



14<sup>th</sup> January 2021

## TO ALL OF OUR PATIENTS

Dear Patient

We wanted to update you again on the current COVID situation. As you are all aware COVID-19 cases have increased considerably since the beginning of December and that rise now seems to be accelerating. Whiteparish Surgery has now recorded 54.5% of their total number of positive cases, since the pandemic began, in the last two weeks.

To help keep everyone safe, and to minimise the number of patients waiting outside the building, **please only come to the surgery for an appointment that has already been booked or to collect a prescription** having allowed 3 working days between ordering and collecting. For all other enquiries please phone us.

We have started to invite patients to be vaccinated according to the strict guidelines laid out by NHS England. Please do **NOT** phone the surgery to ask us about the vaccine or when you will be receiving your vaccination, this prevents those patients who may require urgent help to get through to us. When it is your turn to be vaccinated you will be contacted. If you have any general enquiries about the vaccine you can email BSW Clinical Commissioning Group at [bswccg.vaccinequery@nhs.net](mailto:bswccg.vaccinequery@nhs.net)

Over the last couple of weeks we have encountered a number of sometimes vitriolic myths from patients. These can be disheartening and damaging to our morale. They are counterproductive to an already stretched service committed to maintaining the health of the Whiteparish Surgery Community. Some of these myths and our responses are:

### **Myth 1: “it’s a hoax”**

This wouldn't be said by anyone who has witnessed anyone who was seriously ill or died from COVID. However, we will always be here for anyone who becomes unwell with COVID that needs our help whatever their current misguided belief. Some did not believe that smoking caused cancer and HIV was an illness at first.

### **Myth 2: “it's not round here” and “nobody has died”**

It is and they have! We have had a number of deaths and some very unwell patients although for the majority of our cases we have been able to manage out of hospital.

### **Myth 3: “it’s an excuse for Doctors to be lazy”.**

This global health pandemic is the biggest health challenge we have ever faced. We are providing all of our normal full time services including looking after care homes as well as following requests for additional services from the hospital without additional resources or staff. We are doing hospital work and holding hospital patients that can't be seen in the hospital in addition to seeing COVID patients and ensuring we are COVID secure which is labour intensive. We are incredibly busy you simply may not see it.

**Myth 4: “You are holding the vaccine from us”**

We do not have the vaccine and our staff have not yet been vaccinated. The vaccine roll out depends on supply to a Vaccination Hub. Our local Vaccination Hub will be in the locality of Salisbury where some of our staff will be redeployed and our patients will be invited to for their vaccination starting with the most elderly and most vulnerable.

This will start from 16th January 2021. We have no influence over the supply and delivery or allocation of vaccine. The initial roll out needs to be from large Vaccination centers and to care homes. We have shown huge interest to perform the vaccination ourselves for our own patients but this will not be possible until a greater supply chain is developed for the Astra Zeneca/Oxford Vaccination. Vulnerable patients that can't make it to Salisbury will in time be vaccinated closer to home.

**Myth 5: “there’s no need to wear a mask”**

Many patients express their dislike of wearing a mask. We don't like wearing a mask but we wear them for typically 10 hours a day to protect each other and the public. We request you to wear masks to reduce the spread of COVID and to help us keep our staff well otherwise if we don't have the staff then services will have to be reduced.

Help us to help you- we are only asking you to wear a mask for the 10-20mins that you are in the surgery building.

**Myth 6: “you don’t want to see us”**

We have continued to see patients throughout the lockdowns which is quite unique in Primary Care and we have maintained safe face to face appointments. However, we have reduced face to face contact unless essential or necessary to keep you safe and to limit the opportunity for infection and the possibility of a more infectious second wave which has been anticipated since March and which we now face. When face to face contact is not stratified to be essential then there are alternative methods we use to make contact with you and for you to be consulted.

We do appreciate your frustrations, as we and our families are all patients too and face the same challenges.

We really appreciate all the support you give us, thank you.

Stay safe.

The Partners at Whiteparish Surgery

