

TAYVIEW MEDICAL PRACTICE SUMMER 2021 NEWSLETTER



Dear Patients

As we approach the summer months, it is really important that we all continue to follow the guidance regarding Covid-19. Within NHS Fife, a total of 288,000 vaccine doses have been administered to patients (as of 3rd May 2021) which is a fantastic achievement. The Tayview Team has vaccinated over 600 patients in house with over 98% of those patients having now received both doses. NHS Fife has now progressed to Cohort 10 (40-49 year olds) being invited to attend for their first dose and vaccination hubs are available throughout Fife. We would continue to strongly encourage our patients to take up the offer of a vaccination when they receive their 'blue' envelope from NHS Scotland.

I do hope you will find this newsletter informative regarding upcoming changes within the practice and NHS Fife and would like to wish you all a very enjoyable summer time when it arrives.

David Ramsay
Business Manager

COVID-19 PROCEDURES

From 1st June 2021, the duties of the Covid Assessment Centre will be transferred from NHS Fife to the practice. This means patients who have either tested positive recently for Covid-19 or are displaying symptoms of Covid-19 will no longer contact NHS 24 on 111 for assistance. The following information below explains how this will work within our practice:

Patients who have developed either a new and continuous cough, fever or have lost their sense of taste or smell should arrange a Covid-19 test through www.nhsinform.scot or [by dialling 119](tel:119) if you are unable to arrange an appointment using the online system. We are unable to provide testing within the practice.

If you have developed symptoms which are manageable at home without requiring medical assistance there is no need to contact the practice. Again, you should arrange to be tested in order to confirm whether you have contracted Covid-19 and the practice will receive the results of those tests electronically. If your symptoms worsen and you require the assistance of a doctor, you should contact the practice on 01382 543251 to arrange a telephone consultation with a doctor. The doctor will discuss your symptoms with you and, if appropriate, advise you to attend the practice at an allocated time for further assessment.

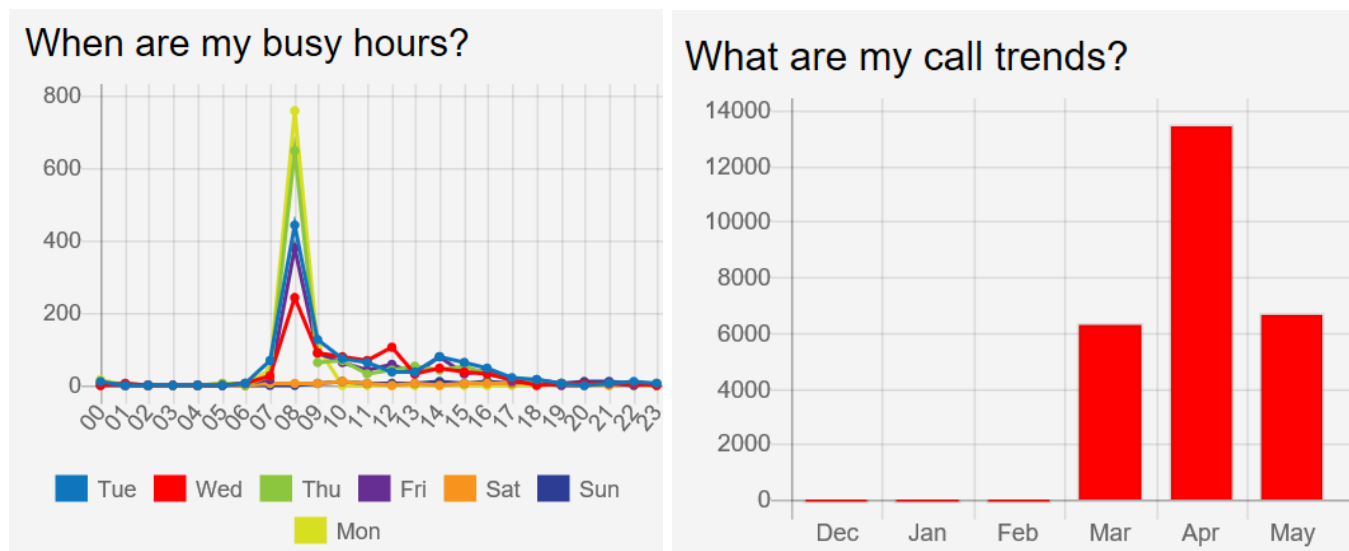
Any patient advised to attend the practice should wear a face covering (if not exempt), use the alcohol hand gel at the front entrance upon entering and leaving and arrive at the allocated appointment time. For the health and safety of all patients and the practice staff, we would ask that you do not arrive too early for your appointment as you may be advised to wait outside the practice until your appointment time.

TELEPHONE SYSTEM

We have received some feedback from patients regarding our new telephone system which was installed during mid-March 2021. We thought it would be helpful to explain how our telephone system works.

The messaging system can be adapted in a way which requires any patient contacting the practice to listen to the full message before being able to select one of the options. Alternatively, it can be adapted to allow patients to bypass the full message and select an option earlier. Following feedback, we have removed the requirement for patients to listen to the full message although we would still encourage you to do so. However, at times, the practice will need to change the message in order to provide important information to patients. A recent example of this was when the practice was running its Covid-19 vaccination clinics. Where it is determined that the message is important in nature, patients will not be able to bypass the message until they have listened to the full message.

Our telephone system has 12 lines and we have 5 receptionists answering the incoming calls from 8am when our telephone lines are at their busiest. Patients are now advised where they are in the queue before their call will be answered. However, when all lines are engaged, patients will be advised that their call cannot be connected at that time and advised to call back later. This means all of our lines are full at that time. We would like to reassure patients that all incoming calls are being handled as quickly as possible. The below is a snap shot of the number of calls received by the practice as of 17th May 2021 and when our telephone lines are at their most busiest.



Based on the above for the month of April, the practice received a total of 13475 calls which equates to just under 1.5 telephone calls per patient registered with the practice. Our telephone lines are busiest between 8am and 10am each morning and we would ask any patient not seeking to arrange an appointment to contact the practice at a later time (such as enquiring about recent test results). This greatly assists us by ensuring that our reception team are dealing with appointment requests only at that time.

MOVING FORWARD

At the start of the pandemic last year, patients will be aware that the practice had to make a number of changes to our systems in order to protect patients and staff. We are aware that such changes impacted our patient population however the vast majority of our patient population accepted that there was a need to change our systems for which we were grateful. As the current Covid-19 infection rates continue to fall, and more patients receive their vaccinations, the practice continues to review its systems with a view to returning to some normality. Unfortunately Covid-19 is still likely to be with us for some time which means the practice has to continually review and change its systems to ensure our staff and patients are kept safe whilst offering medical services. We are keen to return to

normality once it is safe to do so however, below, you will find further details regarding how the practice has moved forward recently.

Entrance Doors:

At the beginning of May 2021, we reviewed our risk assessment regarding the entrances to both practices and made the decision to unlock our doors. We would kindly ask that patients still do not attend either practice unless you have been advised to do so by a member of our practice team and report to reception upon entering either building. Please continue to use the hand gel available at both entrances and use a face covering.

Tayport (branch) site:

We have now re-opened our branch surgery given the rates of infection continue to fall with vaccination rates continuing to rise. We remain grateful to our patients who understood the need for our branch surgery to close last year due to health and safety concerns regarding the building. Currently, the practice is providing GP, nurse, phlebotomy and midwifery services from our Tayport sites. As more services return to general practice, we will be in a position to offer some of those services further from Tayport. Please note however that due to social distancing rules we are still only able to accommodate a small number of patients in our waiting area at Tayport. Should the waiting area be at maximum capacity, patients attending will be advised to wait outside.

Appointments:

Blood appointments can now be pre-booked up to 2 weeks in advance with a phlebotomist

Practice Nurse and Healthcare Assistant appointments can now be booked up to 1 week in advance

Pre-bookable GP telephone consultations are now available to book at 1 day, 2 days and 1 week in advance. Our reception staff will be able to assist you with arranging one of these appointments.

Mental Health Practitioner appointments can now be pre-booked for any patient aged 18 years and over who is experiencing a mental health condition.

From 1st June 2021, the practice will be restarting all chronic disease recalls. Patients will be invited by surname throughout the year for their yearly diabetic, respiratory or annual reviews. Patients should contact the practice to arrange an appointment upon receipt of their letter.

Unless life threatening, patients who feel they need to attend A&E or Minor Injuries (or are directed by the practice to contact those departments) should contact NHS 24 on 111 who will arrange an appointment time to attend the department.

Sadly, there has been a misconception that general practice has been closed throughout the pandemic and that the clinical staff have been "hiding behind closed doors". This is not the case. General practice has been opened throughout the pandemic with medical conditions / concerns being assessed by the clinicians. We have simply operated differently to that of what patients had been used to pre-pandemic and, as restrictions ease further, we are hopeful that the services previously offered will return when safe to do so.

STAFF CHANGES

We are pleased to announce that Dr Gilmour has now returned back to the practice from maternity leave and is available in practice every Monday, Thursday and Friday. Recently, our practice nurse; Yvonne, left the practice but has been replaced by Jerry who rejoined the practice on 17th May and brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience to complement the rest of our knowledgeable nursing team.