



# Downlands Medical Centre

## NEWSLETTER

Email: [esxccg.downlandsmedicalcentre@nhs.net](mailto:esxccg.downlandsmedicalcentre@nhs.net)

Website: [www.downlandsmedicalcentre.nhs.uk](http://www.downlandsmedicalcentre.nhs.uk)

**Autumn 2021**

To All Our Patients

There has been a lot in the national media recently about how GP practices are working, and we wanted to take the opportunity to share with you, what you can expect at the current time as one of our patients.

Firstly, we want to say thank you. Thank you for your support over the past 18 months for working with us in such uncertain times. Like many, we had to change the way we work very quickly and that has only been possible because you – our patients – have adapted to these changes.

We would like to reassure you that we are open and still want and need to know if you are unwell or worried about your health.

Appointments at the Practice are by invite as to follow guidance we have to limit the number of people in the Practice at any time.

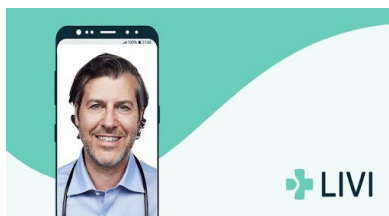
All initial contact is via the telephone or email and to aid that we have twice increased the number of incoming telephone lines to the practice.

We are providing face-to-face appointments, as well as supporting people over the phone or online. Face-to-face appointments will be offered when they are medically needed and can be with a range of healthcare professionals currently working within or outside of the practice depending on the support that you need. Using a mix of face-to-face and phone appointments allows us to keep the number of patients and staff on site to a minimum. This ensures we can all socially distance if you do need to come into the practice and meet with national guidance issued by the Department of Health. It also recognises that our surgery building is not 'fit for purpose' and inadequate to meet the full medical needs of our 11,000 registered patients.

We are asking that if you need our help and support, you still call us first if you are able. We know that some people have struggled to get through to us on the phone or had a long wait and we thank you for your patience. Talking to you helps us understand what kind of support you need and how urgent it is and means we can work out the best way for you to receive help.

We have seen an increase in calls since the start of the pandemic and we are working to try to meet this demand and support all of our patients. We know that some people have put off seeking medical support to protect the NHS and we are committed to making sure all of our patients who need our help can receive it.

engage  
HEALTH SYSTEMS



Whilst we recognise that not everyone has access to a computer, smartphone, or tablet, we do want to make you aware of:

Engage consult – you can use this from the front page of our practice website

[www.downlandsmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.downlandsmedicalcentre.co.uk) Requesting our help via ENGAGE consult is the same as booking an appointment at the practice. There is no need to phone the practice as well and we will deal with your enquiry based on your medical needs within 48 hours.

The NHS app (is owned and run by the NHS, it is a simple and secure way to access a range of NHS services, including the ordering of prescriptions, validating your vaccines.

For repeat prescriptions you can email us at [ESXCCG.prescriptionrequestsDMC@nhs.net](mailto:ESXCCG.prescriptionrequestsDMC@nhs.net) or register for our Patient Access Service and submit orders via this facility. You will also be able to book appointments online via this service and currently seasonal flu appointments are available for booking if you are eligible.

You can book a consultation with a Doctor from the LIVI service. For details and information of how to register please go the Practice Website.

NHS 111 is available 24/7 for 365 days a year. They are available to provide medical advice by either calling 1-1-1 or going online to [www.nhs111](http://www.nhs111)

If you do not have access to these, you can make your request for a repeat prescription in person into the box at the practice or speak to your local pharmacist and together we will action this as soon as we are able.

As we all continue on the road out of lockdown restrictions, we can also update you on plans for services over the coming weeks. Please see the Practice website Facebook page at [@DownlandsMedicalCentrePolegate](https://www.facebook.com/DownlandsMedicalCentrePolegate) or future quarterly newsletters.

If you have a question about the Covid-19 vaccine, please visit the information on our website and [www.sussexhealthandcare.uk/keepsussexsafe/sussex-covid-19-vaccination-programme/](http://www.sussexhealthandcare.uk/keepsussexsafe/sussex-covid-19-vaccination-programme/) if you are able in the first instance. These websites have answers to usual questions and where you can get help in relation to specific queries.

We know that we do not always get things right the first time, but our team is working hard to do the best we can under challenging circumstances. We welcome feedback from our patients so that we can share when things go well and learn when – and how – we can make things better. We welcome your suggestions which can be communicated via [ESXCCG.DownlandsMedicalCentre@nhs.uk](mailto:ESXCCG.DownlandsMedicalCentre@nhs.uk) or by writing to us or through the web-form on the Practice website.

We do ask that as we are here for you, please continue to be respectful and kind to our teams both when you are speaking to them and with regards to personal comments online and on social media. We want to enable a culture of mutual respect and have a zero-tolerance policy on verbal and physical abuse. No patient, carer, visitor, staff member or volunteer should ever be subjected to abusive or anti-social behaviour or language. Appropriate action will be taken if this does occur. We thank you for the respect and the care you show our team, we hope you experience the same in return.

Thank you for your support.

We will try to follow the Governments latest advice to increase availability of Face-to-face appointments by the employment of locum GPs and other Clinicians. However, there is not an unlimited pool of locum Doctors available, and we are restricted on employing additional staff as we do not have room space within the current surgery building. We do have a further trainee Clinical Practitioner joining us on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021 and you may be offered a consultation with her in the future.

# **New Surgery Service.**

## **Appointments available at Downlands**

### **Dementia specialist Admiral Nurse Clinic**

- **Victoria Medical Centre**
- **Beacon Practice**
- **Manor Park Surgery**
- **Downlands Medical Centre**

**01323 407 837**

**[sussexandclinic@dementiauk.org](mailto:sussexandclinic@dementiauk.org)**



Compassionate  
one-to-one  
support and  
practical solutions  
for people looking  
after someone  
with dementia

If you're caring for someone living with dementia, you can call or email the Admiral Nurse Clinic to make an appointment, to seek specialist advice, support and clinical guidance about dementia, in confidence.



**Weekly drop-in  
at the Beacon  
Practice on  
Mondays 9-5**

**01323 407 837**

**[sussexandclinic@dementiauk.org](mailto:sussexandclinic@dementiauk.org)**

## COVID-19 exemptions passes

Patients needing a COVID exemption pass need to ring 119 to request an exemption application form.

The 119 operative will perform a non-medical pre-screening assessment and from the information given will assess which GP/Specialist clinician/midwife should review the application. If you do not meet the pre-screening assessment criteria they will tell you on the call.

A application form, pre-populated with the information recorded by the 119 operative will be posted to you. On receipt of the application the patient will need to add any relevant information/evidence required to support their application. You are not required to make an appointment for this.

The GP/Specialist clinician/midwife will assess the application against the clinical guidance provided by the Department of Health and Social Care, the patients medical records and any evidence/supporting information provided by the patient.

The Clinician will then record the outcome on the Patients Summary Care Record. Following this action the patient will automatically receive a notification by letter of the outcome of their application and, if their application is accepted, this will display on the patients NHS COVID pass available in the NHS app or non-digital alternative.

## Shingles Vaccinations



UK Health  
Security  
Agency

As you get older  
shingles can be very  
painful and really  
affect your quality  
of life.




Have you turned **70**  
but not yet **80** years of age?

If so you are eligible for your shingles vaccination now

Contact your GP practice about having your shingles vaccination

Having your vaccination is an important reason to leave your home

 **immunisation** The safest way to protect children and adults



**Need information regarding your Covid Pass?**

# Ring 119

**THE SURGERY DOES NOT HAVE ACCESS TO YOUR COVID PASS AND ARE UNABLE TO CHANGE ANY DETAILS YOU CAN SEE. PLEASE DO NOT RING THE SURGERY.**

## Covid Pass



**Do you need proof of your Covid Status for travel or leisure?**

The easiest way is to download a copy on the NHS App

or

visit [covid-status.service.nhs.uk/](https://covid-status.service.nhs.uk/)

Or

 **Call 119 and press option 3**

**Your GP Practice does not have access to your Covid19 Pass**



## NHS Digital Weight Management Programme

The surgery is participating in the NHS Digital Weight Management programme. The programme offers free, online access to weight management services for those who are:

- 18 or over
- Have a BMI greater than 30. The BMI threshold will be lowered to 27.5 for people from Black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds, as we know people from these ethnic backgrounds are at an increased risk of conditions such as Type 2 diabetes at a lower BMI.
- Have diabetes, high blood pressure, or both.
- **IF YOU ARE INTERESTED AND QUALIFY AS ABOVE GIVE US A RING AND WE CAN BOOK YOU IN WITH ONE OF OUR NURSES AND GET YOU STARTED ON THE PROGRAMME.**



## New Staff Members

We would like to introduce you to our new staff members. Adelle , Clinical Practitioner who will be starting with us soon and Emma and Rebecca our new Health Care assistants



## Flu Vaccinations

Eligible for a Flu Vaccination? Flu Appointments are available to book online or by telephone.

A promotional poster for flu vaccinations. The background shows a group of diverse people wearing face masks, sitting on a bus. The NHS logo is in the top right. The HM Government logo is in the top left. The main text reads: 'BOOST YOUR IMMUNITY THIS WINTER WITH THE FLU VACCINE'. At the bottom, it says 'Get vaccinated. Get boosted. Get protected.' followed by the URL 'nhs.uk/wintervaccinations'.

HM Government

NHS

**BOOST YOUR  
IMMUNITY  
THIS WINTER  
WITH THE FLU VACCINE**

**Get vaccinated. Get boosted. Get protected.**  
[nhs.uk/wintervaccinations](https://nhs.uk/wintervaccinations)