**Port View Surgery**

**We are changing the way our patients will contact us in future. The new system is called “Total Triage”**

**Definition of triage “conduct a preliminary assessment of a patient’s condition in order to determine the urgency of their need and the nature of the treatment required”.**

In practice this means that a clinician will review your request and decide upon the most appropriate course of action. ***Right care, right place, first time.***

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Why are you making this change?**

GP practice contracts are being changed in October by the NHS, and there will be the requirement for every practice to have their online access open all day. This change is being enforced at a time when our patients are becoming increasingly frustrated with the availability of routine appointments. The current process of having to “call back tomorrow” is causing frustration and also puts our team in the uncomfortable position of having to turn patients away when we have nothing left to offer.

Whilst our capacity for appointments is not going to increase, what we need to do is manage our available appointments more effectively by having a clinician triage every request and make a decision on that day about the next steps needed for the patient. This will ensure that every patient gets a response to their request in a timely manner, be it a prescription being issued, advice being given, an appointment being booked or test being arranged. No-one will be told to “call back tomorrow” as all requests will enter the system on the day they are made.

Some patients are also reluctant to discuss their medical symptoms with a member of our admin team, and so by completing the online form you will be directed straight to a clinician.

**How will it work?**

You will be asked to complete the triage form, either by visiting our website, using your NHS App or by clicking on a link sent to you by our PAs in a text message. This triage form will be added to the triaging Clinicians “list” and you will be advised about next steps.

**When will it happen?**

We aim to “go live” on Monday 4th August

Our Contact Us online system will be open for clinical and administrative requests from 07.00-17.00 each weekday

**What if I don’t have a computer or smartphone?**

You will be able to telephone the practice, and our team of Patient Advisors (PA’s) will complete and submit the form for you**.**

**What if I have different communication needs?**

Patients who cannot communicate in written form are encouraged to let us know so that it can be added to their records. Our PA will be happy to complete the forms for you and any resulting communication can be done via phone.

**If I am unwell, not mobile, living alone, what can I do? Should I phone the surgery direct**

Submit the online triage form if you can. If not, telephone us and our team will complete and submit the form for you.

Home visit requests will be processed this way too, with the triaging Clinician making the decision about the next steps.

**What will happen at weekends?**

The process for getting medical help at the weekends will not change – you will need to contact NHS111 who will advise you accordingly.

**Will there still be times set for urgent and routine appointments?**

We will still encourage you to submit your triage form as early as possible on the day if your need is urgent. The more notice we have that you need help, the easier it is for us to plan your care. We plan for the system to be open from 07.00-17.00 to allow for forms to be submitted before work/school runs etc.

If you suddenly develop an urgent issue later in the day, you will need to submit a triage form, which will be reviewed by the clinician.

**Approximately how long will it take to complete the form, and will it be quicker to get an appointment?**

The form is relatively quick to complete, no more than 4-5 mins depending on how much information you want to write. The clinician will then decide about the next steps and book the appropriate service for you.

**Can I book an appointment straight away?**

No. Patients will not be booking appointments. The triaging Clinician will make the decision about the next steps and will book the relevant follow ups/appointments for you.

**Will I be able to name a clinician I wish to see?**

If you need an urgent appointment, you will need to accept whoever is providing the urgent clinical cover that day. If you are requesting a routine appointment and are able and prepared to wait for your preferred clinician, then we will do all we can to accommodate your request.

**If my health issue is not resolved, can I make another appointment with the same GP, quickly?**

You will need to complete another triage form, which will be reviewed and follow up booked if necessary.

**Does the new system apply to nurse, physio, and pharmacy appointments?**

Nurse appointments will still be booked over the phone.

Physio, Clinical Pharmacist, etc will need to come through the triage system. The clinician will decide who is the best person to see you.

**Can there be a trial period where patients can feed back their experiences with the system?**

**T**here will not be a trial period, as reversing a whole system is an extremely difficult thing to do. However, this is a “work in progress” and tweaks will be made along the way. We will be listening to your feedback to understand where the potential issues might be.

**What measures will be in place in case of system failure?**

IT systems do have issues occasionally, which are generally short lived. Our normal process in the event of an IT system failure is to suspend all activity until the issue is resolved, which is what we will need to do for this process.