, we are asking for all patients aged 11 and over to wear a face covering when they come to the practice. This doesn't have to be a face mask, but a cloth covering which covers your mouth and nose while allowing you to breathe comfortably. It can be as simple as a scarf or bandana that ties behind the head. You can find additional information by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering>

You can also purchase a re-useable cloth face mask from reception for a £2 donation with all monies going to the Enford and Netheravon Mask Makers.

### **How do I see a GP during the evening and weekends?**

If you have a life threatening medical emergency please dial 999. If you require urgent medical assistance which cannot wait until the Practice re opens, please hang up and dial 111 or contact Salisbury Walk in Centre which is open 1830 to 2200, Monday to Friday and 0800 to 2000 during weekends and bank holidays. The Centre can be found on Avon Approach, co-located with Millstream Medical Centre, Salisbury, SP1 3SL. Their number is 01722 331191.

Calls to the NHS 111 service are free from landlines and mobile phones

### **What do I do if I think I have coronavirus (Covid-19)?**

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
- new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

You must also ask for a test as soon as you start showing symptoms. You can do this online – visit [www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test](http://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test)