

NEWSLETTER

NEW SERVICES

New Service - Walk in and Wait Clinics

Seaside Medical Centre launched a pilot in May 2023 offering patients 'Walk-in and Wait' appointments. Initially the service ran one day per week and increased to two days due to positive patient feedback.

We have recently made the decision to extend the service to a third day from June to increase on –the-day appointment availability.

The service is specifically designed for patients who have new symptoms and problems.

It has been designed to enable greater patient access to primary care services including face to face appointments.

In order for the service to run efficiently and safely it is necessary for the Reception Team to carefully navigate each call, to ensure the patients' condition is right for the clinic.

So what's different about this service?:

- 'Walk in and Wait' appointments are for more acute conditions and are shorter in time duration, this means that patients will only be treated for one problem per consultation.
- Patients will be asked to arrive at the beginning of the hour slot to enable the clinician to triage the conditions being presented.
- Examples of conditions treated in the clinic are: chest infections, throat conditions, sunburn, tiredness, breast lumps, delay in menstruation, infected toes and nails, eye infections, eczema, burns and abdominal pain.
- Patients presenting should have a new problem and not have consulted with another clinician with the condition before.

Please note the service is not able to treat children under 2 years of age or women who are pregnant.

Unfortunately due to the fast pace of appointments we are not able to book translation services for these bookings, patients requiring translation should book a routine appointment.

Please ask our team if you would like more information.

New Service - NHS England's Plan for Recovering Access to Primary Care Pharmacy First

Believe it or not, General Practice is delivering more than 1 million appointments every day and half a million more than pre-pandemic. Workforce within General Practice has increased to meet the rising demand and the needs of an aging population.

Patients over the age of 70 have increased by a third since 2019 and it is this age group who are more likely to have on average five times more GP appointments than younger people. The pandemic brought about much change and the increase in practice capacity is trying to keep pace with the growing demand of the population.

Primary care, as well as many parts of the NHS, are under tremendous pressure to provide a service to its users. NHS England's vision is to streamline access to care and advice; provide more proactive, personalised care from a team of professionals; and help people stay well for longer. Along with this vision is the need to take the pressure off general practice and empower people by investing in tools to enable them to stay healthy and manage their care without needing to see their GP.

For this the NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care have expanded the role of the community pharmacy by supporting them to treat 7 common conditions as well as expanding oral contraception and blood pressure services.

The projection is to save up to 10 million appointments a year, equivalent to 3% of all appointments provided by General Practice. This service will free up the General Practitioners to care for patients with complex conditions and ensure the older patients have the access they require.

What Does This Mean For Patients?

The new Pharmacy First Service will enable community pharmacists to provide care for patients without the need for patients to visit their GP.

Patients ringing into Seaside Medical Centre will be triaged by the team and depending on the condition referred to the pharmacist if it is found to be appropriate. The pharmacists will be able to provide advice and NHS funded treatment where clinically appropriate for these 7 conditions:

- **Sinusitis for adults and children aged 12 and over**
- **Sore throat for adults and children aged 5 and over**
- **Acute otitis media for children aged 1 to 17 years**
- **Infected insect bite for adults and children aged 1 year and over**
- **Impetigo for adults and children aged 1 year and over**
- **Shingles for adults aged 18 years and over, and**
- **Uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women aged 16-64 years.**

A patient's General Practice will be notified of the outcome of the Pharmacy First consultation at the pharmacy.

Upgrade to the Telephone System

At Seaside Medical Centre we are always looking for ways to improve access to services.

Listening to patient feedback we recognise the need to improve patients experience when telephoning the Practice. Therefore in June we will upgrade our phone system, so what does that mean for patients?

The software will enable the patient to select an option to put the phone down while keeping their place in the queue until they reach an available call handler, they will be phoned back and assisted.

The new service will also enable patients who need to speak to the Practice for non urgent matters to request a call back at an allocated time.

We hope that this improves patient service and reduces the amount of time spent waiting in the queue especially in the morning.

No Need To Queue

We have been experiencing long queues at opening time in the mornings and we want to ensure that patients who have already booked an appointment are checked in on time ready to attend that appointment.

We therefore ask patients who are attending an appointment at the start of the day to bypass the queue and head to the self check-in machine to ensure readiness for their appointment.

Please note due to demand on our nursing team appointments patients arriving late will not be seen and will need to rebook. Patients should plan their travel time to the practice in advance to ensure ample time.

Emotional Wellbeing Service

The Emotional Wellbeing Service is delivered by our Mental Health Support Team who provide one-to-one mental health support to patients directly at Seaside Medical Centre. The Emotional Wellbeing team work with patients to create personalised support plans and deliver person-centred care using a range of coping skills, grounding techniques, CBT tools, goal setting and signposting.

The Mental Health Foundation defines emotional wellbeing as a 'positive sense of wellbeing' which enables an individual to function in society and meet the demands of everyday life; people in good mental health have the ability to recover effectively from illness, change or misfortune.

Patients can be referred to the Emotional Wellbeing Service by a GP, ANP or ACP.

DNA (Did Not Attend) Rates 2023

Demand for appointments in 2023 was higher than ever.

What may surprise patients is the numbers of appointments patients did not attend during that year or did not cancel.

From January to December -

- 2373 appointments were not attended
- The cost to the NHS was £15,399
- Other patients could have been offered those appointments

Going forward this year the Practice will be reviewing its 'Did not Attend Policy' and reviewing the figures monthly.

We are hoping to raise awareness and request that patients take responsibility in cancelling appointments in a timely manner. Patients who repeatedly do not attend may be asked to leave the practice list per our policy.

We will introduce an option on the phone-line to cancel an appointment during opening hours; patients can also contact us out of hours through our website.

Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)

Measles, mumps and rubella are highly infectious conditions that can easily be spread between unvaccinated people. Being vaccinated is important, as these conditions can lead to serious problems including hearing loss, meningitis and problems during pregnancy. The recommendation is for people to have two doses of the MMR vaccine to provide the best protection against measles, mumps and rubella. The Practice team have and will be continuing to contact patients regarding their MMR status, we would encourage all patients who have not had 2 doses of the MMR vaccine to contact the Practice to book an appointment. If you have any questions regarding this vaccine, please ask the Practice Team.

Blood Results on 'My Health and Care Record'

We have been contacted by patients recently regarding blood results they have viewed on My Health and Care Record. The East Sussex Healthcare Trust (ESHT) now release blood results to My Health and Care Record and this has caused some anxiety for certain patients. Some results are available on the same day, previously they would have taken 3 -5 days.

Although the results are being made available to patients, the GP is also receiving the results at the same time which means the GP still needs time to review the results and add comments in line with our blood test result policy.

Therefore we request that patients don't ring the Practice asking to speak to the GP urgently or to book an appointment but instead to wait until the GP has viewed the blood test result and added their comment plus follow-up guidance and instruction.

We would like to reassure patients that test results will be looked at by a GP in a timely manner and those of an urgent nature will be acted upon promptly by the GP and Practice Team.