Why are GP practices still working differently?

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

If the pandemic is over why can't I book a face to face GP appointment?

The pandemic is not over.

GP practices are open but are working differently in order to protect patients and staff.

In order to protect the most clinically vulnerable people who are in contact with our health services, some physical distancing requirements remain in place.

How are practices working now?

Most practices are using a "Telephone First" service.

This allows the team to assess patients over the phone and consider who needs to be seen in person and when a telephone consultation or video may be appropriate. This helps to ensure that everyone gets the type of appointment they need, and that people don't have to travel to the surgery if they don't need to.

In many cases the issue can be as effectively managed with a telephone consultation rather than a face to face meeting.

If you need to attend the practice for examination you will be given an appointment.

Why do reception staff ask personal questions?

GP reception staff are vital members of the practice team and treat all information as confidential.

They ask questions to ensure that patients are directed to the best support, within and outwith the practice.

They are trained to ensure patients are seen by the most appropriate member of the practice team and ensure GPs can prioritise the patients with the greatest clinical need.

Why am I seeing someone who is not my GP?

Many GP practices have teams of specialists working alongside the GPs.

These teams have widened and may include Nurses, Health Care Assistants, Advanced Nurse Practitioners, Pharmacists, Physiotherapists, Mental Health workers and Community Links workers.

Your needs may be dealt with more effectively by one of these team members.

Where else can I get help?

NHS Inform (www.nhsinform.scot) has lots of information to help you to help yourself.

Community Pharmacists can help with many common illnesses and can prescribe some medications.

Community Optometrists will advise people with urgent eye complaints.

Community Dentists will manage any dental problems.

What about emergencies?

If you have an urgent health issue please contact your GP practice during the day.

If you have an urgent issue and think you need to go to the Emergency Department please call **NHS 24** on **111**, day or night.

If you have a life-threatening emergency please **call 999** or go to your local **Emergency Department**.

Please be patient. Please be kind

All our health services are under enormous pressure and our staff are working extremely hard. We are open and here if needed. Please work with us to help us ensure you get the right care, in the right place and at the right time by the appropriate health professional for your needs.

Please treat those who are trying to help you with respect and kindness.