

Ongoing Impact of Covid 19 on Practice Services

In response to the Covid 19 pandemic, the Practice has taken a number of steps to keep you and our staff safe. These included:

- Shutting the practice doors and asking you to contact us by phone
- Pausing some non-essential work
- Setting up a home visiting service to safeguard our shielding patients
- Asking patients to wait in the car park area and to be escorted to and from your appointment
- Removing all pre-bookable appointments and triaging all calls before a face to face appointment is given
- Moving to make better use of technology for remote consultations and chronic disease monitoring
- Socially distancing and protecting staff by having a number of colleagues working from home
- Working with local practices to plan for worst case scenarios and assess how we can support the wider healthcare system.

We are now thinking about how we de-escalate from this position in an environment that is constantly changing. We think our response should be aligned to the National Covid Alert structure but also to reflect the local conditions. The National structure has 5 levels:

Level 1 (LOW)	- COVID-19 is not known to be present in the UK
Level 2 (MODERATE)	- COVID-19 is present in the UK, but the number of cases and transmission is low
Level 3 (SUBSTANTIAL)	- A COVID-19 epidemic is in general circulation
Level 4 (SEVERE)	- A COVID-19 epidemic is in general circulation; transmission is high or rising exponentially
Level 5 (CRITICAL)	- As level 4 and there is a material risk of healthcare services being overwhelmed

We intend to continue to operate as we are while the threat level remains between Moderate and Critical. We think this is necessary in order to continue to provide a safe environment for patients and staff.

We will continue to offer telephone access and will be looking at other on-line consultation options. We are also mindful of ensuring that clinically important tests and services continue to be offered and so will be increasing the range of chronic disease review and contraception appointments that we offer over the coming months. Where necessary, GPs will continue to see patients in person but this will be where it is clinically necessary for diagnosis and following a telephone consultation and screening for possible Covid infection.

Like you, we are looking forward to being able to return to normal but, in the meantime, feel that this approach allows us to continue to do as much as we can as safely as possible.

We thank you for your support over this challenging period.

The Practice Partners.