



Ringmead Medical Practice

Summer Newsletter August 2021

We are re-opening our doors.

As of Tuesday 10th August, our doors will be open.

Please only visit us with an appointment and where absolutely necessary.

See page two



Community Pharmacy
Referral.



Find out more about this fantastic new way to receive quick, professional healthcare advice on page 3

Flu vaccines and COVID-19 Booster jabs are on their way from 6th September 2021.

We have reserved a flu-vaccine for you if you are over 50 or have a long term condition.

Please keep an eye on our website for further updates

See page 4

**We are about to start contacting our 16-17year olds for their
COVID vaccinations.**

This is something we are currently progressing and are working through the
guidance and requirements to give the vaccines

Please do not contact us regarding these vaccination clinics. We will be in touch in
due course.

Thank you



HANDS



FACE



SPACE

For latest news and updates

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Ringmead Medical Practice

www.ringmeadmedicalpractice.org.uk



Unlocking the Surgery Doors

Thank you for your patience and understanding throughout this COVID-19 pandemic. Although our doors have been locked we have never closed and the team has been busier than ever, adapting to these new ways of working. We understand it has been difficult for you too, with access via the phones, and we can only apologise that demand was unprecedented.

We have also had four new babies, staff in isolation, a number of resignations and over 33,350 COVID-19 vaccines given at our Birch Hill site.

We plan to open the doors on Tuesday 10th August, however as Birch Hill will be used for the COVID-19 vaccine clinics the doors will remain closed on Vaccine-clinic days (Currently Monday and Thursday)

We must maintain the rules of social distancing and the use of masks and hand sanitiser, for the safety of our patients and staff. Please see below the guidelines to follow when visiting our surgeries;

- Masks must be worn at all times whilst you are inside the surgery.
- Please use hand sanitiser upon entry to the building and throughout your visit with us.
- The toilets will remain locked and closed to the public.
- Please only attend the surgery if you have an appointment or it is absolutely necessary.
- When attending for an appointment please do not arrive too early. You will be able to wait inside up to 10 minutes before your appointment time.
- We can safely seat 4 patients in the reception area in Great Hollands practice and 8 patients seated inside our Birch Hill and Crowthorne surgeries. You will not be able to wait in these areas unless you have an appointment.
- Please attend your appointment alone unless absolutely necessary, we cannot allow too many people to congregate in one area.
- Please follow the guidelines of where to sit when you are in the surgery to maintain the safety of you and other patients in the waiting area.
- Only one person is able to speak to a receptionist at the desk at a time. If you are waiting to speak to reception, please check if the desk is clear, if the desk is busy please wait outside the surgery until it is free.
- Birch Hill surgery will still be holding vaccination clinics, please be advised on the days where there is a clinic the surgery will not be open to the general public. These are currently Monday and Thursday each week, however this will be updated weekly.
- If you have a prescription query please email this to ringmead.patientprescriptions@nhs.net before visiting the practice.
- If there is a one way system in place, please follow the posted directional guidance. If you are unsure please ask when you visit and we will be happy to advise you.
- To book an appointment please continue to telephone the practice or use our eConsult service via our website at www.ringmeadmedicalpractice.org.uk
- Please bear with us as we move forward with the reopening, we are working hard to treat our patients and keep everyone safe in our "New normal" and we thank you for your patience and assistance with keeping our community safe.
- Please take advantage of our new service – Same day referral to pharmacy of your choice. (See more information on page 3.)

The volume of calls and emails we receive has increased hugely due to COVID-19. We are grateful for your understanding and patience. We continue to adapt in line with guidance from Public Health England and our CCG regarding how we provide care. Thank you for your ongoing patience and support.



Community Pharmacy Referral



We are participating in a new approach to improve access for patients to GP appointments. The aim is to direct patients to the most appropriate healthcare professional, which may be a GP or a pharmacist.

Since 26th May 2021 if your symptoms could be resolved by a booked consultation with the pharmacist instead of the GP, you may have been given a same-day referral to a pharmacy of your choice.

We think this is a good thing. Once you see how great your local pharmacist is – they are highly trained and skilled clinicians experienced in treating minor illnesses – we don't think you'll look back. This will also help us to free up GP appointments for people with more complex health needs and ensure that everyone gets treated at the right time, by the right healthcare professional.

We are keen to hear what you think and will be listening to your comments and feedback about your experience of using this service.

What is this new service about?

From 26th May 2021, when you call the practice, you will be asked about your symptoms. If they indicate that you can best be helped by a pharmacist, you will be offered a same day private consultation with a community pharmacist located near you.

Community pharmacists have already successfully seen thousands of patients for a consultation for a minor illness, following a call to NHS 111. This new way of arranging consultations with the pharmacist by a GP practice, has been successfully piloted around the county.

What are the benefits?

Pharmacists are qualified healthcare professionals and experts in medicines. They can offer clinical advice and over-the-counter medicines for all sorts of minor illnesses, and a same day consultation can be arranged quickly and at a time to suit you.

This in turn frees up GP appointments for those people with more complex symptoms who really need to see a GP.

What happens when I see the community pharmacist?

We will share your personal details with the pharmacist and details of your minor illness and the pharmacist will contact you to arrange your consultation on the same day, or at a time that suits you.

You may be seen in person in a private consulting room, if the pharmacist thinks it appropriate, or your consultation may be carried out over the phone or via video. You will be asked about your medical history and symptoms and current medication, in the same way the GP would ask you about them.

Usually, the pharmacist will provide you with advice and can sell you an over the counter product where needed, if you choose. They will also send details of your consultation back to us for our records.

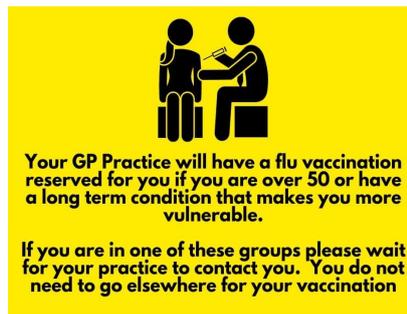
If the pharmacist feels you need to be seen by a GP urgently, they will call us to ensure you are seen, or they will advise you to contact the hospital Emergency Department if deemed necessary. You may also be referred back to us to arrange a non-urgent appointment or follow up.

Why is this a good thing for patients?

Community pharmacies are local, open longer hours than the GP practice and can offer you the same consultation outcome at a time that is more convenient for you. If the pharmacist thinks you need to see the GP, they can help arrange an urgent appointment for you.

Patients who have already used the service liked the convenience of having a consultation on the same day, or a day that suited them, at a pharmacy of their choice. 78% of people who had a consultation with a community pharmacist were successfully helped.

August 2021



Flu vaccines and COVID-19 Booster jabs

Are you eligible for a free NHS flu vaccine?

From 6th of September 2021, we will be running our Flu vaccination clinics alongside the COVID-19 booster vaccinations. We will be inviting patients in accordance with the priority groups as below but all eligible patients will be able to have their vaccination at our practice. We have ordered adequate supply of flu vaccine to meet the increased demand this coming winter.

Once we have added the clinics, we will be inviting you as per the priority groups announced by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) to attend for their Flu jab and Booster COVID-19 Vaccinations. We are waiting for the final recommendations from the JCVI.

Please keep an eye on our website for further updates www.ringmeadmedicalpractice.org.uk

Below is a full list of the priority groups of those eligible for the free flu and COVID-19 booster this year (2021/2022).

Please note invitations will be sent in two stages:

Stage 1

Adults aged 16 years and over who are immunocompromised

Those living in residential care homes for older adults

All adults aged 70 years or over

Adults aged 16 years and over who are considered clinically extremely vulnerable

Frontline health and social care workers

Stage 2

All adults aged 50 years and over

All adults aged 16 – 49 years who are in an influenza or COVID-19 at risk group

Adult household contacts of immunosuppressed individuals

Clinics will be held at our site in Birch Hill, RG12 7WW with a couple of Saturday clinics in September to be held at Edgbarrow School in Crowthorne.

Please do not call or email the surgery regarding the booster or flu vaccine as we cannot offer you an appointment until all the clinics have been created.

Please help us by making sure we have your up to date contact details including your mobile phone number and/or email address. You can do this easily on our website via this link https://www.ringmeadmedicalpractice.org.uk/updating_personal_details_t37919.html?a=0

Thank you