

Ball Tree Surgery

GP Appointment Guide – May 2018



Changes ahead...

We apologise that recently we have not had as much access to pre-bookable non-urgent GP appointments as we would like. We have listened to all your helpful feedback

To help, we are making changes to how you access GP appointments.

Our appointment booking system will now be the same for both sites.

We hope that this new system will provide a better range of appointments to help you access us both when you are **urgently unwell 'on the day'** or to book **'in advance'** to see your **usual GP** for **non-urgent and ongoing problems**.

It is really important that you read the information below.

Please tell your relatives, friends and neighbours about these changes if they don't have an email address

Check out the **'3 before GP'** section at the end of the email – would your question or problem be solved faster with self-care or by asking a pharmacist

Summary:

Appointments 'on the day' – are now only for people who are **URGENTLY** unwell

- If you are urgently unwell – please try to call us before 10:30am (including for visits)

We will have more **pre-bookable GP appointments** and more opportunity for telephone follow ups for non-urgent matters

In Detail:

What is changing?

- How you book a GP appointment
- What you will be asked when you call for a GP appointment
- The GP appointment options available – including – **On the Day**, **Book in Advance** and Phone Calls for follow up

Why is it changing?

- We are moving to one system for both locations
- We have listened to you and are trying to create more appointments to improve our access
- We can only do this with your help
- Please help us by answering our Reception Team's questions – we will try to get you to see the right person in the right timescale

Your experience when booking:

You will be asked: Why are you calling?

If you want a GP appointment

- What is the appointment for... - please do tell us (we are not being nosy and everything is confidential)
- Is it **something new** or have you been seeing a GP about this already, **something ongoing**?

If something new...

Reception will ask - are you currently **URGENTLY** unwell?

If **YES – you are urgently unwell** - We will arrange for a same day GP or Specialist Nurse appointment OR ask our Duty GP to call you who may ask you to come for an appointment.

- The Duty GP could be at either our Ball Tree Sompting **or** Kingfisher Lancing Branches and you will need to go to the site where the Duty GP is working on that day.
- If the Duty GP asks you to come in and you state that it is not convenient or you are not available then you need to consider if you are urgently unwell...
- There will only be 'on the day' urgent appointments available at one site on any particular day – there will not be a regular pattern to the days.
- Urgent appointments are not for anything administrative – such as sick notes or medication requests

If NO – NOT urgently unwell - but you are quite unwell with something that cannot wait a few days...

EITHER

We will arrange for an appointment either **same day** or **next day** with an Advanced Nurse or Senior Nurse or GP.

The Nurses have access to a GP if they are concerned.

The Senior nurses can prescribe medication or ask a GP to prescribe

OR

If NO - NOT urgently unwell

Is it something that could be answered by phone?

If YES – Can be helped with a phone call - we will book you in with a GP Phone call as soon as we are able

NOTES:

- Call could be at any time on a particular day – you will need to be flexible
- You MUST check we have your correct number
- You MUST answer calls from 'Unknown Caller' – the GP will not be able to try calling more than two times

If NO – cannot be helped by a phone call

We will book you in with an **GP appointment** as soon as we are able – ideally your usual GP

If your call is about **something ongoing**

Can it wait until you see the same GP that you have seen about this recently? (**this is your best option**)

If **YES** - we will try to book you with the same GP as soon as we are able

If **NO** – or the same GP is away or not available for a while – then we will find another GP appointment as soon as we are able.

How appointments are changing:

- There will be **MORE** appointments available to book in advance
- There will be **FEWER** appointments on the day – as these appointments are **ONLY** for **URGENTLY** unwell people
- We know that there is pressure on our appointments. Demand has gone up but we have the same number of GPs.
- Please do not ask Reception to book you into an on the day appointment if you are not urgently unwell – that is not fair to those who are.

3 Before GP...

We know that many things may seem urgent to you or that you think need to see a GP – however before you call please have a think... **3 before GP**

○ **1 – Self Care**

Is it something that could get better by itself in a couple of days or that you could 'self-care for' search [Self Care NHS](#)

○ **2 – NHS Online**

[NHS Choices](#) and the [Self-Care Forum](#) – links to these trusted sites are on the front page of [our website](#). If you don't have access to a computer or a smart phone ask a friend or family member if they could help you.

○ **3 – Ask your local Pharmacist**

Is this something that could be seen by your Pharmacist?
(you can see a pharmacist immediately without an appointment and they are trained to support you)

This new system will take a little while before we all feel the benefits – please be patient while the ripple of change is felt – likely at least a couple of months...

Thank you for helping us to try this new system.