

Advanced Access Appointment System

The environment in which doctors (GPs) are striving to provide services is increasingly challenging. There is an increased demand on general practice caused by changes to the population, more complex health needs and care moving out of hospitals contributing to pressure on GP services. Whilst 90% of patient contact takes place in General Practice, less than 9% of NHS funding is spent on GP services. This practice supports the "Your GP Cares" Campaign - we have posters in the waiting rooms about this. The wait for GP appointment is increasing and this is a national problem.

To help cope with this increased demand, and also to respond to feedback from our patients regarding the wait to the next routine appointment, the practice implemented a new improved appointment system. We do monitor the balance of appointments booked on line to ensure fair access for all.

On Line Access

The surgery offers on line access so that you can book or cancel appointments, keep your contact details up to date and order medication at a time to suit you. You have access 24 hours a day 7 days a week. If you wish to register please complete the form (available at reception) and bring in photo ID and proof of address to reception, they will print out a letter for you with details of how to register.

Doctors' Appointments

Approximately 60% of our appointments are available for patients to be seen on the day. Our doctors also have 3 appointments in their sessions for their use only; these are used when they wish to review a patient again or if they need to see a patient following a telephone call. The remaining can be booked up to 6 weeks in advance.

The same day appointments for the entire day are released in the following way:

- Several appointments are released for on line access at 7am
- Several appointments are released for on line access at 7pm the evening before (in response to patient feedback)
- The remaining appointments are available on the telephone from 8am on the day when the phone lines open.

If we have no appointments but you consider that your medical problem **MUST** be assessed that day, we ask you to come as an extra. This will be a sit and wait appointment following morning or afternoon surgery. These appointments are only for the patients who feel that their problem is urgent and cannot wait until the next day's surgery. If we have a very high demand, you may be contacted by the duty doctor who will assess if it is urgent for today.

Nurses' appointments

You can still pre book nurses' appointments as usual on the telephone. The reason nurse appointments are not on line is that not all nurses offer all services and the time needed for each service varies so a receptionist needs to ensure you are booked with the right person for the right length of time.

Bank Holidays – All appointment are same day for the day before and 1-3 days after bank holidays, depending on the length of time we were closed over the bank holiday.

Commonly asked questions concerning Advanced Access

What happens if I phone and all the appointments for my doctor are booked?

We have spent several weeks collating data on the number of appointments requested on any one day. We should therefore be able to offer you an appointment on that day with an alternative doctor. If you only wish to see your doctor then we will ask you to phone when they are next in Surgery. We will continue to monitor demand for appointments and make adjustments to the system as necessary.

I work away from home and need to plan my appointments.

Whilst most appointments will be available for booking on the day, 40% are pre-bookable up to 6

weeks ahead. However, once all pre-books are taken you will be asked to call back on the day or book on line. Evidence from other surgeries suggests that as patients find that the system works, there is less demand for pre-booked appointments when patients feel confident they can come on the day.

What happens if a doctor is on holiday or ill?

If a doctor is on holiday we book enough locum cover to ensure we provide enough sessions over the week. If a doctor is ill we will do our best to accommodate you with another doctor. It is not usually possible to book locum cover for the same day.

I can never get through on the phone, how will I make a same day appointment?

We have upgraded our telephone system to allow quicker access to receptionists. Your call will be answered by the first available receptionist.

We encourage our patients to register for the on-line access system and use it to their advantage.

Will I see my Doctor?

The table below shows where our doctors usually work; they do move site sometimes to provide holiday cover. Patients are welcome to choose to be seen in either Histon or Cottenham surgery sites, if they are able to travel.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Histon Morning	Dr. Grande Dr. Baldwin Dr. Robinson Dr. Manning Dr. Aho GP Registrar	Dr. Grande Dr. Poole Dr. Robinson GP Registrar	Dr. Poole Dr. Pritchard Dr. Manning	Dr. Baldwin Dr. Robinson Dr. Manning GP Registrar	Dr. Poole Dr. Pritchard Dr. Aho GP Registrar
Histon Afternoon	Dr. Poole Dr. Robinson Dr. Manning Dr. Aho	Dr. Grande (Diabetic Clinic) Dr. Poole GP Registrar	Dr. Poole Dr. Pritchard Dr. Manning	Dr. Grande Dr. Baldwin Dr. Robinson GP Registrar	Dr. Aho Dr. Manning GP Registrar
Cottenham Morning	Dr. Poole Dr. Pritchard	Dr. Baldwin	Dr. Robinson	Dr Aho	Dr. Manning
Cottenham Afternoon	Dr. Grande GP Registrar	Dr. Aho Dr. Robinson	Dr Robinson	Dr. Manning	Dr. Poole

SMS

We would encourage all patients to register for our SMS text reminder service so that we can send you confirmation of appointments and a reminder. This service can also be used to send you messages from your GP or nurse; this will help reduce postage allowing us to direct our funds to front line services.

Patient Feedback

We welcome patient feedback on how our system is working. Please either send your comments in writing to the practice manager Olga Starobinskaya or email them to firs.house@nhs.net.