

St.Andrew's Medical Centre

Dr Cathy Bruce Dr Diloni Allwin Dr Amy Rice Carly Ord (Clinical Pharmacist)
Dr E Xiradakis Dr J Mulvihill Dr J Fearnley Dr F Moriarty Dr E Gowland
Robert Powell (Paramedic Practitioner) Sue Court (Advanced Nurse Practitioner)

Changes to our appointment system from Monday 20th February 2023

The Team at St Andrews Medical Centre would like to update you on changes we are making to our appointments system.

General Practice is busier now than it has ever been and, while we now offer considerably more appointments than before the Covid-19 pandemic, we understand that it can still be difficult to get an appointment, especially at a time that suits you or with a clinician of your choice.

Over the last year, restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic have been gradually relaxed. As a result, **we are pleased to announce that we will be trialling re-introducing pre-bookable face to face and phone appointments from Monday 20th February 2023.**

How will the new appointments system work?

1. For **routine, non-urgent** medical issues, please:
 - Submit an eConsult via our website (ideally), or
 - Call reception **after 11am**. *This will enable the phones to be free first thing for sick patients requiring urgent medical attention.*
 - Our skilled reception and care navigation team will manage your query and offer you an appointment with **the most appropriate clinician** from our Multi-Disciplinary Team in a suitable time frame, this may include a referral to our local Pharmacy team for minor illness.
2. For **urgent medical issues** that cannot wait for a pre-bookable appointment:
 - Please call reception at **8.30am** on the day.
 - Our new phone system will give you a place in the queue and the option of a call back. Please be patient.
 - Please do not submit an eConsult for urgent medical issues as we **cannot guarantee they will be seen the same day.**
3. For **housebound patients**, please try to ring **before 11am** if at all possible as most visits are arranged at lunchtime.
4. To find out about your **test results**, please only call after 2:00pm and select the 'Test Results' option 2 – any enquiries received prior to this will be asked to call back after 2:00pm

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By introducing pre-bookable appointments, our number of appointments 'on the day' will be reduced. Therefore please make use of the pre-bookable appointments wherever possible which will ensure that when you have an urgent medical issue, there will be availability on the day.

For example, if you are asked to follow up with a GP after having a test or starting on a new medication, or you have a more long term health problem, please make sure that you book your appointment well in advance, as this will not be booked in "on the day" as it is not deemed to be urgent.

In order for these changes to take place, we are going to need your support and patience while the transition happens and going forward. General Practice is changing, it is not like it was 15, 10 or even 5 years ago and we need your help to make sure that our resources are focussed on meeting the health and welfare needs of all our patients in the best way possible.

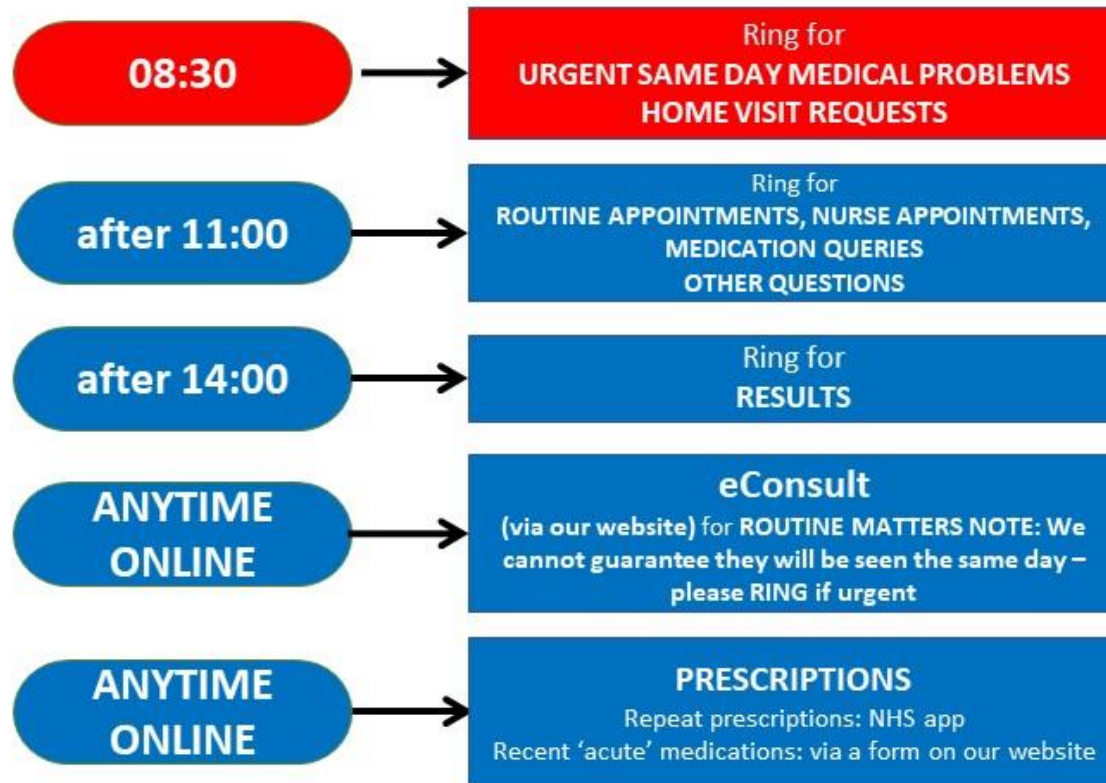
What can you, as patients, do to help support these changes?

- Please try to call at the right time of day for the type of appointment you require.
- If you book a **telephone appointment**, please try to be available **around the time of your appointment** – but if you miss the call or the Clinician is held up, please be aware that **the Clinician may not be able to call until later**. The clinician is only able to try to call you twice.
- **If you are NOT able to attend an appointment please cancel this** at the earliest opportunity. We have a large number of missed appointment every month with all clinical team members – by cancelling your appointment, we can offer it to another patient so it is not wasted. Please consider whether your GP Practice is the right place for your query to be directed – could you go to the pharmacy? To the dentist? Refer yourself directly for counselling or a hearing test? There is a list of options on our website <https://www.standrewsmc-southborough.nhs.uk/self-help-centre> that are better suited to deal with certain problems than your GP.
- If you have **symptoms of Covid-19** on the day of your pre-booked face to face appointment, please ensure you have done a test prior to attending your appointment. **If it is positive, please contact reception ASAP** so we can adjust your appointment accordingly.
- **REFERRALS:** Please login to your NHS app account to manage your referrals. If you are unable to find any details of your agreed referral then please ring the surgery and select the Secretaries Referral Line – Option 3'

And finally... Thank you for your support and patience as we transition to this new appointment system. With your help we hope this will improve the experience for all involved.

From 20th February 2023: New Appointments System @SAMC

BEFORE YOU RING: Please consider if your GP Practice is the right place for your query to be directed
(Perhaps the Dentist, Pharmacy, high st hearing tests, Health visitors, self referral counselling & more – see our website for an extensive list with contact details!)



UNABLE TO ATTEND YOUR APPOINTMENT? Please cancel ASAP