



Health Matters – 23rd March 2020

*A regular update from
Hoveton & Wroxham Medical Centre.*

The GP partners and staff at Hoveton & Wroxham Medical Centre have been conducting contingency planning within a fast developing situation. Communication is important so we will find the time to keep patients and carers updated on developments on a weekly basis. One *health warning* is that much may change between penning these words and you reading them, so always check with us before making health-related decisions.

As we pass mid-March, our focus is on meeting Government and NHS direction and on putting plans in place to minimise the effect of Coronavirus infection. We need to maintain GP service continuity. As I briefed my team last week: we will get through this; community support will counter the anxiety we all feel; and, I personally believe that our patients and carers are fortunate to have such a professionally dedicated and skilled team looking after them.

At this point we are:

- Enhancing our signposting/triage capability. We are encouraging more patients to communicate with us via our website (by PC, tablet or smart 'phone) to use the medical forms on our website to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of this triage capability (see below).
- Reducing to an absolute minimum the need for patients to come into the building for an appointment. This will mean more telephone appointments with the doctor or nurse. We are also quickly reviewing other technological solutions, such as video online consultations for occasional use.
- Planning a greatly increased capacity for the delivery of medicines to our dispensing patients; again, to minimise the need to access the building. This could require some community/voluntary support given the limited Practice personnel to do these deliveries.
- Working out how we can manage a system of many more doctors' visits. The increasing policy of self-isolation means we will be called upon, in urgent cases, with our limited GP resources to manage the multitude of ongoing primary care challenges – both physical health and mental health.
- Involved with other NHS providers, care homes and other public bodies to manage the Coronavirus crises as a whole and make best use of the resources we have, and to minimise the impact.

www.hovetonandwroxhammedicalcentre.nhs.net

From 1 April 2020, Hoveton & Wroxham Medical Centre is changing the way we communicate with our patients. This will help your medical centre manage the current situation and it will improve the efficiency of the service we provide you.

Most of our patients have access to our **website** (www.hovetonandwroxhammedicalcentre.nhs.uk) via the Internet, either by a personal computer, tablet or smart phone. All future contact with our doctors, nurses and other staff will be by patients using the **forms** on our website. The **forms** are accessible through the different so-called areas on the website.

Importantly, those without computer/internet access will not be disadvantaged. You can still telephone our medical receptionists in the normal way.

Even if you do telephone our receptionists, they will be filling-in the **form** on your behalf. Our GPs and nurses will look at the information you provide and then decide the best course of action, which may start with a telephone call to discuss next steps.

This will also apply to how we meet all your **medicines** needs. The website has an area called PRESCRIPTIONS AND MEDICINES CENTRE.

Between now and 1 April, patients are asked to familiarise themselves with the website, start using it for self-care, and for communicating with the Practice.

