

## COVID-19 – Changes to practice appointments for St Mary's Surgery

All patients are asked to note that important new measures are now in place as part of the management of coronavirus in Ely and surrounding areas.

St Mary's aims to ensure the continuation of essential services to care for our patients and these new measures will help to protect patients by minimising the need for them to visit the surgery, and in addition also minimise your healthcare staff from any possible exposure to COVID-19.

### What has changed?

- If a patient has an existing appointment with a GP, nurse or HCA this will become a telephone appointment.
- If you need to make an appointment for something that is not related to coronavirus, you will be triaged over the phone and either a telephone consultation with an appropriate clinician will be made or a face to face appointment if it is deemed clinically necessary. Clinicians, under some circumstances, may be wearing protective equipment, including aprons, masks and gloves. There is no need to worry; your clinician is simply practising NHS guidelines for good infection control.
- Childhood immunisations. If you have been sent a letter inviting your child for their routine vaccinations, please contact the surgery. It is important you do not postpone these. Child immunisation helps boost their immunity against a variety of diseases.
- The booking of all new routine appointments has been suspended for the foreseeable future.
- Clinics such as family planning, diabetic, inhaler clinics have been postponed for now. Staff from our Patient Services Team will be contacting all patients and advising them of these changes to their regular clinics.
- Prescriptions and dispensary. We have been advised by the Local Medical Committee that we can issue up to three months' supply of most medications on request. Please re-order online or put your repeat slips through the outside post box. DO NOT come into the surgery to drop them off.

This structured approach will allow St Mary's to continue to provide the important care to all our patients over the coming few months, when undoubtedly we will also be affected by a reduction in staffing through necessary self-isolation.

If you are not registered for online services and wish to do so, download the NHS app from the App Store or Google Play and follow the instructions to register.

St Mary's will continue to keep you informed of any further changes. Do keep an eye on our website (<http://www.stmarysely.nhs.uk/>), our Facebook page (@stmaryssurgeryely) and MJOG messaging on your mobile, if you are signed up for it.

We thank our patients for their understanding and support.

19<sup>th</sup> March 2020