

COVID-19 GP Practice information toolkit

Accurate as of 17:00pm on Friday, 13/03/2020

Overview



- This toolkit contains links to the latest information for primary care about COVID-19 aka Coronavirus, aligned to the latest information from Public Health England
- It also contains links to information for your patients, including posters to put around your practice.
- Also included is the current agreed messaging for use on your telephone waiting messages, SMS text messaging services and your websites.
- **This information may change rapidly as the situation develops. For the latest information, visit <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care>**
- **We have fed back to PHE and NHSE that the primary care guidance needs to keep pace with the guidance going out to the public.**

For the latest information



For the latest primary care guidance, visit:

www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care (last updated 12th March 2020)

For the latest general guidance for health professionals, visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance> (last updated 13th March)

We will send all COVID-19 comms from a single email address



- We are going to be sending all COVID-19 comms from a single email address
- This will help you to get the right information in a consistent way
- Please also send any COVID-19 related queries to this box, as it is being monitored and enquiries logged.
- **Please add this email address to your safe list**
- **Keep an eye out for and give priority to emails from the email address**
- **Please check your junk/spam folders to make sure the emails aren't going there by mistake:**

warnoccg.covid19primarycarecommunications@nhs.net

Management of a suspected case of COVID-19



The general advice is to:

- identify potential cases as soon as possible
- prevent potential transmission of infection to other patients and staff
- avoid direct physical contact, including physical examination, and exposures to respiratory secretions
- isolate the patient, obtain specialist advice and determine if the patient is at risk of COVID-19

Key messages to the public



- if you have symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, stay at home and do not leave your house for 7 days from when your symptoms started.
- this action will help protect others in your community whilst you are infectious
- plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home
- ask your employer, friends and family to help you to get the things you need to stay at home
- stay at least 2 metres (about 3 steps) away from other people in your home whenever possible
- sleep alone, if that is possible
- wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water
- stay away from vulnerable individuals such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions as much as possible
- you do not need to call NHS111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days contact [NHS 111 online](#). If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999

DO NOT ATTEND YOUR GP PRACTICE - Use the NHS 111 online coronavirus service if:

- You have a new continuous cough or a high temperature or fever
- You feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home
- Your condition gets worse
- Your symptoms do not get better after 7 days

ONLY CALL 111 IF YOU CANNOT FIRST GET HELP ONLINE

Quick guidance



- Do not send patients with COVID-19 symptoms to A&E
- Patients presenting with COVID-19 symptoms should be directed to NHS111 online in the first instance and not sent to A&E;
- Following the new national guidance as of 13/03/2020 the home testing service has now ceased and there will be no drive through testing service.
- The hospital assessments PODS remain in place to test those patients requiring hospital admission only.

COVID Home Management Service (CHMS)



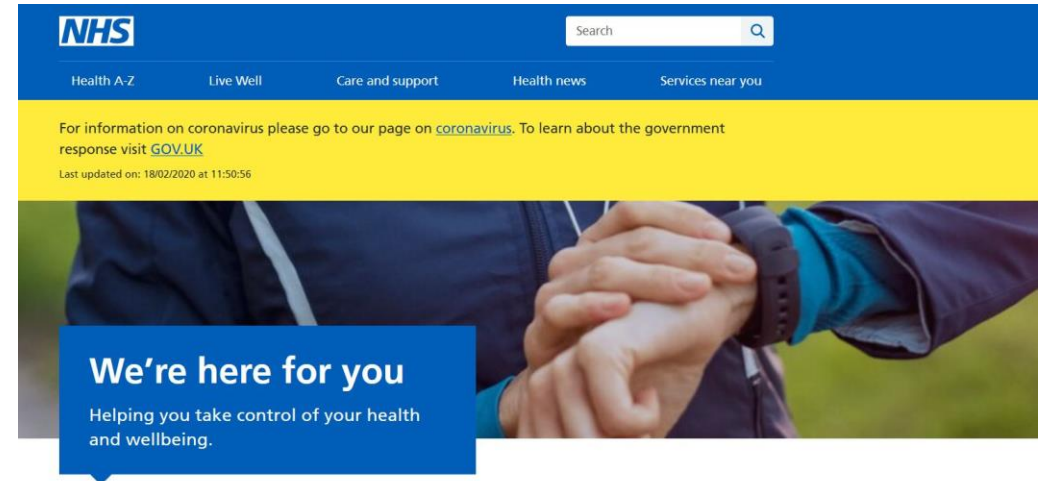
- The COVID Home Management Service (CHMS) will monitor the care of patients who have been diagnosed with COVID 19 but do not need immediate admission;
 - This service will operate 24/7, and provide a single telephone number 24 hour point of contact for patients;
 - They will receive referrals directly from NHS 111;
 - This service will be operated by the local Out of Hours Service delivered by Care UK.
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- **Further information to follow as this service develops.**

First port of call



NHS website...

- The latest generic information on symptoms of coronavirus infection
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Please make sure your own practice websites are up to date with links to this



Posters

- Posters with the latest messages on hygiene advice.
- Posters to provide information about the coronavirus and to direct patients that think they could be infected not to enter the building.
- A poster for GP practices that need to close for cleaning is available.
- <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/> has the latest



Message to use on your telephone



Please do not book a GP appointment or attend your GP Practice if you have symptoms associated with coronavirus including a new continuous cough and a high temperature. You are advised to stay at home for 7 days.

If your symptoms are serious, or get worse, NHS 111 has an online coronavirus service that can tell you if you need further medical help and advise you what to do.

Only call 111 direct if you cannot go online, or are advised to do so by the online service.

For the latest Covid-19 advice please visit www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

Message to use for text messages



For the latest Covid-19 advice please visit www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

Coronavirus advice: if you have a new continuous cough and/or a high temperature, please stay at home for 7 days. Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. If your symptoms are serious, or get worse, visit the NHS111 online service.

Message to use for online booking



If you have symptoms associated with coronavirus including a new continuous cough and a high temperature, you are advised to stay at home for 7 days. Do not book a GP appointment or attend your GP Practice.

If your symptoms are serious, or get worse, NHS 111 has an online coronavirus service that can tell you if you need further medical help and advise you what to do.

Only call 111 direct if you cannot go online, or are advised to do so by the online service.

For the latest Covid-19 advice please visit www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

Online access



- Practices should continue to promote online access options for patients. There is NO national directive to suspend online access
- Please replace face to face appointments with telephone and/or video triage and consultations. Further info can be found here
https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/Commissioner-guidance-local-requests-to-suspend-online-booking_050320.pdf
- Online booking saves time. Patients can book or cancel appointments, order prescriptions and save waiting for phones to be answered during busy periods. It also means only one visit to the surgery to pick up prescriptions. The system is safe and secure.
- Encourage patients to register for Online access and electronic prescribing so prescriptions can be collected directly from the local pharmacy.

Online consultation — South Warwickshire CCG only



- Using online consultation can help you manage patient enquiries without them having to telephone or come into the practice
- Most practices are starting to go live on online consultation using the eConsult solution
- Any eConsult pages contain up to date messages re the coronavirus
- As a practice you can then direct the patient to the latest on line information via nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/
- Further advice on online consultations is available here: www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/online-consultations-summary-tocolkit-for-practices-dec-2019.pdf

Patient type	Change in guidance
For symptomatic, unconfirmed patients meeting the COVID-19 case definition	PPE revised to include a change from FFP3 respirator to fluid resistant surgical mask, gloves, apron and eye protection if risk of splashing into the eyes.
For confirmed cases of COVID-19	Full PPE ensemble continues to use FFP3 respirator, disposable eye protection, preferably visor, long sleeved disposable gown and gloves.
For possible and confirmed cases of COVID-19 requiring an aerosol generating procedure	Full PPE ensemble as per previous guidance for confirmed cases: FFP3 respirator, disposable eye protection, preferably visor, long sleeved disposable gown and gloves.

An initial stock of protective kit (PPE) for each practice, including 400 general use aprons, 300 pairs of examination gloves and 300 fluid repellent face masks is being issued to all practices. Larger surgeries will receive repeat deliveries to ensure they have sufficient amounts.

Cleaning following a suspected case



Once a possible case has been transferred from the primary care premises, the room where the patient was placed should not be used, the room door should remain shut, with windows opened and the air conditioning switched off, until it has been cleaned with detergent and disinfectant. Once this process has been completed, the room can be put back in use immediately.

More information on how to appropriately clean following a suspected or confirmed case can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wn-cov-guidance-for-primary-care/wn-cov-interim-guidance-for-primary-care#environmental-cleaning-following-a-possible-case>

What to do if the media contact you



Understandably there is a lot of media interest in COVID-19 at the moment.

Already there has been instances of the media contacting practices directly to ask for statements, updates or patient information.

Please forward all media requests on to:

warnoccg.covid19primarycarecommunications@nhs.net

And the CCG Communications and Engagement team will handle them on your behalf.

The NHS app



The NHS App provides a simple and secure way to access a range of healthcare services on a smartphone or tablet.

Once registered, people can book and manage appointments at their practice, order repeat prescriptions, securely view your GP medical record, and much more.

NHS

Get more control of your health and care

Get the NHS App

- Book and manage appointments at your GP practice
- Securely view your GP medical record
- Order your repeat prescriptions
- Check your symptoms, get instant advice, and more

www.nhs.uk/nhsapp

Download on the App Store | GET IT ON Google Play

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A promotional graphic for the NHS App. It features a blue header with the NHS logo and the text 'Get more control of your health and care' and 'Get the NHS App'. Below this is a list of features: 'Book and manage appointments at your GP practice', 'Securely view your GP medical record', 'Order your repeat prescriptions', and 'Check your symptoms, get instant advice, and more'. The website 'www.nhs.uk/nhsapp' is listed. The bottom half of the graphic shows a person in a white coat using a smartphone. At the bottom, there are logos for the App Store and Google Play, and a small disclaimer.

Q: The PPE we've received is different to what we were told to expect/I don't think this PPE is adequate.

A: The guidance on the PPE needed changed in the last few days. For symptomatic, unconfirmed patients meeting the COVID-19 case definition, PPE revised to include a change from FFP3 respirator to **fluid resistant surgical mask, gloves, apron and eye protection if risk of splashing into the eyes.**

Q: Should we close the practice?

A: Practices should only close when advised to do so by Public Health England, and this is currently only a temporary measure in order to clean communal waiting areas. If you are asked to close by PHE for any reason, please let us know on:

warnoccg.covid19primarycarecommunications@nhs.net

Q: We need to clean due to a suspected case, what do we do?

Q: Does cleaning need to be carried out by a specialist team?

A: Once a possible case has been transferred from the primary care premises, the room where the patient was placed should not be used, the room door should remain shut, with windows opened and the air conditioning switched off, until it has been cleaned with detergent and disinfectant. Once this process has been completed, the room can be put back in use immediately.

More information on how to appropriately clean following a suspected or confirmed case can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wn-cov-guidance-for-primary-care/wn-cov-interim-guidance-for-primary-care#environmental-cleaning-following-a-possible-case>

Cleaning does not need to be conducted by a specialist team and can be done by practice staff, using the appropriate PPE equipment

Q: Can we change all face to face appointments to telephone appointments?

As stated previously, practices should follow usual business continuity arrangements and remain open as normal unless advised to close by Public Health England.

Practices which do switch to a telephone triage will need to be mindful of how this is communicated to patients, as we have seen incidents in our area where it was interpreted to mean the practice had shut and this caused a lot of media attention and negative press.

New agreed guidance on this is expected over the next few days and will be sent once it arrives.

Q: Should staff self-isolate if they come into contact with a suspected or confirmed case?

Practice staff in contact with a suspected case are not required to self-isolate unless directed by the Health Protection Team in Public Health.

Q: Do we need to let the CCG know if there is a suspected case?

Contract holders should notify the CCG via warnoccg.covid19primarycarecommunications@nhs.net and provide details of the incident and on-going management.

Q: Are elective surgery appointments being rescheduled?

Guidance is expected on this over the next few days. We will send it out once it arrives, as appropriate. Our acute providers acknowledge clear communication to patients will be needed to ensure patients don't bounce back to primary care.

Q: How do we support patients with diabetes?

NHS England /Improvement and Public Health England have worked with Diabetes UK to produce [advice on the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) for people living with diabetes.

It includes advice on attending routine appointments and increasing blood glucose monitoring, as well as recommending general good practice around handwashing and reducing the risk of picking up infections. The advice has been published on the [Diabetes UK website](#).