

Primary Care: Why are GP Practices still working differently?

The Pandemic is over! It is not over yet and the modelling suggests there is a 3rd wave on its way. We must protect Primary Care Teams and vulnerable patients by keeping contact to a minimum.

How are practices working now? All appointments are being triaged - this means that people with the greatest need are being seen first.

What is Triage? The Duty medic will assess every eConsult and phone query and decide who needs to be seen in person, who needs a phone consultation, who needs to be seen via video and who can be directed to a community pharmacist etc.

How do we triage? Duty clinicians will look at all the information available and make an assessment loosely based on:

'Hear it' - phone consult,

See it' - video consult (Near Me)

Feel it' - face to face appointment.

Why do receptionists ask personal questions? Put simply, because they have been asked to! Anyone that is tasked with answering a call at a GP practice must maintain strict confidence and only ask questions to help you get the right treatment.

eConsult? Consult is an online way of contacting your doctor to get help and support. There is lots of information that you can use to help yourself too. Find out more by watching this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fGEpzrgAJc>

What about emergencies? If it is a genuine medical emergency then you should call 999 and ask for an ambulance. If you need emergency care but are not in imminent danger then you should call 111

Where else can I get help? NHS Inform has a wealth of information to help you help yourself: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/> Community Pharmacists (chemists) can help with many common ailments and illnesses and can prescribe some medicines too.

Please be patient. Primary Care Teams have been working incredibly hard throughout the Pandemic. Many of our teams are exhausted and they really are doing their best to help you. We, just like you, want to get back to as close as normal as possible as soon as possible, but we are not there yet.