



**The same day
booking
system.
Guide and
FAQs**

What is The Cranborne Practice Patient Services and Information Gateway?



A service to improve accessibility of GP services, reduce waiting times and supporting patient needs, creating opportunities to access support on the day of need.



To support and assist our team of GPs Nurses, HCA's and Medical Receptionist to provide our patients with a timelier service



Providing a different patient centric service as the current situation is proving challenging and we believe our patients have been understanding, we cannot continue without changes in our working practices.



To promote and provide communication access to services via a range of channels

- Phone appointment
- Online appointment
- In person appointment
- Referral (a request to an allied health care professional)



- Our surgery opening hours will remain unchanged as 8 am – 6.30 pm

The current situation

The Cranborne Practice provides support to over **12,000** patients.

There are 11 **GPs** (a mixture of part-time and full-time), 7 nurses including 2 Advanced Nurse Practitioners, 6 Health Care Assistants, 10 medical receptionists and 5 administrators and secretaries.

On an average week, the Practice will receive over **1,900** phone calls

Issue **1,300** repeat prescriptions

Undertake **1,400** telephone consultations

See over **900** people in person

Historically a patient can wait up to **2 weeks** to see a GP

Why the need for change?

- The Practice does not want to be in a situation where the next available appointment for its patients can be up to 2 weeks away.
- However, it is a daily balancing act between demand and availability.
- The Practice believes that its patients should have access to medical support on the day of need.
- The Practice recognises that delays in seeing their doctor can cause distress and worry for its patients.
- Whilst every request to see a GP is an important request, there are wide-ranging needs depending upon the patient's vulnerability and their risk.
- The Practice is committed to improving things, and without changes, the current situation will soon become untenable.

How will it affect me?



With the new system you will get access to a GP on the **SAME DAY** as your request



Appointments slots will be released daily and will be available to book online or by phoning the surgery. In person bookings may also be made at our Lake Road Surgery branch.



This means that you can access medical support when you need it and not have to wait to discuss your concerns with a GP



Initially, while the system beds in, there may be an additional wait time to get through if phoning to request an appointment via the telephone; however, there are several other ways in which you can secure an appointment e.g., online



We ask that our patients work with us whilst we make the changes, and whilst we have taken steps to ensure the disruption is minimal, you may experience an increased delay in us answering the phones in the initial week.

What will I experience differently?

The new system went live from **Monday 6th of June**

Since then, **no forward bookings** have been taken for GP appointments

At the start of each day all appointment slots will be released to be booked by our patients

These can be booked online from 7 am using a **Systmonline account**, or through the **NHS app** or **Airmid App**

At 8 a.m. our telephone lines will be open and able to receive calls from our patients

On receipt of your request, you will be offered a choice of either a face-to-face appointment with a GP or a time to receive a telephone call from one. The timeslot will depend on the GPs daily schedule

You can also walk into our Lake Road surgery branch and speak to one of our trained medical receptionists

By the end of the day, all patients who have requested to speak with a GP on that day, will have done so either by a face-to-face appointment or by telephone

The next day the process is repeated with all free and available slots being released for booking that morning

This means that if you need to see or speak with a GP during the day, you will be able to do so.

To address any concerns, you may have:

The following pages provide information to answer questions you may have about the new system.

It is a different approach to previous arrangements, but one that we firmly believe will improve the level of access to services for our patients.

Is this the end of the family GP service?

Is this the end of the family GP service where a person gets to see their own GP who understand them, their history and where a patient has confidence in the ability to talk to someone, they feel they know?

RESPONSE

Definitely not!

In fact, we want all patients to identify a GP as “their” GP so we can, where possible, ensure a patient sees the same GP on an ongoing basis. This is our objective, and we will do all we can within the time and resources available to deliver it.

It is not the end of face-to-face appointments either. We are still providing these as we have done so throughout the recent pandemic.

Will I be guaranteed to see a GP that day?

If I ring up in the morning, will I be guaranteed to see a GP that day?

Or will I get to speak to someone who can help and if need be, issue a prescription?

RESPONSE

You will be guaranteed to be seen/spoken to by a GP based on YOUR choice and GP availability on the day.

This is what tried to do previously, but we had to carry out pre booked appointments too, which impacted our responsiveness!

Prescriptions are always actioned/dealt with on the day requested.

You will be inundated with telephone calls!

Surely if you are releasing all the appointments in the morning, during the first hour of the day you will be inundated with telephone calls. Will I be spending a long time on the phone waiting for my call to be answered?

RESPONSE

We are encouraging our patients where possible to help us and **use other alternatives to calls e.g. the many online options we offer.**

We are already inundated by phone calls every day and are often faced with handling between **300 to 400 calls per day** with many patients requesting an urgent appointment.

Will I be stuck in an even longer telephone queue?

If I have an urgent need, and there are 10 people in the queue before me, how will I get a face-to-face appointment with a GP that day, especially if you've already filled all the slots?

RESPONSE

We recognise this may be an area of concern, and we have worked hard to have this covered. We already have a limitless list for our on duty GPs.

Demand is already extremely high and was not helped by patients having to wait up to 2 weeks for an appointment.

We believe that by dealing with the enquiries on the day we can reduce the waiting time. Sometimes the phones will get busy, **but the trade-off is that you know that you will get to see a GP on that day.**

I want to feel comfortable talking to a specific GP

I do not feel confident talking to a GP I don't know. I want to feel comfortable talking to a specific GP, so how will I know what day they are working, when they are working and what happens if their slot are already filled by the time I get through?

I also know that some GP's are specialists, e.g. dermatology. How can I see a specialist GP?

RESPONSE

Should you wish to wait to see a specific GP, you may need to wait until the date of their next available surgery. In June 2023, we added information about our GPs routine hours.

However, please be aware that events such as holidays or annual leave will also affect the rotas of when GPs are available. You will be directed to your usual GP if they are available.

If your need is to be seen more urgently than their availability allows, you will be offered an appointment with a GP who has more immediate capacity.

What about follow up appointments?

If a GP wants to see me for a follow up appointment in a few days' time, how is that going to work? Do I need to go through the whole system again? Can't a follow-up just be booked?

RESPONSE

No, but don't worry: if necessary the GP will follow up with a text message to you or a call back initiated by themselves.

What if the surgery is closed?

If a GP phones a patient after 6.30 pm and thinks they should be seen, how will that work as the surgery will be closed by then?

RESPONSE

If a patient needs to be seen same day, be assured that the Doctor will deal with the issue. If they are unable to see the patient, and it is urgent, they will refer them to the "out of hours" service (NHS111) or ask them to attend A & E.

Have GP hours increased?

Has the number of GP hours (excluding locum hours) gone up pro rata in line with the increase in number of patients?

Have the number of reception staff increased?

RESPONSE

We have increased our GP hours aligned with this system.

Our medical reception team has not increased as we are limited to space and budgets. Our view is that we would prefer to put our funds into providing more GP capacity who can deal with concerns from our patients.

What about those who can't go online and rely on phones to make an appointment?

I have access to the Internet, so if I log on before 8 and book an appointment, surely this means there are less slots available for people who do not have access to the Internet and who are required to phone.

Does this not discriminate against the elderly people who rely on phone to make appointments?

RESPONSE

Available appointment slots are offered evenly between online and phone/in person requests.

At times there may be a wait on the phone, but we are of the view that for the best patient care it is better to wait on the phone and speak with a GP that day as opposed to a quicker phone response and a two week wait to see a GP.

What if it's urgent?

How will you decide that my need is urgent?

Will you take my word for it?

RESPONSE

Whether considered urgent or routine – you will be given a same day appointment.

What if **no** slots are available?

Are you sure that you have the capacity to handle all the requests for GP appointments on a day-to-day basis. What happens if there is oversubscription to the slots available?

RESPONSE

The duty doctor as now, could see 30 or 70 patients in a day.

This way, only the GPs on the day would be sharing the workload, rather than it resting on two or three GP's per day.

Who will decide whether I am referred to a GP?

Who will decide whether I am referred to a GP, Nurse, Health Care Assistant or Pharmacist?

What happens if I disagree?

How can I get to see who I want to see?

RESPONSE

If a patient requests a GP consultation, we would rarely request that a patient sees an allied health care professional.

However, for the fairness to all patients, if we identify a consistent inappropriate use of GP time and the GP has requested a follow up with another of our qualified healthcare team, we will make a note of this going forward and will explain our decision to the patients.

I work during the day. What will the new system mean I need to do?

I work and only get one day off a week, but I want to see a GP because I'm concerned about a medical issue that is developing. Do I have to keep ringing up every morning on my day off to find a slot? It could be some time before my next day off which will further delay my being seen.

RESPONSE

Whenever you want to be seen you will be!
At your choice you may prefer a telephone consultation.

It makes no difference to us when your day off is. When you call us on day "x" we will book you for that day. You won't be delayed in getting access to a GP.

Why now?

If you can support all calls on the day on which they are made, why haven't you been able to do it at present. What is going to change?

RESPONSE

Historically we were able to meet the daily demands to see a GP. But lockdown and the changes in the way we had to operate during the pandemic has caused a build up in demand which we have been working hard to address.

We are, in effect, resetting the system so that we can again deal with our patients concerns on the day.

I look after someone and can't call until after 10am.

I look after an elderly relative but cannot get to see her until after I've taken the kids to school. When I can make a call on her behalf, surely by that time all the daily slots will be filled. I am not able to see her every day and make the call every day until a slot becomes available

RESPONSE

Not all appointment slots will be taken.
Based on our analysis and restricted system we are confident that you will still be able to access GP services on that day.

Can I walk in?

Can I still walk in and make an appointment? Will I have to sit and wait until a slot becomes available?

RESPONSE

You can book in person at our Lake Road Surgery branch where our trained medical receptionists are based.

However, we cannot guarantee the appointment will be at a time which makes it appropriate time to "sit and wait" but not all appointments need to be face to face. So, if you wish you may wish to receive a telephone appointment.

However, we sometimes experience patients queueing outside our doors to make an appointment in person. We ask patients to book online or persevere on the phone. This system will give them a same day allocated slot no matter which channel is used to contact us.

Will you call me back?

Is it possible that there is a call back list if the daily slots are oversubscribed or if someone doesn't turn up for an appointment resulting in a slot becoming available?

RESPONSE

When you contact us, you will be given a slot. So, this situation will not arise.

What if I need to organise transport?

I need to organise a taxi to get me to the surgery. If I must book up on the day, it is less easy for me to organise a taxi at such short notice.

I rely on buses to get me to the surgery; it will be difficult for me to coordinate my time of appointment with the bus timetable.

I rely on a friend or relative to take me to the surgery and accompany me, they may not be available on the day that I call as they may be working or have other commitments.

RESPONSE

We will endeavour to book it to fit with transport needs.

If you advise us of your transportation constraints, we will update our records and can take that into account when booking your appointment.

Is this a pilot project?

Is this a pilot to test new system or is this it?

What will you do if you find that the new system is not working for patients, and they are unable to get health care support on the day they call or are finding it difficult to make calls to the surgery?

RESPONSE

We are moving to this system, and it will take patience and flexibility as it rolls out.

We will pick up on any areas of concern and specific problems as they arise. We have tried to take all our patients needs into account.

Won't the number of phone calls to the surgery make it worse?

One of the problems I've experienced in the past is making calls to the surgery, often held in queues and long wait times. Surely this will only make matters worse?

RESPONSE

We typically have 5 reception staff handling our lines into the surgery at any one time. They are working flat out and take time to listen and understand each caller needs.

With this new system as it beds in there may be a longer telephone wait times, BUT you will get a GP appointment that day. Our view is that it is better to wait on the phone for a same day appointment than wait 2 weeks to see a GP.

Can't get to the surgery without help?

I am disabled and find it difficult to get to the surgery without support. Trying to get support at such short notice and on the day will be challenging for me and as a result, I might not be able to make appointments at short notice.

RESPONSE

We will endeavour to book it to fit with transport needs.

Tell us when you call about your transport constraints, and we will do all we can to accommodate your needs.

As we currently do now, our reception team will be able to identify and prioritise vulnerable patients.

Is this fair?

Surely there is a case of whoever gets in first gets the best choices? That does not seem fair!

RESPONSE

This is not the case with the Same Day GP Appointment booking system.

Unfortunately, it has been the case in the past!

Everybody eventually gets seen as often routine appointments when offered more than a week away or they are put on triage for the day. With the new system, everyone who contacts us on the day requesting a GP appointment will get one.

What happens if I am dissatisfied with the new service?

Who can I report it to? How can I feedback any issues?

RESPONSE

Direct to the Practice Manager as per present guidance. We want to work with our patients to ensure this system works and we trust that we can work with our patients to improve the service.

Be assured we are doing all we can to meet the best interests of our patients.

More
Questions?

Please contact by email



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