

# THE ORCHARD SURGERY

## SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER 2021

Dear Patient

The team at the Orchard would like to thank you for your support over the last 18 months; it's been an incredibly difficult time for all and we hope that you and your loved ones have managed to stay safe and well.

When covid-19 hit we had to quickly adapt to ensure we could continue to provide services that were safe and effective. We were mandated to triage all requests and to utilise e-consultations and video consultations. During this period we were grateful for such tools as we were able to continue to connect and support our patients in a way that kept them safe and managed transmission. This was vital for our vulnerable populations. We are very grateful for the response this has received and how open and willing people have been to try these new ways of working.

Now that restrictions are starting to ease, we feel it's the right time to revisit how you access your healthcare team at the Orchard. We want to try and find a middle ground that brings back the good ways of working pre-pandemic but also keeps elements of the new ways of working which patients have benefitted from during the pandemic. We believe that patients should have a choice about how and when they access their healthcare team and we will be working hard to facilitate this over the next few months.

This newsletter is to share information about how you can access support from your healthcare team, local pharmacy and other partners who can support you with your health and wellbeing. We hope you find it useful and would be grateful for any feedback.

**Dr B Conlan & Dr T Wyatt**

### **Accessing Appointments**

In April 2020 when the UK started to move into restrictions to try to manage the covid-19 outbreak, we like all other GP Practices across the country, were mandated to implement e-

consultations. This was to ensure we could provide safe and timely care and treatment to our population during a time when contact was limited.

The Orchard Surgery are proud to have maintained core GP Services throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. We used eConsult to triage patients and were then able to offer telephone consultations and face to face consultations to those not suspected of having covid (on-site) and also those suspected of having covid (central hub off site). We are now able to adapt but also to retain the new ways of working which we have adopted and that have worked well.

Our Doctors have experienced increased workload pressures and they want to let you know the best way to access advice quickly and in the most efficient way:

## GP or other Clinician Appointments:

### (1) Self- Care

Please consider self-care in the first instance for minor issues such as a sore throat or sickness. For most minor ailments you can contact a pharmacy for advice and then let us know if the problem gets worse or does not get better after a few days

### (2) Telephone and Face to Face Appointments

Our reception team can organise either a telephone or face to face consultation, should this be safe and appropriate for your problem. If the problem is routine, we will then try and book you in as soon as possible but at busy times this may be up to 3 weeks (or more if you would like to see a particular GP).

**For urgent appointments** - our reception team will need to ask you some information to help prioritise your care. For some urgent problems we are working with our Partners in the PCN (Primary Care Network) and you may be assessed by a clinician in this team.

### (3) eConsult

We are still using eConsult; this can be a useful way to let your doctor know a lot of information about your problem in a timely manner.

You can access eConsult from the Home page of our website Monday-Friday from 8am-8pm and you will receive a response to your problem from one of our medical professionals.

Responses can be one of the following:

- Phone call appointment with a GP  
(this may be arranged by text so please keep your mobile phone handy; or by reception calling your landline –please put the most appropriate contact number on the E-consult)
- A text with links to relevant information
- A text request or call from reception -for you to book in for tests directly with follow up phone call as needed e.g. blood tests, urine sample, ECG etc.

- An appointment with our Nurse
- An appointment with our Clinical Pharmacist
- Redirection to another provider –such as a pharmacist or Walk-In Centre
- Face to face appointment with a GP if necessary and COVID precautions taken

If you have trouble attaching photos to eConsult you can contact the surgery and we will send you a link via text to send the photos through.

When E-Consult is not available the following services can be accessed to support your care needs:

- NHS111
- Local community pharmacies
- Urgent Treatment Centre
- In the event of an emergency, your local Accident & Emergency unit

(4) If you have a routine follow up due, you can ring reception and discuss the most appropriate way for you to be assessed.

## **Nurse Appointments and Phlebotomy Appointments**

For all Practice Nurse or blood test appointments, please phone reception to book in.

If you need to get in touch with us you can email queries to us at [wiccg.orchardteam@nhs.net](mailto:wiccg.orchardteam@nhs.net)

Please use the above methods to contact your GP/ Health Care Professional. If you have been directed to send in Blood Pressure Readings or Photographs after submitting an eConsult or speaking to your GP then please use the email for these purposes.

## **Prescription Requests**

For prescription requests, the preferred method is to order online via Patient Access or the NHS app or you can email your request to us at [wiccg.prescriptions@nhs.net](mailto:wiccg.prescriptions@nhs.net)

Prescriptions take 2 working days to process so please order 7 days in advance.

## **Our Wider Surgery Team**

We are proud to be part of the Healthier South Wirral Primary Care Network. This is a group of 6 local surgeries (Spital Surgery, Eastham group Practice, Civic Medical Centre, Allport Surgery, Orchard Surgery and Sunlight Group Practice).

Being part of a Primary Care Network means our patients have access to additional roles which we work in partnership with as part of our team. This can include:

- GP Clinical Pharmacy Team: For medication queries and medication reviews
- Cancer Care Coordinator: Tracey Pilgrim can give practical advice and support to anyone diagnosed with cancer
- Wellbeing Practitioner: Vicki Bartlett supports patients with any practical, social and emotional concerns they may have. Vicki says, “I provide a signposting service to patients who need specialised support and support people to engage with activities and services within their local community. I also provide a listening ear to patients and empower them to make healthy and positive changes”
- Health Coach: Scott Morgans can give diet and exercise advice to help you get more active and achieve a healthier lifestyle
- Learning Disability Coordinator: Suzanne Thomas can help anyone with a learning disability with access to services and any support needed
- Mental Health Care Coordinator: Rachel Kinnear can give advice and support to those with mental health conditions

## How to Access The Orchard Surgery

Post COVID Access Route visual:

