

Covid-19

Firstly, thank you for your patience over the last few months since Covid-19 came into force. You will have noticed a very different surgery to what you have been used to. As per NHS England guidance, we have moved to a 'total triage' model, meaning that all appointments are triaged first. This may take place in the form of a telephone or video call with a clinician. If the clinician feels you need to be seen face to face, they will invite you to the surgery. **You must wear a face covering when attending the surgery.** All of our clinical staff will wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to see you, this will involve gloves, apron, a face mask and face shield or goggles. Please do not be alarmed, this is for your safety as well as the safety of our own staff. On the advice of NHS England, we had to suspend more routine appointments, but we are now beginning to plan for returning to routine appointments, albeit a "new normal".

You will have noticed that the front door of the surgery is closed currently. Anyone wishing to enter the practice or speak to a member of staff should ring the intercom. We have a number of at risk staff who cannot have any patient contact and therefore we ask you to bear with us when waiting for the intercom call to be answered. Thank you once again for your support and patience.

Support during Covid-19

We have contacted all high risk shielded patients to ensure they are coping at home, giving advice about medication and the volunteer services available. If you wish to seek help from the volunteer service, please contact the Good Sam App on 0808 196 3646. They can arrange for prescriptions/medications to be picked up and delivered to your house, help with food shopping and provide support for those that are struggling with self-isolation. We have referred many of our patients to these services and have found their help invaluable.



Donations

Thank you to all the wonderful local patients who donated many items of PPE and scrubs to the practice. Your help is much appreciated and enabled the surgery to continue to respond to patients that had an urgent medical need. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Complaints during Covid-19

You may have heard that the NHS Complaints Procedure has been paused to allow all NHS organisations the time to deal with Covid-19. We have also paused our complaints process in the surgery. We are of course always happy to receive feedback but our response will take longer than normal.

Blood tests

During Covid-19 the surgery will only be carrying out urgent blood tests, these will be carried out at the surgery and not at Halstead Hospital.

Nurse Appointments.

Our team of Nurses are still here to provide the following during this current time:

- Childhood Immunisations
- Dressings
- Smear Tests
- Injections for Prostate Cancer etc,

If you or a family member require one of these services, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Doctor Link

We now have a virtual symptom checker available for patients which could result in you being signposted to another service or recommended to have an appointment with a clinician within a certain time period. If

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you wish to register for this service, please go to <https://app.doctorlink.com/elizabethcourtauldsurgery/register>

New Practice Manager

Carrie McSpadden has taken over from Richard Hartwell as the new Practice Manager at Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery. Carrie also manages the partnership's other surgery in Chelmsford and divides her time between the two practices.

Children and Young People aged 13-16

In line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), we are no longer able to speak to parents of children and young people aged from 13-16 years of age without their consent. Online access to records for this age group is no longer permitted in order to protect children and young people's confidentiality. Once the young person reaches the age of 16, they can request online access to their own record. Please note this is not a practice decision, this has come into force in line with GDPR.

Cervical Screening

Cervical screening has resumed from 5th June 2020. If you are due for a smear test, you should receive an invitation letter asking you to contact the surgery. If you received a letter before the outbreak of Covid-19 and cancelled your appointment, please phone reception to re-book. We have appointments at all times of day. You can also ask for an evening or weekend appointment at our Extended Access Service hub in Chelmsford.

It is Cervical Screening Awareness Week from 15th-21st June 2020. To find out more about this, please visit the following website:

<https://www.jostrust.org.uk/get-involved/campaign/cervical-screening-awareness-week>

Surgery News!

Advice for Patients during a Heatwave

Stay out of the heat:

- keep out of the sun between 11am and 3pm
- if you have to go out in the heat, walk in the shade, apply sunscreen and wear a hat and light scarf
- avoid extreme physical exertion
- wear light, loose-fitting cotton clothes

Cool yourself down:

- have plenty of cold drinks, and avoid excess alcohol, caffeine and hot drinks
- eat cold foods, particularly salads and fruit with a high water content
- take a cool shower, bath or body wash
- sprinkle water over the skin or clothing, or keep a damp cloth on the back of your neck

Keep your environment cool:

- keeping your living space cool is especially important for infants, the elderly or those with chronic health conditions or who can't look after themselves
- place a thermometer in your main living room and bedroom to keep a check on the temperature
- keep windows that are exposed to the sun closed during the day, and open windows at night when the temperature has dropped
- close curtains that receive morning or afternoon sun, however, care should be taken with metal blinds and dark curtains, as these can absorb heat – consider replacing or putting reflective material in-between them and the window space
- turn off non-essential lights and electrical equipment they generate heat
- keep indoor plants and bowls of water in the house as evaporation helps cool the air
- if possible, move into a cooler room, especially for sleeping

- electric fans may provide some relief, if temperatures are below 35°C
- keep an eye on isolated, elderly, ill or very young people and make sure they are able to keep cool
- ensure that babies, children or elderly people are not left alone in stationary cars
- check on elderly or sick neighbours, family or friends every day during a heatwave
- be alert and call a doctor if someone is unwell or further help is needed

If you have a health problem:

- keep medicines below 25 °C or in the refrigerator (read the storage instructions on the packaging)
- seek medical advice if you are suffering from a chronic medical condition or taking multiple medications

If you or others feel unwell:

- try to get help if you feel dizzy, weak, anxious or have intense thirst and headache;
- move to a cool place as soon as possible and measure your body temperature
- drink some water or fruit juice to rehydrate
- rest immediately in a cool place if you have painful muscular spasms (particularly in the legs, arms or abdomen, in many cases after sustained exercise during very hot weather), and drink oral rehydration solutions containing electrolytes.
- medical attention is needed if heat cramps last more than one hour
- consult your doctor if you feel unusual symptoms or if symptoms persist

Action for Family Carers

If you are an unpaid carer to a family member and are struggling to cope, please contact: Action for Family Carers for advice and support. If you would like to tell us you are an unpaid carer, please email f81068.reception@nhs.net so that

we can add a note to your medical record.

Registration Forms and Data Collection

Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group have recently given guidance and training to practices for supporting LGBT patients. In line with this, we have updated our registration form to include data collection on gender and sexual orientation. It is of course your choice if you do not wish to disclose this information.

Type 1 Diabetes Support for Adults

MyType1Diabetes provided by MyWay Digital Health includes tailored advice and information created by NHS Experts in diabetes. Adults with Type 1 diabetes can use this platform to access lots of information about diabetes, including videos, leaflets and e-learning courses, to learn and understand more about their type 1 diabetes and increase their confidence in how to manage it. Adults with Type 1 diabetes can access the service directly by visiting myType1.diabetes.nhs.uk and creating a free account.

Accessible Information Standards

If you have a preferred method of communication, such as telephone, email or letter, please let us know by emailing f81068.reception@nhs.net. Similarly, if you have a certain font size you would like us to use when writing to you, please let us know.

Flu Season

Please keep an eye on the website Elizabethcourtould.gpsurgery.net for more information about how to obtain your seasonal flu vaccination this year if you are in one of the at risk groups or are over 65 before the end of March 2021. We have ordered enough flu vaccinations for everyone who is at risk and over 65. Please see our website from August 2020 for further information.