



Aspen Medical Practice

Practice Newsletter

Autumn 2020

Changes in response to Covid-19

Thank you for all your support and understanding during these unprecedented times.

The face of General Practice has changed and despite our best efforts Covid-19 is here to stay for the foreseeable future.

Our priority is ensuring patients and staff are kept safe. We are operating an appointment system where the majority of consultations are conducted either online, by text, or via video or telephone call. If an examination is needed you will be invited in for a face to face appointment. We will only offer remote consulting where it is safe to do so. Please be assured that we do not wish to compromise clinical care.

When you attend your appointments please:

- wear a fabric mask,
- come alone if possible
- do not bring food and drink
- bring a urine sample if needed, as there are limited toilet facilities.
- Please sit 2 meters apart
- do not arrive more than 5 minutes before your appointment time.

It is important we have a current mobile number and email. Please update via the website if these change.

Please only attend if you have been asked to do so or have an appointment.

Covid –19 cases rising in Gloucestershire

Although we are fortunate to not yet be seeing the very high numbers affecting the north of England, we are seeing a steady rise in numbers. With winter approaching, additional pressures put increasing strain on a struggling NHS.

- To help stop the virus spreading:
- wash your hands regularly
- keep socially distanced
- wear a face covering.
- Isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms.

eConsult

We have been live with eConsult for 3 months now and are feeling the benefits.

This online consultation tool is accessed via the website. It will navigate you to the care you need which may be self care, support from pharmacy or completing an online consultation which will be passed to a Doctor or Nurse.

You may get a response by text message or the clinician may call you to discuss further. Many of the templates have a picture facility which is especially useful for skin conditions or lesions.

Urgent eConsults received assigned to an on the day slot ,otherwise they are booked into a follow up slot, ideally with a clinician who knows the patient or has been seeing them for an ongoing issue or has specialist knowledge of this subject.

Thank you to everyone who has used it. Although it can seem that there are a lot of questions, this is to ensure safety is maintained and that any red flag symptoms are highlighted.

Saintbridge Surgery Covid-19 Hot Hub

We will continue to use Saintbridge Surgery as our Covid Hot Hub for the foreseeable future. Where possible patients will be seen in their car. When you are sent to Saintbridge for an appointment please remain in your vehicles and ensure your mobile phone is with you as the clinician will call and take further details of your concerns on the phone first.

When to get tested

If you have a loss of sense of taste or smell, fever or a new cough you must get a Covid test.

Covid is the master mimicker so even if you think this a cold, your usual winter chest infection, asthma or tonsillitis you must get tested,

Covid Testing is available 119 or

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

Support after Covid

As you find yourself recovering from Covid-19 you may be coming to terms with the impact the virus has and on your body and mind.

Support can be found. <https://www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk/>

Appointments

Over the past year we have increased our appointments to cope with a tide of increasing demand.

In September, our clinicians delivered 22180 consultations of all types.

This is a **66%** increase over September 2019 (13306) and a **83%** increase over September 2018 (12,097)

This rate is the equivalent of 8.9 consultations per patient per year.

Our website has many resources, allowing patients to self care and self refer to specialities such as Physiotherapy and Psychological therapies.

Our community Pharmacists are knowledgeable and able to diagnose and treat common minor illnesses.

By using our website or submitting an eConsult where possible, you help us to meet this increasing wave of demand , especially as we head into winter.

<https://www.aspenmedicalpractice.nhs.uk>

Virtual Carers Support

Our monthly carers support has gone virtual and we are now offering monthly Zoom meeting with Gloucestershire Carers Hub.

Please ensure we have you registered as a carer so that you receive regular texts with our monthly log ins.

Our next meeting on the 4th November we will have experts speaking about dementia.

11am –1 pm.

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/2235823886?pwd=MWZzcnF5NWZlUXpUzTZPd1pyMzViQT09>

Meeting ID: 223 582 3886
Passcode: dEQ4R7

Launch of Aspen Carers and Support Line

Our wonderful volunteers, who all have experienced the difficulties of being carers first hand are here for you.

Every Wednesday between 11am –1pm they are ready to listen, support and signpost without judgement. Please call 07864210500.



Eat Real Food Support Groups

Our monthly eat Real Food Support group has also gone virtual.

Learn more about the benefits of an Eat Real Food lifestyle on our website and join us monthly.

We are missing our group consultations but are looking to launch an online Eat Real Food Programme. Please watch this space.

Aspen Patient Participation Group

We are lucky to have an amazing PPG. They have supported us throughout this year.

During our flu clinics they helped to guide patients and support staff. We are most grateful for their help.

We are always looking for new members, of any age, and background. We hope our PPG can reflect our total and diverse patient population.

If you would like to be part of this group, or want to know more than please contact reception or visit the Aspen website on the left hand side near the bottom you will find Patient Participation Group, click on this for information.

<https://www.aspenmedicalpractice.nhs.uk/navigator/patient-participation-group-registration/>

Tuffley Surgery

We recognise that Tuffley Surgery is vital in providing care to the patients of Tuffley.

However, we have had to make the difficult decision to keep this currently closed. Due to staff shielding, staff sickness and isolating it is making it difficult to work safely from multiple sites. To survive Covid-19 we have had to pool our resources and work together to avoid conflicts to patient care. Please be assured that long term Tuffley will reopen.

Follow us.....

We are active on Social Media. and have our own Facebook page, Twitter account and Instagram account,. Please follow us via our website or by searching for us.

We will be using social media to share information and keep patients updated.