



Dr Waldendorf, Dr Kinmond, Dr Yin & Dr Kwan
Dr Stretton, Dr Anderson, Dr Beattie, Dr Hardman, Dr Hyder, Dr Tariq, Dr Bhandari

To our patients,

We are writing to seek your support over the coming months, and to keep you informed as the surgery goes through a challenging period. Due to a mixture of personal and family ill health, as well as retirement, and more joyous changes such as expanding families, the surgery will be around 300 appointments short each week through May and June.

The surgery will continue to strive to offer the best care possible and there will be no change in our opening hours or the services that we offer, we may however need to work differently.

As a surgery our preference has always been to have long-term doctors who you know and that know you well. For the coming months we will be more reliant on locum staff and you may not be able to see your regular GP. Please rest assured that all of our employed locums are experienced and carefully vetted by the practice. In many cases they have been previous employees or trainees of the surgery and most you will have already encountered on a regular basis. We ask that you extend the same courtesy to them as you would our long-term staff.

Our teams will be under pressure, including reception and triage. They will be working hard to ensure that you receive the care you need but you may be asked to wait longer than we would normally wish. For the past 3.5 years we have addressed 60% of contacts on the same day, 70% within 48 hours, and all within 2 weeks. Over the coming months we need to ensure that those who need to receive our immediate care and attention are able to do so and this may mean more routine queries are asked to wait a little longer.

Administrative waiting times will be slightly longer in addition, as our doctors will have fewer opportunities to complete things such as prescriptions and process test results, although we have systems in place to ensure urgent results and prescriptions are always acted on the same day. The processing of letters and reports may be delayed but referrals will still be handled within the same time scale and your onward care will not be delayed.

What can you do to help?

We first and foremost ask for your understanding of the situation and that you work with us to ensure this period is as least disruptive as possible.

You can help us in some simple ways:

- For all contacts with the practice please utilise the online consultation form via the website or the NHS app as the first means. Please provide as much information as possible in your request so that we can best help you
- Consider contacting your local pharmacy first - our local pharmacies are fantastic resources with highly knowledgeable and capable staff. Pharmacies are now able to treat a variety of ailments such as tonsillitis, sinusitis, urinary tract infections, and skin infections, including issuing prescriptions such as antibiotics.
- For eye conditions please consider contacting the dedicated Community Urgent Eye Service (CUES): 0303 003 5598
- For urgent mental health concerns please consider contacting the local urgent mental health support service: 0808 196 4501, or by texting STW to 85258
- You can self-refer to talking therapy and counselling here: <https://www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/talking-therapies/shropshire-telford-and-wrekin-talking-therapies/self-refer>
- Please request all prescriptions where possible through the NHS app, this greatly reduces the administrative time needed and speeds up how quickly they are processed for you. If you are struggling to use the NHS app please come to reception and we will be happy to help
- Please check the NHS app for test results - the doctors on reviewing the results will leave comments against them which you can see on the app
- The status and timing of referrals can be checked via the referral service by phoning: 03300 248 283, or emailing: stw.your-referral@nhs.net

We greatly appreciate your support during this time.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Waldendorf, Dr Kinmond, Dr Yin, Dr Kwan, and all of the team at Linden Hall Surgery