

## Message from Cllrs Jenny Sandum and Paul Thorogood

### Changes since the outbreak of Covid-19 at Kelvedon and Feering Health Centre and surgeries nationwide

Please find attached a Covid-19 Patient Information poster regarding adapting to the changes that have been necessary both at KFHC and at surgeries throughout the country, since the coronavirus outbreak.

We have also requested further information from the Mid-Essex CCG on the change to prescription ordering, and expressing our concerns about the timings of this change, and KFHC has put the CCG's response on their website (<https://www.kfhc.co.uk>)

A copy of this information is also attached to share with anyone who is unable to access the KFHC website.

We understand the frustration that many are feeling at the changes that have been taking place at the surgery. Please bear in mind that these changes to safety measures and prescription ordering are not specific to KFHC and are taking place nationwide, and understanding will be required during what is a period of big adjustments for both staff and patients. We know that many residents and volunteers have been doing an amazing job at supporting those shielding with prescription pick-ups - please do pass this information on to anyone you have been supporting who is not on social media.

Also just a reminder that all patients are currently required to wear a mask or face covering when entering the surgery and when attending a face to face appointment with a Clinician. This became mandatory from Monday 22nd June 2020.

This is for the ongoing Safety of all Patients & Staff as outlined in the Government Guidance. Please note: KFHC are unable to supply face masks or face coverings to patients.

Also, as lockdown eases and the surgery becomes busier, a surgery mobile number is in use to help patients get through to the surgery during the busiest times: 07591378705. This telephone number can be used daily until 16.00pm

As always, if you would like to discuss this or any other local issue with us, please contact us directly on:

[cllr.jsandum@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.jsandum@braintree.gov.uk) or [cllr.pthorogood@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.pthorogood@braintree.gov.uk)

Or call us on 07941 937296 (Jenny) or 07973 385275 (Paul)

# Information for Patients



As we continue to adapt to the changes which have been necessary as a result of the coronavirus outbreak, some of you will be aware of how differently we have been working to care for our patients over the last three months.

However, many of you may not have needed to contact us so we wanted to provide a brief update on what has been happening in the practice during this time and what we will continue to do moving forward.

## One thing is certain - we have not stopped caring for you throughout this pandemic

Over the last few weeks GPs, Nurse Practitioners, Practice Nurses, Healthcare Assistants, Phlebotomists, Midwives, District Nurses, Pharmacists, Care Co-ordinators, Dispensers, Paramedics, Care Navigators, Receptionists, Administrators, Medical Secretaries have worked together, including over the Easter and May Bank Holidays, to continue to:



Telephone patients

Refer patients to hospital when necessary



Conduct online e-consultations

Review medication & issue prescriptions



See patients face to face when appropriate; blood tests, vaccinations, etc.

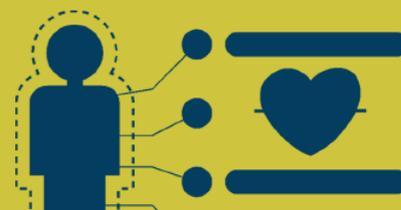
Review hospital discharge letters from consultants



Support patients who are shielding i.e. those who are extremely clinically vulnerable

Support patients with palliative care needs, & their families

# Information For Patients



Support vulnerable with safeguarding needs

Provide palliative care to patients & their families



Support families who have recently been bereaved

Support multidisciplinary team to deliver care in the community



Support people with mental health needs

Support NHS with the Clinical Commissioning Group, Primary Care Network & other local organisations



Support residential care patients & care workers

Assess patients who have long term conditions & need regular reviews



Review COVID-19 positive patients

Review care plans & urgent needs for patients who are frail and require support



Whilst we will continue to assess all patients on the phone or online before booking an appointment with a GP, you will be offered a face to face appointment if the GP feels it is clinically appropriate and safe to do so. It is important that you contact us if you have any health concerns or questions and even more important, not to ignore or put off any medical advice that is given to you – we are still here for you.

We will continue to work with our **Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)** and **Primary Care Network (PCN)** to consider the implications this has for us and you for the next few weeks and months. We will also keep you informed about how we will plan to deliver flu clinics from September.

We would like to thank you for your patience and understanding through what has been and still remains an extremely difficult time for everyone. We will continue to provide you with the right service to meet your need.

## **Repeat Prescriptions – copy of information on KFHC website – 12 July 2020**

**We have had many queries from patients regarding Repeat Prescriptions. Please find below communication from Paula Wilkinson chief pharmacist at the CCG to the councillors of Kelvedon and Feering.**

Mid Essex CCG is supporting the NHS Digital strategy and encouraging use of electronic ordering by patients themselves whenever possible. Therefore the CCG is not supporting ordering by community pharmacies using paper repeat prescription scripts, which then have to be delivered to GP surgeries for processing. Paper based repeat prescription ordering through community pharmacies not only causes additional work for community pharmacies to deliver the paper repeat prescription slips to the GP surgery, but also causes additional work within the GP practice in processing paper requests. Now that GPs are required by regulations to send all prescriptions electronically to community pharmacies for dispensing, community pharmacies no longer go to GP surgeries to collect paper prescriptions for dispensing. Aside from the additional time receiving paper repeat requests, it also takes longer for GP staff to process paper repeat requests than electronic requests which go directly into GP clinical systems and do not need manually inputting- and hence is safer too. Using electronic ordering also means that patients can order in a more timely manner, since using paper based systems via community pharmacies usually means a patient ordering one or two months in advance of when they need them- as they are asked to order the next supply when they pick up their dispensed prescriptions.

It is for this reason, and with the support of GPs, that the CCG agreed GP practices should stop accepting repeat prescription requests from community pharmacies- whether paper or electronic via pharmacy owned apps. Community pharmacists are asked to encourage patient to order their repeat prescriptions electronically using the NHS app or GP on-line service. Pre-COVID the CCG engaged in a publicity campaign encouraging patients to use the NHS App. The app is directly linked into GP clinical systems and also allows patients to book or cancel GP appointments on-line and, if set up, to view their medical records. In other areas of the CCG, volunteers have been supporting patients to download the NHS Apps onto their phones and use that to order their repeat medication. Although many older people do not have computers many do have a mobile phone and, once set up on the App, it is easy for them to order their own medicines electronically. In the recent Residents newsletter 'Engage'

<https://midessexccg.nhs.uk/get-involved/engage>

As part of the response to COVID there is national encouragement for GPs to set up patients on the electronic Repeat Dispensing (eRD) system—which means that for those patients with stable medication a set of up to 12 months of prescriptions can be set up, which sit on the electronic EPS spine and are automatically sent to the patient's nominated pharmacy for dispensing and avoiding the need for patients to order each time. We have been in contact with the surgery and with Boots in Kelvedon and they have already started working together to identify patients who are suitable for eRDs, and over the course of the next few weeks they will be setting up as many suitable patients as possible on this system. Patients who are on the same regular repeat medication can also request eRDs from their GP surgery.

We recognise that not all patients are able to order their medicines electronically or suitable for setting up on eRDs, and in which case patients can still use a paper repeat slip and post or delivery it themselves to the GP surgery. Some practices have a dedicated phone line for patients to telephone their repeat requests, but this is usually only available for vulnerable patients with prior agreement of the surgery. Such patients should contact the surgery directly themselves to set up any special arrangements. However it is anticipated that there will only be a small number of people where this applies. <https://midessexccg.nhs.uk/livewell/your-medicines-your-nhs/reducing-medicines-waste/increasing-erds-and-stopping-managed-repeats>

This programme of stopping community pharmacies ordering medication on behalf of patients commenced before Christmas and practices were asked to implement this by end of March 2020. During the pandemic new practices did not commence this programme, but as we are coming out of pandemic practices are resetting. Practices who have implemented this policy of

not accepting third party orders have found that this improves the overall system greatly and reduces work for GPs and pharmacies by improving efficiency of the re-ordering process and once set up electronically patients really like the system—no more lost scripts, time spent chasing paper around the system etc. The decision to start this from 1<sup>st</sup> July was one made by the practice but we are supporting the change in line with the overall plan.

In respect of patients who are worried/concerned please encourage them to speak directly with the practice/community pharmacy to ensure that arrangements are put in place for them to continue to obtain their medication in a timely manner.

**Paula Wilkinson FRPharmS**  
**Chief Pharmacist**

**Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group**