



SOMERSET MEDICAL CENTRE

BULLETIN SPRING 2024

Welcome to the **SPRING 2024** Bulletin.

Surgery Updates:

Did you know the pharmacy are now licensed to prescribe medication for certain conditions? **The**

Pharmacy First option covers:

- Uncomplicated UTIs in women aged 16-64
- Shingles (18 years +)
- Impetigo (1 year +)
- Infected Insect Bites (1 year +)
- Acute Sore Throat (5 years +)
- Acute Sinusitis (12 years +)
- Acute Ear Infections (1-17 years)

The surgery offers a pharmacy referral system which is documented on our system, and should you be referred to the surgery for further treatment, we will organise an appointment. However, you don't need an appointment or referral and can walk into most pharmacies at your convenience. Please support the surgery by using the Pharmacy First option wherever possible.

E-Consult

The best way to communicate with the surgery is via E-Consult (our digital front door). So far, many patients have engaged successfully with the system. This has led to the phone lines seeing a reduction which I am sure you will agree is great success.

We are looking to enhance this service by adding the facility to book certain appointments directly via the app – watch this space!!

We hope those patients able to use the technology will embrace this system as it helps those patients unable

to use this functionality to be assisted on the phone lines without the large queue.

Other Useful Applications:



The **NHS App**, which you can download from the App Store, is for ordering repeat prescriptions, accessing your health records, viewing your test results, managing appointments, and seeing any referrals and covid passes. You can also link your profile to be able access services for someone else. This is via Proxy Access. For full access to your results and records, you need to complete and return a Subject Access Form (tick box one) which will be approved by a GP and enhanced access will be activated. Please ensure that the notification section has been activated as this will be now the main point of reminders from the surgery.

Using 111 On-Line

Get help for your symptoms including urgent prescriptions or medicine. This service now provides access to GPs who can view your medical notes and issue medication and if necessary, organise a face-to-face appointment with us at the surgery the same day.

Website Update:

The new and improved website is now up and running. The new site offers the facility of completing forms online and access to information is a much more user-friendly style.

There is a new link for completing our registration forms. These should now all be completed on-line. Should you need a paper copy as you are unable to use the on-line facility, please let us know.

Link to website:

<https://somesetmedicalcentre.nhs.uk>

Notes for our patients when visiting the surgery:

The front desk remains fully operational for any queries you may have. We have a check-in screen to save you queuing at the desk. You can check in for both GP and nurse appointments. If you have an appointment with the nurse, check in on screen then make your way to the nurses waiting area.

Please do not come to the desk to book on the day appointments. There are several options available which have been detailed for booking.

Prescriptions – Please use your **NHS App** or our website wherever possible.

We will be discontinuing paper prescriptions from Monday 01.07.2024.

Please note, prescriptions can take 3 working days to process which is a change from our previous policy.

Registrations – please fill in the electronic forms on our website or you can collect hard copy forms from reception.

Face to Face or Telephone Appointments

We have been offering the choice of face-to-face or telephone appointments, depending on your requirements. Obviously, some conditions would be best served with a face-to-face appointment. You will be asked at the time of booking which appointment type you would prefer.

Pharmacy Referrals

As mentioned in the surgery update, for many minor illnesses, a GP appointment isn't always necessary. The patient liaison team can create a referral to your local community pharmacist. This useful tool can result in you getting to see a pharmacist in a private consultation room at a time to suit you. They can often provide advice or over the counter medication to treat the condition.

Travel Vaccine Process

If you are travelling abroad and would like to see your vaccination history, you can view all these details via the **NHS App**. You may then be able to research if you would require additional vaccinations before completing the Assessment Form.

Contacting the Surgery

The E-Consult app can be used to contact the surgery for several things including:

Requesting an appointment

- Repeat sick notes
- Travel Form advice
- Updating contact details

For those unable to use the systems provided previously, please utilise the options below:

Telephone System: We open the lines at **8.30am** which are answered in turn by the reception staff. Please pick from the following:

Option 1 for appointments.

Option 2 is for prescriptions queries. The line is open from 10.30 am – 2pm.

Option 3 is for test results. The line is open from 10.30am-5pm.

Option 4 is for general admin queries 10.30am to 5pm

Please remember not to call the practice for repeat prescriptions – use the NHS app

Email Policy:

Emails to the surgery may not be seen on the same day by your doctor. Please do not use this mailbox for the following:

Appointments: We do not accept requests for appointments via email.

Prescriptions: Please do not send any prescription request via the admin email. If you are requesting a prescription, please do so via the NHS App or the

website. We do not take prescription requests over the phone.

Deaf and hard of hearing patients who have difficulty using the phone and rely on email for contact should register with the surgery that you are hard of hearing via EALCCG.somersetmedicalcentre@nhs.net. Your medical records will be updated. They may thereafter access the surgery by this email address for routine issues including appointment requests or general queries, remembering to include in your subject heading / content that you are hard of hearing.

General Appointments / Information:

Nurses Appointments: The nurses are continuing to see patients for blood tests, dressings, stitch removal, regular injections, health checks, smears and also routine child immunisations.

Annual Reviews: Patients will be invited in for their annual reviews; including diabetes, asthma, hypertension etc. Please wait to be contacted by the surgery; we will contact you by letter or SMS.

NHS Transport Support: Provides transport for equipment, supplies and/or medication between NHS services and sites. Also involves assisting pharmacies with medication delivery.

Social Prescribing Service – Referring

The Social Prescribing Service connects patients to non-medical support, such as day centres, charities or community groups, in the community to improve their wellbeing and tackle social isolation.

They can link you in to support within your local community to help you work towards a more fulfilling life.

They enable people to have more control over their lives, develop skills and give their time to others, through involvement in community groups.

Patients can now refer themselves to a social prescriber or health and wellbeing coach. They can

give free help if your health is affected by loneliness, your weight or diet, addiction, your housing, debt, stress, or other things.

What is Social Prescribing?

<https://youtu.be/O9azfXNcqD8>

Ear syringing services: We do not offer this service at the surgery.

Pharmacies: Please utilise your local pharmacy who are able to provide over the counter solutions for many symptoms including, coughs and colds, verrucas, eye infections, thrush, hay fever, diarrhea, constipation, mouth ulcers, head lice: You can purchase all treatments from your local pharmacy and some medications are available at supermarkets. Please try these over-the-counter treatments first before contacting the surgery.

Surgery opening hours:

Monday 08.30am to 20.00pm

Tuesday 08.30am to 18.30pm

Wednesday 08.30am to 18.30pm

Thursday 08.30am to 18.30pm

Friday 08.30am to 18.30pm

Weekends we are closed

Telephone number: 0203 405 8000

Patients not attending appointments: If you cannot attend your appointment for any reason please contact the practice immediately to advise so we can cancel your appointment and offer it to another patient. Each appointment lost costs an average of £30 each time.