

Report of Mendip Country Practice activity and arrangements during Covid pandemic

The practice has risen to the challenge of Covid 19 and has worked hard as a team to continue to provide care to patients and the wider community within the restrictions imposed by Public Health, NHSE and the CCG to ensure patients and staff are kept as safe as possible and not unduly exposed to potential risk of infection. Dr Duffy continues as the Practice Clinical Lead for Covid.

At the beginning of the pandemic we contacted all shielding patients to ensure they had support, this was aided by our Social Prescriber Tracey Chedzoy. Although Shielding has temporarily halted we continue to provide a dedicated clinic, surgery session and dispensary collection time for shielding patients on a Monday morning until 1pm. This is to ensure they are continued to be monitored for their chronic diseases. Our nurses have also carried out home visits for those shielding patients too ill or with no means of attending the surgery other than public transport, so they continue to receive vital ongoing monitoring and care.

The Dispensary team have also been delivering medication to shielding dispensing patients and will continue to do so for as long as necessary.

The majority of the appointments are being conducted via telephone or video link and after the clinician has assessed the patient, if they require to be seen face to face the clinician will organise the appointment.

When patients are seen face to face we ask that the patient wears a mask, we will provide one if they do not have one available. On arrival at the surgery the patient is asked to sanitise their hands with gel provided. We ask that do one accompanies the patient into the building unless absolutely necessary, i.e. parents with children and help with mobility. We have also asked that parents, if at all possible, only bring the child in that's having the treatment into the surgery. In the waiting room we only allow 3 patients and the lobby 1 patient. Clinicians who are seeing patients face to face wear full PPE as per Public Health requirements.

The Admin team have sent out, when necessary, campaign messages via SMS text messaging and emails to patients. We will be sending out Flu vaccination invite messages in the next few weeks, although patients who are eligible do not need to wait to receive an invite to book their appointment for their flu vaccine. Public Health have asked us to invite all 50 to 64 year old for a flu vaccine, however, this will not happen until November onwards. We have continued to refer patients to secondary care and the secretaries have continued to chase outstanding and overdue appointments.

Apart from Spirometer testing all other face to face procedures were restarted in August, including ear syringing and cervical smears. For those women who are on more frequent recalls we continued to test throughout lockdown. The secretaries and Reception staff continue to chase patients who have not attended for screening, including smears and blood tests. AAA screening is being recommenced on Monday 22nd September in our

carpark, Diabetic retinopathy – we are waiting to hear about the date for recommencement of service.

Staff are continuing social distancing within the surgery, and are wearing face masks in corridors. Some have been able to work from home during lockdown and we have rearranged admin hours so staff can continue to social distance.

We have had two Registrars start – Dr Georgie McGuire and Abigail Nicolson. Robert Gregory and Charlotte Hickson are still with us. We also have a Foundation year 2 doctor starting 2nd December, Rosalind Beckett.

We have commenced a new service called First Contact Physiotherapy across our Primary Care Network. The 3 physiotherapists work across the patch Mondays to Fridays, at MCP, Beckington, Grove House, Oakhill and Park Medical. At present they are providing advice over the phone to patients who have a musculoskeletal problem. They are able to refer on to other services, or for x-rays, MRI scans or blood tests. The physio is here on a Monday morning or alternate Friday afternoons. However, MCP patients can be booked in at the other 4 practices.

As to the question about staff ratio - although the GPs are not seeing many patients face to face, clinicians still have full surgeries. Nursing staff if they can deal with a patient over the phone they do. However, the majority of procedures are face to face as is the nature of their work. We still need a full complement of Dispensary staff - there work has in no way reduced and in fact during the first two months of lockdown rapidly increased. We still require admin staff, secretaries, care co-ordinators, receptionists and PM, telephones need answering, referral letters typed, appointments booked and chased. Staff and doctors need paying and so do the bills. Yes, patients walking through the door has reduced, and there were less queries from patients, especially during the first two months. However, during those first two months the work did not lessen, just changed in nature, for example the team contacted over 1000 patients who could possibly have been a shielding patient. The clinicians here were at pains to ensure patients with a chronic disease were continued to be monitored - as you can see from the report above. Training of new GPs and medical students (in the latter case remotely) has continued. We also sent out campaign messages to patients stating that we were still here for them if they had an acute problem or worrying symptoms. Surgery sessions are becoming busier and we have not reached winter yet, we are also have a very large flu campaign to organise under Covid rules.

Practice Manager, Mendip Country Practice

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