

Critical Announcement Regarding Implementation of Emergency Contingency Procedures
[INSERT DATE]

[INSERT PRACTICE] is currently in a temporary crisis due to a combination of clinical practitioners being on sick-leave and the long term national shortage of GPs being available to cover.

The health and wellbeing of our patients is our top priority and we have therefore implemented temporary emergency measures, as follows:

TELEPHONE TRIAGE

Our normal policy is to accept an unlimited number of calls until triage closes at 10:30am. During our emergency measures, we must limit the number of triage slots available to a safe working level in order to protect patients and practitioners, to mitigate against risk and to provide optimum care. This means that calls regarding non-urgent problems, for e.g. blood results, will not be returned straight away and may be returned later in the week.

Please be assured that we will accept and prioritise all urgent calls regardless.

MEDICATION

Whilst our official policy is to process repeat medications within 5 working days as per Health & Social Care Board recommendation (from order until medication is available to collect) our patients will be used to receiving it within one or two days. However during these emergency measures, we will be keeping to the HSCB guidance by providing repeat medication within 5 working days. This is to ensure adequate time is given to consideration and issuing of medication appropriately, to ensure adequate time for transport and dispensing of medication and to reduce errors. We ask our patients to ensure you order medication in good time and do not let repeat items run out.

We will process urgent acute items quickly. Where repeat medications have run out, please reorder as soon as you can and speak to your Pharmacist for an emergency interim supply if required.

We have made the Health & Social Care Board aware of this critical situation and will avail of help if any is offered to us.

We extend our sincere apologies to our patients for any inconvenience caused and thank you all for your patience, understanding and co-operation during this difficult time. We will resume normal operations as soon as it is safe to do so.