



Newsletter – April 22

Changes to our GP Partners. After 31 years incredible service to the NHS and 23 years as a Partner at Stoke Gifford Surgery, Dr Aitken has set a date for her retirement from the Practice in mid-March 2022. The Partners will really miss Dr Aitken's leadership, dedication, and unwavering commitment to the Practice. Dr Aitken has been a wonderful doctor to our patients and will be greatly missed by patients and colleagues alike. At the same time, we are pleased to announce that Dr Yusra Khan is joining the Practice Partnership. Dr Khan trained as a GP at the practice and has been employed as an Associate GP since May 2015. The Partners are delighted that Dr Khan has been able to progress from Trainee GP to Partner with the Practice and are excited about the contribution that she will make. Dr Matthew Smith has also joined the team and we have welcomed Drs Charkham and Mathews back from leave.

Developing Conygre Road. Things have been a bit quieter at our Conygre Road Surgery during Covid. We needed to allocate a room at Conygre Road to see patients who we were worried may have had covid and who we wanted to see away from our more vulnerable patients. At the height of the pandemic, this did limit how we could use Conygre Road. The rules around transporting covid vaccinations and having designated sites also meant that the vaccine programme could only be delivered from Stoke Gifford. However, things are changing! We have been successful in a bid to expand the building at Conygre through NHS Transformation Fund money. Work has now started that will add 3 new clinical rooms and an upstairs waiting area. The plans look great, and the building will be transformed by this work that will allow us to offer more services from this site. We expect the work to be finished around September. During this time, there will be limited parking, so we are asking patients to try and attend on foot if possible.

Covid vaccination programme. We will shortly be contacting our over 75-year-old patients and those that are deemed clinically extremely vulnerable for the next Covid Booster. We are awaiting delivery dates and will be contacting eligible patients once these are confirmed. We are hoping these clinics will run through April.

Covid Update. We are still dealing with covid. The public health infection controls have not changed for us, and we are asking patients to continue to wear a face covering when in the building. Much of the healthcare system is really struggling with capacity at the moment due to the incredibly high infection rates currently in this area. We have tried to keep as normal a service running as possible throughout Covid but currently have so many people off that service levels are impacted. In order that we can focus on those that are seriously unwell, we are asking all patients to explore all self-help, NHS website and pharmacy options before contacting us. We are very grateful to those that are supporting us with this request.

AskmyGP. Thank you all for embracing askmyGP. We now ask that all requests for clinical advice are now sent via askmyGP, and we hope you will agree that this system is working well. Historically, the biggest area of patient dissatisfaction has been the time taken for phone calls to be answered. With askmyGP, this has improved considerably. Key to the success in getting phone waiting times down has been asking patients to raise their own askmpGPs when requesting GP advice and the majority are using this service. Please do use askmyGP for GP appointments as, if you phone for a GP appointment, our reception team still need to add you to askmyGP. This ends up taking longer than it would were the patient doing it themselves and ties up a receptionist who could be answering other queries.

Please use AskmyGP responsibly and appropriately. AskmyGP has made access very easy. However, we still need to work through and assess all requests and would ask that you continue to consider self-management, NHS online advice / 111 and pharmacies as a first course of action. This allows us to quickly sort through the hundreds of requests that we get per day and to prioritise those in most urgent need.

Please remember: you must continue to call for nurse appointments and you must request prescriptions in writing or via the NHS app.

The NHS App. Use the NHS App is constantly being developed and we are encouraging all patients to register for it. It allows you to:

- get your NHS COVID Pass – view and download your COVID Pass for places in England and Wales using this service, or for travel abroad
- get advice about coronavirus – get information about coronavirus and find out what to do if you think you have it
- order repeat prescriptions - see your available medicines, request a new repeat prescription and choose a pharmacy for your prescriptions to be sent to
- book appointments - search for, book and cancel appointments at your GP surgery, and see details of your upcoming and past appointments
- get health advice - search trusted NHS information and advice on hundreds of conditions and treatments. You can also answer questions to get instant advice or medical help near you
- view your health record - securely access your GP health record, to see information like your allergies and your current and past medicines. If your GP has given you access to your detailed medical record, you can also see information like test results and details of your consultations
- register your organ donation decision - choose to donate some or all of your organs and check your registered decision
- find out how the NHS uses your data - choose if data from your health records is shared for research and planning
- view your NHS number - find out what your NHS number is

Community Pharmacy Consultation Service. The NHS Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS) was launched by NHS England and NHS Improvement on the 29 October 2019, to facilitate patients having a same day appointment with their community pharmacist for minor illness or an urgent supply of a regular medicine, improving access to services and providing more convenient treatment closer to patients' homes. The service is helping to alleviate pressure on GP appointments and emergency departments, in addition to harnessing the skills and medicines knowledge of pharmacists. Should the patient need to be escalated or referred to an alternative service, the pharmacist can arrange this. The practice can make a digital referral to a convenient pharmacy, where the patient will receive pharmacist advice and treatment for a range of minor illnesses. Where a patient request looks like it would be appropriate for a CPCS referral we will contact you to confirm suitability and refer you on to our pharmacy colleagues.