

# Northgate Surgery

## Patient Access Policy

### **1. Aim**

This document sets out how Northgate Surgery ensures that all patients are able to access timely and appropriate clinical care.

### **2. Objectives**

- Patients are able to access information, care or treatment by a GP or appropriate member of the practice team in line with their clinical needs.
- The ability of patients to access the above does not vary on account of characteristics such as age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, geography or socio- economic status.
- Clinicians and staff are able to manage available resources to meet demand effectively so that the best possible levels of service and access are maintained at all times.
- Patients and carers are aware of how to get the best from the practice and are involved in monitoring and developing the systems and procedures to ensure that their needs are met.

### **3. Rights and responsibilities for the patient**

#### **3.1 Patients' Rights**

As a patient you have the right to:

- join the practice of your choice in the area where you live following acceptance by the practice;

- easily-accessible information about your practice and how to access care via the practice leaflet and website;
- appropriate urgent care as per Section 5 Access Targets;
- clear information about your treatment in a suitable format and language so that you and the clinician may make an informed decision about the best course of action;
- privacy and confidentiality;
- be treated with dignity and respect at all times (including access to a chaperone if required);
- comment or complain if you are not satisfied with the service provided.
- be registered in accordance with NHS England's ['Patient Registration'](#) standard operating procedure.
- Be registered or receive treatment without delay where the patient cannot produce photo ID or proof of address.

### 3.2 Patients' Responsibilities

As a patient it is your responsibility to:

- treat all practice staff with respect;
- ensure you attend any appointment made at the surgery and arrive on time;
- cancel an unwanted appointment as soon as possible so it can be offered to someone else;
- inform the practice if you change your address or telephone number so the practice can contact you urgently if needed;
- inform the practice if you have any special needs, including communication needs, so the practice can make any necessary arrangements;
- let a member of the practice staff know if you are unsure about or dissatisfied with your care so that it can be explained or put right;
- do your best to look after your own health;
- use the services of the practice appropriately.

## 4. Surgery opening hours and appointment times

Northgate Surgery operates from the following surgery premises:

<b>Monday</b>	08:00am - 18:30pm
<b>Tuesday</b>	08:00am - 18:30pm

<b>Wednesday</b>	07:00am - 08.00am for pre booked appointments only 08.00am - 18:30pm for normal surgery appointments
<b>Thursday</b>	07:00am - 08.00am for pre booked appointments only 08.00am - 18.30pm for normal surgery appointments
<b>Friday</b>	08:00am - 18:30pm
<b>Weekend</b>	<i>closed</i>

The phone lines open at 08.00 until 18:00 (except when closed for training) Monday to Friday, after which calls are diverted automatically to the GP Care Wakefield service (please see below for details).

Patients can also book appointments by using our online services 24 hours a day. Please contact reception or see our website for details on how to register for this service.

All sites are closed for staff training for a maximum of ten Wednesday afternoons (from 12 noon) each year. Details are displayed clearly on the practice website and each practice site at least four weeks in advance together with instructions on what to do if you need help when the surgery is closed.

The practice provides standard appointment length of 10 minutes for a GP but longer appointments are available on request for patients who need more time.

On Tuesday and Wednesday mornings between 7.00am and 8.00am additional appointments are offered for a wide range of services including Nurse Practitioner appointments, smears, bloods and general nursing appointments.

## **GP CARE WAKEFIELD**

**This is an extended out of hours service owned by all Wakefield GP Practices to cover the entire population of the Wakefield district.**

## **GP Appointments**

It operates from 6 – 10 pm Monday to Friday, and 9 – 3pm Saturday's, Sunday's and Bank Holidays. During these hours, please telephone the normal surgery number and you will be automatically diverted. Outside of these times please telephone 111 or ring back during normal surgery hours if your need is not urgent.

Following triage of your problem, if deemed appropriate the service will offer you a GP appointment at Trinity Medical Centre or Pontefract General Infirmary.

There needs to be shared consent in place for the service to be able to provide safe care therefore please ensure you give explicit record sharing consent when accepting an appointment with the service. Patients who prefer not to give shared consent **cannot** access this service.

**The service is not available for routine matters such as repeat prescriptions**

## **Routine care by HCA/Nurse**

In addition to the above, during 6pm & 8pm Monday to Friday, and 9am & 1pm on Saturday's, Sunday's and Bank Holiday's, patients can be seen for routine nurse care including:-

Routine ECG (not chest pain)

Spirometry

Smears

Bloods

Review of contraception pill

Repeat depo injection

B12 injection

Removal of sutures and clips

For more information, please telephone or ask at reception.

## **5. Access standards**

### **5.1 Routine consultation standard**

All patients will be offered a telephone or face-to-face consultation with a doctor or other suitable practitioner (such as a senior nurse) within two working days of contacting the practice, unless the call is triaged to be safe for a longer time frame or the patient may choose to wait longer if they want a more convenient appointment or to see their preferred practitioner.

## **5.2 Urgent clinical assessment standard**

All patients who believe that they have an urgent medical problem which needs to be dealt with the same day (and cannot be offered an appointment that day) will be contacted by a doctor or another suitable practitioner from the practice within four hours, provided they clearly identify themselves to the receptionist and supply a contact telephone number and where possible a brief indication of the problem. The patient must inform the receptionist if he/she believes the problem requires attention more quickly.

## **5.3 Repeat prescriptions standard**

The practice will generate and sign all repeat prescriptions within two working days of receiving a request to do so, except where;

- the practice has tried and failed to contact the patient where this is needed before the prescription can be issued safely,
- or where a medication review is pending and must be undertaken before the prescription can be issued safely. The request for a medication review will be highlighted on the patient's most recent prescription.

The practice aims to generate and sign repeat prescriptions within 24 hours of request but because of the need to ensure patient safety patients should allow two working days. The practice will do its best to provide prescriptions in urgent circumstances but will not compromise patient safety to do so.

In line with a new NHS Patient Safety programme, the Doctors at Northgate Surgery have agreed that the clinical risk associated with accepting repeat prescription requests over the telephone is too high and this service has now ceased.

Our new system will be safer for patients. Some requests for medication over the phone are not clear and it can take considerable time and effort to clarify what is required. Written requests will avoid potential confusion and medication errors.

In future you will be able to order repeat prescriptions in the following ways:

1. Complete the repeat prescription counterfoil attached to any existing prescription and hand this in to reception or place it in the box at the entrance to the building.
2. Online by registering for Online services. This is an easy and simple way. Select the 'Order Repeat Medication' tab at the bottom of the page on our website.
3. Register for electronic prescriptions. Your prescription will be sent to a pharmacy of your choice. Please complete a nomination form at reception.
4. Ask your chemist to order and collect your prescription. It can be collected in person or home delivered. Speak to your local pharmacy to make arrangements.

Patients on repeat medication will be asked to see a doctor, nurse practitioner or practice nurse at least once a year to review these regular medications and notification should appear on your repeat slip. Please ensure that you book an appropriate appointment to avoid unnecessary delays to further prescriptions.

## **6. If you miss your appointment or are late**

There would be much shorter waits for appointments if every unwanted appointment was cancelled and so available for another patient to use. It is frustrating for doctors and nurses to be under pressure to provide better access when up to 1 in 10 appointments are wasted by people who simply do not turn up.

We have a dedicated ansaphone for patients to cancel unwanted appointments. Please telephone the main surgery number and select option 6 to cancel an appointment. Alternatively if you have been reminded of your appointment by text you can cancel your appointment by texting CANCEL to 07800 00 000 199.

If you attend the surgery late for your appointment it may be difficult to fit you in without making other patients wait longer. Please try to attend just before your appointment slot but not too early. If the surgery is running late you will be informed by reception or via the screen in the waiting area so that you have the option of re-booking.

If you arrive more than 10 minutes late, reception will have to check with the Doctor if you can still be seen. If appropriate you will be seen but you may have to wait. Alternatively, you may be asked to re-book your appointment.

## **7. Improving access for patients**

The practice is always pleased to receive comments and suggestions about its services including how easy it is to access them. Please contact the practice manager, Alison Sugarman if you have comments or suggestions to make on 01977 703635 or by e-mail at [alison.sugarman@wakefieldccg.nhs.uk](mailto:alison.sugarman@wakefieldccg.nhs.uk).

Patients are encouraged to join our Patient Representative Group and the practice keeps the group up to date with the audits it carries out every six months to monitor access. If you would be interested in contributing to our Group, please contact the Practice Manager, Alison Sugarman on 01977 703635 or [alison.sugarman@wakefieldccg.nhs.uk](mailto:alison.sugarman@wakefieldccg.nhs.uk).

The practice has recently achieved the 'Young Person Friendly' accreditation. All reception staff have received training in assisting young people to get the best from the practice. There is access to resources specifically for young people via the practice's website and on the dedicated board in the entrance foyer. The practice provides a dedicated clinical advice service for young people. Our Young Persons' Telephone Advice Clinic is on Wednesdays between 12.00 noon and 12.30 pm. This is an advice line for people aged 13-19 years old for dedicated help on any matter that you would like to discuss with someone clinical on a totally confidential basis. Please feel free to contact reception during these times and someone will help you.

All practices in Wakefield have implemented the Accessible Information Standard. This tells NHS organisations how they should make sure that disabled patients receive information in formats that they can understand and receive appropriate support to help them to communicate

We have a designated member of staff, Katie Langowski who is responsible for ensuring that patients with sensory impairments are assisted in gaining access to all of the services the Practice offers. Please contact her at the Practice if you have experienced any problems with accessing services and would like additional help. We are a 'Working to Become Dementia Friendly' Practice. We have dementia-friendly signage, grab rails and toilet seats to help patients navigate their way round the Practice and make a visit to us less stressful for them and their relatives/carers. Interpreting services are accessed via the Practice. Please contact the Reception for assistance.