

Park Practice, 9 Broadwater Way, Eastbourne,
East Sussex, BN22 9PQ

Tel: 01323 502200

Email: admin.parkpractice@nhs.net

Website: www.parkpractice.co.uk



Newsletter – Winter 2024



We are now in the middle of the cough and cold season and our appointment system is getting even busier. It is not hard to imagine how frustrating it must be when you are trying to get an appointment and find that there are none available. Recently more options have become available to us which has helped to reduce the load on appointments, so you may be offered one of these when you call. Please use them if you are offered as it is very likely they will be able to help just as well as we can. We are also looking at improving our appointment systems further by clinically assessing any appointment request in order to signpost people to the best option quickly first time. We are looking at various different systems, and will let you know as soon as we have decided what to do.

In the meantime try to keep warm and safe.

Dr Martin Writer

Nursing Team Appointments

Please note that our nursing team are only able to see you for the procedure (or procedures) that you are booked in for, as the appropriate amount of time has been allocated for this. They are not able to assist with other medical questions and can not undertake any other procedures during your appointment if this has not been pre-arranged, such as a blood test, as this will cause them to run behind.

Please also note that they are not authorised to add additional tests to any blood tests that you are attending for.

Hospital Choices for New Referrals – It's up to you to decide!

If a GP needs to refer you for a physical or mental health condition, in most cases you have the legal right to choose the hospital or service you would like to go to. This will include many private hospitals, if they provide services to the NHS. Please note this is not available for all specialities.

- When the referral is processed, you will be sent notification via email, text or by letter, giving you a hospital shortlist. The notification will advise you how to make the booking details for the hospital you have chosen, and includes a password and reference number. This will help you to book your appointment online or over the phone.
- Even if you do not mind where you go, it is important to know that you have a choice.
- It may be that you want to be seen somewhere away from home but closer to your family. If you have a hospital preference, please inform the GP or clinician at the time of your consultation.

Monthly Figures for Not Attending an Appointment at the Surgery

We would be very grateful if you could let us know if you can not keep an appointment, which can then be given to someone else who needs it. Below are the number of appointments which were **not cancelled**:-

June 2024 – 173 appointments

July 2024 – 219 appointments

August 2024 – 182 appointments

September 2024 – 154 appointments

October 2024 – 241 appointments

November 2024 – 197 appointments



Electronic Devices/Mobile Phones in the Waiting Room



Please be considerate to other patients and switch your electronic devices, including gaming devices, to silent whilst in the waiting room.

The NHS Jewish BRCA Testing Programme

BRAC refers to two genes – BRCA1 and BRCA2, which every one of us has.

- ❖ Having Jewish ancestry, increases your risk of having a BRCA gene fault.
- ❖ These genes play an important role in the prevention of cancer. Some people have a fault in one of their BRCA genes – this puts you at increased risk of developing certain types of cancer.
- ❖ NHS England is now offering free BRCA gene testing for anyone living in England, aged 18 or over, with one of more Jewish grandparent or any type of Jewish origin (Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Mizrahi etc).
- ❖ For more information please go to <https://jewishbrca.org> Please read the information given on the website and if you are interested in having the gene testing, please complete their form online contact the Genetic Counselling Helpline on 020 3437 6001. A screening pack will be sent to you in the post which involves providing a saliva sample. Please note this test is not done at Park Practice.

Telephone Call Backs

Please can all patients only request one call back from the Practice. We can assure you that all call backs will take place but these may take longer than expected depending on the complexity of the queries that we are dealing with on the phone.

Multiple call back requests just increase the time it takes for patients to receive their call back and prevents other patients from entering the queue. Many thanks for your assistance.

Help with Healthcare



What help is available if I'm struggling to access healthcare?



Healthcare costs

If you have a low income or receive Universal Credit, you may be able to get help with NHS costs including:

- Prescription costs
- Dental costs
- Eyecare costs
- Healthcare travel costs



Call **0300 330 1343**

or visit nhs.uk/nhs-services/help-with-health-costs



Getting to appointments

If you need transport to attend an appointment there is support available through:

- Sussex Patient Transport Service (PTS)
- East Sussex Flexibus
- Local community bus service or transport schemes



Visit eastsussex.gov.uk/community/cost-of-living-support/transport



Dental Pain/Dental Problems

We do not have the necessary equipment and lighting needed to clearly see inside your mouth – you may need a dental abscess drained, a tooth extraction or root canal treatment which is why we will often try to redirect you to see a dentist.



However, if you are unwell with a dental problem and you are unable to access timely dental care, our priority would be to ensure you do not have a serious illness or complications.

Antibiotics will only scrape the surface of the problem at best and definitive treatment can only be provided by a dentist.

To help with dental pain, avoid very hot or cold foods, eat a soft diet and take painkillers but be mindful to stay within the recommended amounts. Your local pharmacist can help with it comes to pain relief.

If you have contacted several dental surgeries but can not find one taking new patients call NHS England on 0300 311 2233 who will be able to advise you accordingly.

Vaccination Facts and Figures

Since September 2024, we have given: -

103 Intranasal flu (under 18-year-olds)

808 Flu vaccinations (under 65-year-olds)

1911 Flu vaccinations (over 65-year-olds)

The groups eligible for flu vaccinations in the 2024 to 2025 flu season include:-



- All children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2024.
- All primary school aged children (from reception to year 6).
- Secondary school aged children (years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11).
- Those aged 6 months to under 18 years in clinical risk groups.
- Pregnant women.
- Those aged 65 years and over (including those who are 64 but will be 65 on or before 31 March 2025).
- Those aged 18 years to under 65 years in clinical risk groups.
- Those in long-stay residential care homes and other long-stay care facilities where rapid spread is likely.
- Carers in receipt of carer's allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person. Close contacts of immuno compromised individuals.
- Frontline workers in a social care setting without employer led occupational health schemes.
- All frontline health care workers, including both clinical and non-clinical staff who have contact with patients.
- Social care workers directly working with people clinically vulnerable to influenza should also have the influenza vaccine provided by their employer.

Since January 2024, we have given:-

245 Pneumonia vaccinations

The groups eligible for a pneumonia vaccination include:-

- Those aged 65 years and over.
- Those aged 2 years and over and have certain medical conditions.
- Those who have no spleen or kidney disease.
- Those who are identified as requiring vaccination by the local Health Protection Team.

224 Shingle vaccinations

The groups eligible for a shingle vaccination include:-

- All adults turning 65
- Those who are aged 70-79
- Those who are aged 50 and over with a severely weakened immune system.

Since October 2024, we have given:-

265 Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccinations

RSV is an infectious disease of the airways and lungs.

The NHS will invite you for an RSV vaccination once you turn 75 years of age. This is single dose vaccine. **Please do not call the surgery** about having this vaccination as you will automatically get an invite about this.

Our Friends and Family Test Feedback Figures

August 2024 – 97% patients said we were very good/good

September 2024 – 97% patients said we were very good/good

October 2024 – 98% patients said we were very good/good

November 2024 – 97% patients said we were very good/good

We welcome all your comments, both positive and negative, as this helps us to improve our services to you.



Some positive comments

“Was in and out before my appointment time, perfect”.

“The doctors and nurses are very easy to talk to and very professional”.

“I felt I was listened to”.

“On time, good communication, pleasant outcome”

Some negative comments

“I want to know why you can only ask about one thing at a time, when you waited a long time for your appointment”.

We operate 10 minute appointments and we usually only have enough time to deal with one problem. If you have more than one problem, we may ask you to book a further appointment at another time. If this is the case, the clinician will, however, medically prioritise your problems to be discussed.

“It is impossible to get an appointment with a doctor as you can not pre-book”.

Pre-bookable appointments are always available for all of our clinicians.

“Wi-fi would be good, so we can do stuff on our phones while waiting”

There is now NHS Wi-Fi in the waiting room – the password is EastSussexCCG.

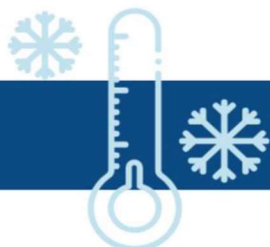
“Answer phones quicker, on hold for about 30 mins”

All patients are given the option of having a call back, whilst waiting in the phone queue. You do not lose your place in the queue, if you decide to use this option.

Keep Warm and Well This Winter!

citizens
advice

Tackling Fuel Poverty Together



Cold Homes Kill

Beware of heating risks

- Reduce fire risk from open fires and portable heaters
- Un-swept chimneys or damp wood can start chimney fires
- Install a carbon monoxide monitor
- You can ask the fire service for a free home safety visit
- Check your electric blanket is safe to use.

visit: www.esfrs.org/your-safety/home-safety-visits
0800 177 7069

Damp and mould

- Causes breathing problems
- Makes asthma worse
- Can cause damage to possessions and buildings
- You can deal with damp and mould by following the steps provided on our web page. If you rent your home, you can also alert your landlord.

visit:
warmeastsussex.org.uk/keep-warm/condensation

Cold causes blood to thicken and blood pressure to rise, increasing the risk of stroke and heart attack

Heat your home to at least 18°C

Did you know?

- Below 16°C breathing becomes more difficult
- Below 12°C there is strain on the heart and risk of heart attack
- Below 9°C can cause hypothermia and risk of death

visit:
warmeastsussex.org.uk
0800 464 7307
Text WARM to 80011
Apply for a Warm Home
Check

Check out the information on how to stay warm and well in cold weather on the other side of this leaflet and at: www.warmeastsussex.org.uk

Published by Citizens Advice 1066. Sept 2024. citizensadvice1066.co.uk

We Need Your Unopened Medical Items!

We have joined an initiative that allows our patients to recycle the following **unopened** consumable items:-

- Bandages, Wound dressings, plasters
- Catheters, urine bags, leg bags, night bags
- Ostomy bags, stoma bags, urostomy bags
- Incontinence pads, pants, sheets
- Glide sheets
- Syringes
- Walking aids such as crutches, walkers and surgical boots (Zimmer frames from Eastbourne only) – Medi Tech Trust will collect these from you directly.

Medi Tech Trust are a small charity with their focus being on consumables so their storage capacity is limited. Items other than the above take up valuable space which they need to keep free for the many medical items they receive as donations for onward shipping to war-torn and low-income countries.

For larger items such as commodes, shower chairs etc they refer people to the Scope website which has a recycling page with details of other charities which may be able to help. Please see below link:

<https://www.scope.org.uk/advice-and-support/second-hand-disability-equipment#Recycling-disability-equipment-click>

Please deposit your items into the yellow bin by the front door. ***Remember they must be unopened and unused!***

Would you like to join our Patient Participation Group?

Our Patient Participation Group meet quarterly. The objective of the group is for patients to have a voice and to improve our practice. It is important that the composition of the group reflects the make up of the practice population, by age/sex/needs etc.

The Group meets approximately every 12 weeks on a Monday 3–4 pm (this is a time which is convenient to the majority of members). Meetings will be limited to a maximum of 60 minutes.

If you are interested in becoming part of our Patient Participation Group, please email admin.parkpractice@nhs.net When you email please add "PPG" into the subject line and include your full name, email address and a contact number.

The Aims of the Patient Participation Group are:-

- To offer opinions in a constructive manner and to put forward ideas on behalf of other patients.
- To improve the provision of health care.
- To improve communication between surgery, patients and the wider community about matters concerning the surgery and health in general.
- To provide assistance in development of new services.
- To encourage a spirit of self help and support amongst patients to improve their health and social care.

Christmas Arrangements

We will be closed for Christmas on Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th of December 2024, re-opening on Friday 27th of December 2024.

We will then be closed on Wednesday 1st of January 2025, re-opening on Thursday 2nd of January 2025.

If you have a health concern whilst we are closed, you can contact NHS 111, 24 hours a day by dialling 111 or going online to www.111.nhs.uk. They can advise, support and direct you to the most appropriate service for your needs.

ONLY attend A&E if you have a life-threatening emergency.

If you need mental health support over the Bank Holiday, the Sussex Mental Healthline offers crisis care for people in urgent need of help with their mental health. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 0800 0309 500.

All the partners and staff wish you a Happy and Healthy 2025.

