



Self-referral services rely on you to contact them, and once they have arranged a plan for you they will normally send notification of this through to the surgery so we can update your records.

For appointments with our nursing team, you may be sent a self-booking text link or Reception will call you to book an appointment. These calls normally take place in the afternoon when Reception have more capacity to call out to patients.

### **Can I make a request for a GP appointment at any time?**

Our core operating hours are 8am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday. Patients can access our services online, by phone or by visiting the Practice during these hours.

All requests for appointments are triaged and put through the Klinik system.

If you telephone for an appointment and are unable to complete the online form yourself, our Receptionists will do it for you.

If you attend the surgery in person and are unable to complete the online form yourself, our Receptionists will support you to complete form on your own device using our WiFi, or by using the iPad in the waiting area. They will not take the information for the form directly over the Reception desk to protect your confidentiality.

Requests for certain appointments with the nursing team can be booked directly over the phone or at the front desk without the need for triage, but patients can also submit a Klinik request for these as well.

When the practice reaches capacity for the day, we are able to restrict access to requests for anything that is not a routine or administrative request. This is to ensure safe staffing levels and good clinical care. As we are an appointment-only, non-emergency service, we do not have limitless capacity each day. If you contact us with an urgent issue after we have reached capacity by telephone or by attending the surgery, your request will still be triaged and you may be signposted to another service if we are unable to see you. Sections of our online form may be switched off after a certain time to ensure that urgent requests are not submitted after the point that capacity has been reached. We will always reopen for new requests the following working day.

### **How can patients help make this process as smooth as possible?**

- Put as much information as you can into your Klinik request – this ensures quicker, safer and more effective triage.
- Make sure you include whether you'd like to see a specific clinician, or any times you are not able to attend an appointment. If you're very flexible, indicate that you can attend any time and our team will book you an appointment and text you the details, which saves time in trying to phone patients to confirm appointments.
- Use the NHS App – the app allows you to see and cancel booked appointments, request repeat prescriptions, access self-care advice for common conditions, and view your test results. These are all common issues that patients contact us about which increase the number of Klinik requests and telephone calls we receive. By using the NHS App you can

help our Reception team focus on dealing with more urgent matters. If you need help setting up or using the NHS App, our staff can arrange a drop-in session for you to get some 1-1 support.

- Don't submit duplicate requests on the Klinik system – this can cause confusion amongst the Reception team and lead to duplicate appointments. Whilst we aim for 1 problem per appointment, it's good to get a full picture of a person's health issues in case they are linked. Our Triage Team can determine whether more than 1 appointment is needed.
- If you need to chase an appointment, please call us in the afternoon to do so. Submitting additional Klinik requests can cause confusion and creates additional work. If you have had an acknowledgement please rest assured that your request is in the system and will be allocated an appointment when one becomes available.
- Use self-booking links if you're sent them. These are valid for up to 7 days, with new appointments released each morning around 8.30am. If there are no available appointments when you receive the text, try again the following morning and more should appear.
- Follow the advice that you are given – if a referral to the Pharmacy is made please engage with this. If the Pharmacy feels that you need further review with the GP they will tell us and we will arrange this for you. If you see a clinician and are given a treatment plan, please follow this and wait to see if there is an improvement before contacting us again. If you aren't sure of your treatment plan, using the NHS App will help as you will be able to see the notes from your consultation.
- Bear with us! Patients are consulting with their GP more and more – General Practice in England is 20% busier than pre-Covid but there hasn't been a corresponding increase in resources to match this additional demand. This means the waiting times for appointments may be longer. We try to give a better service by directing patients to the most appropriate person or service for their problem – which might not always be a GP. This frees the GP appointments up for those who need them. We also try to encourage patients to see the same person for an ongoing problem. This may mean a slightly longer wait, but it saves time on repeating your history and means the clinician gets to know what's normal for you.
- Be respectful – our Reception staff do a really tough job and are working as hard as they can in challenging circumstances. Incidents of abuse or aggression will not be tolerated, and patients may be removed from our practice list for breaches of our Zero Tolerance Policy. We are all in this together – help us to help you.

Thank you for your continued patience and support.

The Partners at Kingswood Health Centre