



PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWSLETTER

SPRING / SUMMER 2020

NEWS FROM THE PRACTICE

- Covid 19 has resulted in widespread changes in daily life, particularly in healthcare. However, Hilltops remains open to patients, albeit in an adjusted form while the crisis continues.
- In line with various adjustments, telephone consultations are working well and the Hilltops messaging service is also in routine use, utilising existing software. Video consultations are also available and working well.
- It would appear that the crisis has created the opportunity to show a new way of working, and requests via the website are encouraged.
- Patients who aren't confident in the use of technology will still be able to contact the surgery by 'phone and speak to a receptionist who will complete any necessary on-line forms for them, passing information/requests on to the relevant clinician.
- The primary means of entry to communication with the surgery remains via telephone, but this will need to change to a secondary means in light of the exponential increase of patient numbers.
- The current website, FootFall, signposts patients to various solutions as well as delivering a tile based navigation system. However, under consideration is an alternative online triage system, Klinik, which, if deemed appropriate and beneficial, can be merged with Footfall or even replace it, thereby offering additional options to patients.
- Hilltops continues to consider "Klinik", the new triage system that may replace FootFall, and negotiations are ongoing.
- For patients who need to visit the surgery, rooms 1 and 2 are being used for face-to-face consultations.
- Patients should still use A&E facilities when symptoms arise that give cause for concern in order to avoid the development of serious conditions. A&E departments are working with 'hot' and 'cold' areas which are well separated in order to prevent the spread of any infection.
- There is the possibility of a new GP joining Hilltops in the Autumn, with discussions now at an advanced stage. It is hoped that an announcement will be made in the near future.

You can ask to book directly with our Urgent Treatment Team -

Appropriate clinical issues that the team will treat are:

Boils	Dermatitis	Skin Rashes	Eczema	Psoriasis
Sinusitis	Tonsillitis	Chest infections	Asthma Attacks	Ear/Eye infections
Diarrhoea/Sickness	Thrush Symptoms	Chickenpox	Bites/Stings	Burns
UTIs	Morning after Pill			



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If you experience symptoms such as a dry cough, temperature plus tiredness and (possibly) shortness of breath, please follow Hilltops' guidelines before coming into the surgery.

NEWS FROM THE PPG

- The PPG met with Hilltops Partners and Management via Zoom on 14 May 2020 to discuss procedures and arrangements during the current situation and the inevitable changes, both temporary and ongoing. Minutes of this meeting are now available on the website.
- The PPG acknowledges and welcomes the growth of IT procedures and recognises the need to inform patients of their ongoing arrival and offer guidance in their use. In addition to guides via the website and FaceBook, suggestions have been invited from the PPG by Hilltops as to how these means of communication to patients can be enhanced.
- One suggestion is the creation of standard wording that could be included in responses conveyed by email or letter to patients.
- Such standard wording could also be included within texts, letters and social media and the PPG supports the utilisation of these to incorporate various standard wordings, as appropriate, when contacting patients.
- Patients who are unsure about, or are unable to use, IT are reassured that they can always contact Hilltops by phone.
- Difficulties are an inevitable part of the transition period to a changing method of communication that will better fit the current circumstances, both in terms of the covid crisis and, in future, for the growing numbers of patients together with the increasing services being made available to them. However, during this transition period, support remains available at all times
- The PPG acknowledges that the current website is considerably more user friendly than the previous website, being well laid out and simple to navigate whilst continuing to be backed up by telephone reception staff who are available to help patients who need their support in its use. The planned upgrades/changes to the website will serve to further enhance communication and accessibility to the numerous services offered by Hilltops.
- During the covid crisis period, the PPG remains in contact with Hilltops partners and management, and further Zoom meetings are planned pending the eventual return to normality, the Minutes of which will be made available within the PPG section of Hilltops website.
- In the meantime, the PPG looks forward to the time when we can once again meet with patients in the waiting area, handing out hard copies of our Newsletters, selling you our books and just having a chat.



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