

# Patient News

August 2020

## Dear patient

I am really pleased to let you know that *gtd healthcare*, a not for profit provider of healthcare services, has taken over the management of Elmwood Medical Centre.

Work will be undertaken, in partnership with your GP practice team to support, develop and continuously improve services for patients. Patient input and feedback is extremely valuable and we welcome your involvement to help shape services. To find out more, please speak to the reception team or email Cate Shelmerdine, engagement manager, via [cate.shelmerdine@nhs.net](mailto:cate.shelmerdine@nhs.net).

*gtd healthcare* has been providing services across the north-west since 1997. We deliver healthcare services to more than 2.4 million patients including the management of 12 other GP

practices across Greater Manchester, walk-in centres, urgent care centres and out-of-hours services. All our services have been rated 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission and 'Outstanding' for 'Well-led'.

Our values underpin everything that we do and they help us make sure that we focus on the things our staff and patients believe are most important.

Further information about *gtd healthcare* will be displayed at the practice. However, if you have any queries in the meantime, please do speak with a member of the reception team and/or if you want further information on *gtd healthcare*, please visit [www.gtdhealthcare.co.uk](http://www.gtdhealthcare.co.uk).



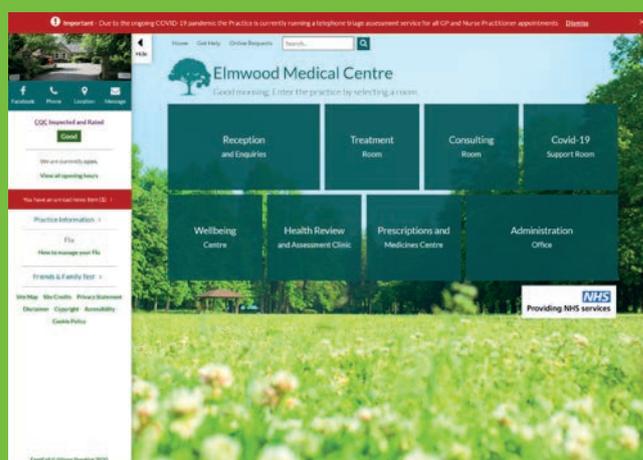
**David Beckett**  
Chief Executive  
*gtd healthcare*

## Website

A few months ago the practice changed its website, which now includes additional features to improve communication with our patients.

The new features include:

- the ability to request medication;
- the facility to ask the practice a question, either the reception team, nurse or GP;
- update your contact information;
- register as a patient;
- enquire about joining the patient participation group;
- complete health assessment questionnaires to prevent the need for you to attend the practice for some reviews;
- access details about local and national support groups for a variety of wellbeing issues.



You do not require a login or password to access any of the above but you may be

asked to provide some personal details so that we can identify you.

# Booking and attending appointments

Elmwood Medical Centre has remained open throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and while services have been reduced, it is our priority to ensure that our patients continue to receive the best care possible under these challenging circumstances.

Measures have been put in place to ensure the safety of all patients and staff. However, despite the government's efforts to ease social distancing guidelines from 4 July, the way in which you can book an appointment and visit the practice continues to have restrictions in place.

For details on how to access services, please speak to the practice in the first instance or visit the [practice website](#).

The way we consult with patients has changed; we now offer telephone and video consultations for most appointments to keep patients and staff safe. Suitable arrangements will be made for those who do need to be seen face-to-face.

It is important that patients attend routine appointments, such as for vaccinations, antenatal checks, sexual health advice and contraception, providing that you have been informed that this is going ahead.

Anyone who has symptoms of Covid-19, or lives with someone who has symptoms will need to self-isolate and should not go to the GP practice, pharmacy or hospital unless specifically asked to by a healthcare professional. The symptoms of Covid-19 are a new continuous cough, a high fever (37.8 or above) or loss or change in your sense of taste or smell.

We are continuing to experience a reduction in the number of patients presenting with an unwell child, cancer symptoms or a long-term health condition including mental health. Please rest assured that our services are still very much open and accessible.

## Booking an appointment

1. To book a telephone triage consultation, please contact the practice on 01298 23019 where our reception team will be happy to help you. All appointments are being offered on a same day basis and are available from 8am so please ring early to avoid disappointment. We are still offering a same day emergency triage system for patients who feel that they require urgent medical advice. Please note that online appointment bookings have been temporarily suspended so as to allow patients to be appropriately triaged by the reception team and to prevent patients inadvertently attending the practice for a telephone consultation.
2. If you are invited to attend a face-to-face appointment, please ensure you are wearing a face covering or mask before entering the building. If you do not have a face covering, the team

will provide a mask. However we ask patients to provide their own where possible so as to protect the NHS' limited resources.

3. To ensure that we meet social distancing guidelines we have limited the number of patients who can enter the waiting room at any given time; markings are on the floor and chairs to identify this.

Please **DO NOT** visit the practice unless you have a prior arrangement from a member of staff or you are unable to contact us via phone or through our website. It is really important that you do not put other people at risks, particularly those who may already be unwell and of course our team who are key in keeping the practice running and our patients healthy.

4. To minimise risk to patients and our team, all members of staff have their temperature checked at the start of their shift.

## Advice

For the most up-to-date advice, we would recommend you visit the following verified website and not rely on the national media. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

For details on social isolation and updated shielding advice, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

## Visiting the practice

When arriving at Elmwood Medical Centre, please:

- sanitise your hands and wear a face covering - do not enter the practice without a face covering;
- only attend the practice for a pre-booked appointment;
- telephone or complete the relevant form on the practice website with medication queries.

You will be asked by our staff to wash your hands on arrival. Our staff may look different to the last time you attended the practice due to the personal protective equipment they will be wearing, so you will not be able to see their usual smiley faces. However, they will continue to provide the same high quality care.

# Prescriptions

Please continue to request all repeat prescriptions online via [Patient Access](#) or through the [practice website](#). Also, you can request your prescription through your local pharmacy. Where possible, please **DO NOT** come to the practice to order your medication.

Please support the practice and your local pharmacists by continuing to order your repeat medication as you would do normally, seven days before your prescription is due. Please refrain from telephoning the practice to check if your prescription has been signed as this causes an unnecessary volume of calls and delays for other patients.

## Contact details

As we are providing telephone and video consultations, it is important that your contact details and/or your carer details are up-to-date on our systems. If you have changed your contact number, email or address, please call or complete the relevant form on the practice website to update your details.

## Patient participation group (PPG) meetings

PPG meetings have been suspended due to the coronavirus pandemic but the practice is looking to re-start these in a virtual format in the near future. All new members are welcome and if you would like to get involved to discuss the practice plans and share feedback, please contact reception or complete the relevant form on our website.

## Download the NHS app

The **NHS app** is a simple and secure way to access a range of NHS services on your smartphone or tablet.

Use the NHS app to:

- get advice about coronavirus;
- order repeat prescriptions;
- book appointments;
- check your symptoms;
- view your medical record;
- register your organ donation decision;
- find out how the NHS uses your data.

The NHS app is available on iOS and Android. You must be aged 13 and over and registered with a GP practice in England.

You can sign-up without having to visit the practice for a code and verification as this is all done via the app.



Secure access 24 hours a day

Access a range of NHS services  
anytime, anywhere

# Face coverings

It is now a requirement for people using public transport, entering shops and those working in certain public sectors, to wear face masks / coverings.

If you are unable to wear a face mask / covering for personal or medical reasons, then it is not a requirement for your GP to provide any written evidence that excludes you from wearing a mask. The requirement to wear a mask / face covering is to protect yourself and others in your vicinity.

## PATIENT NOTICE



To help keep our patients and staff safe, you should wear a cloth face covering when entering this centre.

Please keep your face covering in place at all times unless you are advised otherwise.



- A cloth face covering should cover your mouth and nose while allowing you to breathe comfortably – this can be a scarf or bandana that ties behind the head.

Government guidance recommends wearing a face covering when:

- social distancing is not possible;
- social distancing is difficult to maintain;
- you come into contact with others who you would not normally meet.



## Thank you

On behalf of all the staff, thank you to all the patients and local community groups for your support, kind words and donations of equipment such as scrubs and personal protective equipment for our clinical team. We would also like to thank our patients for their understanding during these difficult times.

If you would like to discuss any of the information within this newsletter further, please speak to the practice team via 01298 23019.