



IT IS NOT BUSINESS AS USUAL

To the majority of our patients, we thank you for your continued support and kindness during this crisis.

We continue to operate in a way that does the most to protect the lives of our patients and our staff.

In line with national guidance, over 90% of patients are currently safely managed by video or telephone consultations. For those that do need to be seen face to face, all staff wear PPE and clean areas between cases. This takes time and reduces capacity. We are remaining doors closed for the time being as we cannot have patients in our waiting room for periods of time prior to appointments – decontamination and social distancing rules apply and present their own challenges.

COVID is still here. We are still seeing cases in our community and we therefore still need provision for 'hot' assessments, as well as home visiting services for those that are housebound. Following telephone or video consultations, any patient requiring examination that has a cough, fever or loss of taste/smell, no matter the cause, are seen in those settings.

This means, in terms of restarting routine services, we are a long way away from what we used to do. It is not business as usual. A second wave is a real possibility and we are making preparations for this. We are being guided by the Royal College of General Practice, our CCG and NHS England, to ensure we prioritise the right services and groups going forward. This includes our large care home community, those who are end of life requiring palliative care and advance care planning, those with suspected or diagnosed cancers, and those with mental health, dementia and learning difficulties.

With courage, commitment, and teamwork, our staff have risen to the challenge that COVID presented. Working more hours than ever before, covering colleagues too high risk to do work frontline and putting their own (and their family's) health and wellbeing at risk daily. We have innovated and brought in new technologies. We have made changes in days that normally take months or years.

We are here for you and we thank you for your understanding and patience during this time.