



TAYVIEW MEDICAL PRACTICE

WINTER 2020

NEWSLETTER

Dear Patient

From the recent weather, it is safe to say that we have now entered the dark, cold, winter months. As we approach the end of 2020, I'm confident in saying that this has certainly been one of the most challenging years for the practice due to Covid-19 and, I'm certain, one of the most challenging years for our patient population too. However, given the recent announcements by both the UK and Scottish Governments regarding Covid-19 vaccines, we're hopefully beginning to see some light at the end of the tunnel. Within this newsletter, I have attempted to provide you all with as much information as possible regarding vaccinations although I must emphasise that discussions and plans are still on-going within the NHS and the information I currently have is limited.

Despite the recent Covid-19 vaccine announcements, we still continue to operate on an **urgent** basis only. We remain open for all urgent clinical matters and continue to offer a telephone triage service at present. Our practice doors remain locked to prevent access by anyone who has not been asked to attend the practice. This reduces the risk of Covid-19 transfer and helps keep our patients and staff safe. If you feel you need to speak to a doctor or nurse about an **urgent** matter, please contact the practice on 01382 543251 and a receptionist will assist you further.

Once the vaccination programme has been fully implemented, the practice aims to review the current procedures in place with a view to returning back to our previous appointment systems. However, the vaccination programme will not be a quick fix for Covid-19 and, as such, we continue to maintain social distancing procedures to protect our patients and staff. It remains important that any patient who develops symptoms of a continuous cough OR fever OR have lost their sense of smell or taste should not contact the practice. NHS 24 continues to provide assistance for Covid-19 related queries and should be contacted on 111 if your symptoms are such that you are unable to manage them at home and need medical assistance. If you do have any of the above symptoms, but do not require NHS 24 input, you should consider arranging an appointment to be tested for Covid-19. Please visit <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> to arrange an appointment or request a home testing kit.

Over the last few months, there has been a lot of changes regarding processes within the NHS and also General Practice. Within this newsletter you will find information regarding new services that the practice will be providing, details regarding changes to the way you should access treatment at A&E or Minor Injuries (known as Scheduling Un-scheduled Care) and some changes to help improve your experience when contacting the practice.

You may recall, prior to March 2020 when Covid-19 impacted the UK, the practice developed an appointment system based on patient feedback which improved access to appointments significantly. The results of patient questionnaires, at that time, showed that over 98% of our patients were either satisfied or very satisfied with our new appointment system and, personally, I felt that we had finally achieved an appointment system that met the vast majority of our patient population's needs. Sadly, from March 2020, we had to implement an urgent appointment system only and I can fully appreciate the impact this has had on our patient population when attempting to contact the practice to arrange an urgent appointment. Please believe me when I say I want to get Tayview back to as near normality as possible and I ask you to bear with us for a bit more longer. We continue to be very grateful to you all for your continued patience and understanding regarding the changes we have made to protect you and our staff during these challenging times.

Please note, the practice will be closed on Friday 25th December, Monday 28th December, Friday 1st January and Monday 4th January. Patients should contact NHS 24 on 111 if they feel their condition cannot wait until the practice re-opens.

Lastly, may I take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas when the time arrives.

With best wishes

David Ramsay—Business Manager

Covid-19 Vaccination Programme

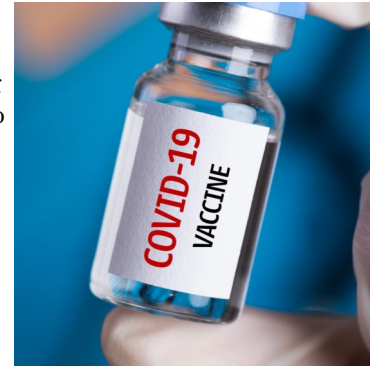
Following announcements made by both the UK and Scottish Governments regarding the implementation of Covid-19 vaccination programmes, the information available to the practice is limited. Please monitor our practice website (www.tayviewmp.org.uk) for updates regarding the vaccination programme.

At this time, we can confirm that the practice will be involved with vaccinating patients who meet the criteria set for vaccination. The criteria is still currently being decided by the Scottish Government. The practice has already developed plans relating to how we vaccinate patients whilst maintaining social distancing and I can confirm that any vaccination programme provided by the practice will be based on an appointment only system. Given the high numbers, and the need for social distancing, we would kindly ask all patients to try their hardest not to request to change their appointment time as we will have very little flexibility regarding alternative appointment times and it may be that we are unable to change your allocated appointment time.

Patients eligible to be vaccinated by the practice will receive a letter from the practice which will detail an appointment time for you to attend. The letter will also contain important information regarding the vaccine in order for you to make an informed decision as to whether to you wish to take up the offer of a vaccination.

Our plans involve **ALL** doctors and nurses vaccinating patients whilst maintaining social distancing. Unfortunately, given the high numbers of patients likely to require vaccinated, this will impact the number of appointments we are able to provide with a GP or practice nurse. We would kindly ask all of our patients to bear this in mind and ask themselves whether their need for an appointment is urgent or whether they can seek assistance from an alternative health care provider such as your local pharmacist, optician or dentist. Patients who require an urgent appointment will continue to be provided with an urgent appointment. However, if a GP feels your request is not for an urgent matter, or can be assessed by a more appropriate healthcare professional, then our reception team will advise you of this.

As mentioned above, please monitor our practice website for further information. We aim to provide as much information to you via our website as and when we receive further information. However, we would like to reassure our patients that we are ready to begin vaccinating as soon as we are given the approval to do so.



Scheduling Unscheduled Care

The way people access services is changing in order to keep patients and our NHS safe this winter—making sure everyone gets the right care in the right place.

A&E remains open for those who have a life threatening emergency.

However, to ensure patients have the fastest access to the treatment they need, anyone with a non-life threatening condition, who would usually go to A&E, should now call NHS 24 on 111 first (day or night) to be directed to the right NHS service.

If A&E is the most appropriate place to provide the right care, patients will either be directly referred to A&E by NHS 24 or a telephone / video consultation with a senior clinical decision maker will be arranged. This system is designed to avoid unnecessary waits in crowded waiting areas and offer care much closer to home whenever possible. If it is determined that you need to go to A&E, you will be offered an appointment time to attend the department. This means the team at A&E will know to expect your arrival in order that you can be seen directly at that time.

The above also applies to any Minor Injuries Unit that you may feel the need to attend. Patients who would usually be advised to attend a Minor Injuries Unit (or A&E unit) by the practice will be advised to contact NHS 24 on 111 first in order to be directed to the most appropriate department for your care whilst being issued with an appointment to attend.

Where our reception staff would usually direct patients to other healthcare providers regarding a medical condition (e.g. mouth pain—dentist), our reception team will continue to direct you or, alternatively, advise you to contact NHS 24 on 111 who will assist you regarding your condition further in order to ensure you get the right care in the right place.

**THE WAY WE ACCESS
URGENT CARE
HAS CHANGED**



**Right Care
Right Place**

Influenza Campaign 2020

From the week commencing 7th December, all patients aged 60-65 should receive a letter from NHS Fife inviting them to arrange an appointment for a flu vaccination. The letter contains information regarding how to arrange an appointment. The flu vaccinations will be provided to patients at local hubs and are not being administered by the practice. We would strongly encourage any patient who receives a letter to consider arranging an appointment to be vaccinated against flu this year.



At this time, the practice has no further information regarding the vaccinating of patients aged 55-60. Please continue to monitor our practice website for the most up-to-date information.

New Services & Improvements at Tayview

We are pleased to detail below a number of new services and improvements that are available, or will become available, to our patient population:

Pharmacy First

Did you know that your local pharmacy can now provide consultations for a large number of common minor ailment / minor medical conditions? This new service is called 'Pharmacy First'. If you have a minor ailment or minor medical condition, it is worthwhile checking with your local pharmacist first to see if they can assist you. Pharmacy First enables pharmacists to diagnose and treat minor conditions. There is no cost to you when using this service and, if the pharmacist is able to treat you, they can prescribe suitable medication to assist you further—again, at no cost to the patient. If the pharmacist feels your condition would be better investigated by a GP (or other healthcare professional), they will direct you to the most appropriate healthcare professional.

Mental Health Nurse

From January, the practice will be providing the services of a Mental Health Nurse every Wednesday. The Mental Health Nurse is qualified to assist our patient population regarding a variety of mental health conditions such as low mood, depression, anxiety or stress. They are also able to review patients who are currently taking medication to assist with their mental health. This service will be available to all patients at Tayview aged over 17 years old. Our reception team will follow guidelines provided by NHS Fife Mental Health Team and assist you with arranging an appointment with the Mental Health Nurse if it is felt your condition is appropriate.

Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs)

The practice currently has three ANPs (Jenny, Lois and Jo) who work on certain days within the practice. ANPs can see and treat the vast majority of conditions and it may be that our reception team provide you with an appointment to discuss your condition with an ANP. The ANPs can also prescribe any medication they feel is necessary whilst also referring you onto secondary care for further investigation if it is felt appropriate.

Practice Pharmacists

We are pleased to announce that we now have a practice pharmacist available within the practice every day (Monday to Friday). Our pharmacists (Claire and Sarah) are here to assist you with medication queries. Their role also involves medication reviews, ensuring patients discharged from hospital on medication have their records at the practice updated to reflect any changes to their medication and discussing with patients any medication changes. It may be that our reception team feel your request to speak to a GP would be better dealt with by the practice pharmacist and will issue you with an appointment if necessary. You can also contact the practice to arrange a telephone consultation with a pharmacist if you have any medication queries or concerns.

Practice Telephone System

During the month of January, we will be upgrading our telephone system following patient feedback. There will be no 'down-time' to our phone system as the work is expected to be completed over a weekend. Our new telephone system brings with a range of benefits based on the feedback of patients. Patients contacting the practice will no longer experience an engaged tone as all calls coming into the practice will be queued in the cloud. Whilst queued, patients will be notified of their position in the queue. The system provides up to the minute statistics of the number of calls coming into the practice, the length of time taken to answer each call, the length of time each call takes when answered and statistics to show when our phones are busiest. These valuable statistics will allow the practice to determine whether changes need to be made to how our calls are handled whilst also investigating any concerns patients may have regarding the length of time taken for their call to be answered.

2021 and onwards

As we move into 2021, we are hopeful that more services will become available to our patient population given the new GP contract that is currently in negotiation. Such services that we hope to see within the practice include physiotherapists, additional mental health nurses, community link workers, more ANP input, paramedics and urgent care practitioners. We will keep you up to date regarding further new services as and when they become available.