

August 2023

# UPPER TOOTING SURGERY



**Dear Reader,**

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## **Online Access**

We encourage all patients to apply for online access (we need proof of ID for this, for obvious reasons) and to download the NHS App. Ordering medication is a simple process using this app and you can submit non-urgent queries to the practice using this.

From the end of October 2023, all patients should be able to view their full GP records (including consultations, results and documents) using the app, so we encourage patients to download this.

Our reception team are happy to help with any difficulties and to demonstrate how to use this.

## Our Booking System

We feel online booking for face-to-face GP appointments, nurses' (e.g. smears and immunisations) and physiotherapists' slots is working well and taking pressure off phone lines with consequent decreased waiting times.

Please consider checking for an online-bookable slot before calling us.

We now open all day on Saturday for pre-booked appointments only. **Please note, all of these appointments are at our Trevelyan House site.**

For any urgent issues outside of 'core hours' (i.e. 08:00-18:30, Monday to Friday) and at weekends, please contact NHS 111 who will be able to advise you.

Our telephone automated booking system helps to reduce time on the phone if calling on the day for an on-the-day face-to-face GP slot.

Online consultations can be useful for non-urgent, simple issues – please see our website for details.

## NHS App - In-App Messaging

From this month, patients will receive messages from the practice via the NHS App messaging service. This is a convenient and secure way for the surgery to send you messages about your care. We will only send a message if we need to contact you.

We may continue to send you some information by SMS (text) message whilst we transition to using the NHS App messaging service.

If you do not want to receive messages from the NHS App Messaging Service, please contact the surgery to discuss your preferred contact method.

### **How to check if you have a message:**

The best way to keep up with your messages is to download the NHS App on Google Play or the App Store and turn on notifications. Messages received via the app will appear in the 'View messages from your GP surgery and other NHS Services' section.

### **To check your messages:**

- 1) Log in to the NHS App
- 2) Go to 'View your messages'
- 3) Select View messages from your GP surgery and other NHS services' and select GRAFTON MEDICAL PARTNERS

## Prescriptions

We aim to turn around all prescription requests sent via the online ordering system within 48 hours and usually the same day. We have recently had a spate of 'urgent' requests, marked 'going on holiday tomorrow' or even 'going on holiday today', often for medications on a three-monthly cycle. Please order prescriptions in a timely manner.

We also have some cases of over-ordering, often weeks (or months) before medication is due to end. These may be rejected to ensure safe prescribing and to prevent drug overuse plus, in some cases, pharmacy over-ordering.

Medication reviews with our in-house pharmacists can now be booked online, as can blood tests (but only if requested by one of our clinicians). We have had instances of patients deciding that they 'need' a blood test, booking an online slot and effectively wasting a phlebotomy slot when there are no clinical requests on the system.

## Measles Vaccination

Measles is a truly unpleasant illness which can have serious complications. There are increasing cases in London due to declining MMR vaccination levels. For full protection two doses of MMR vaccine are required, with the first dose administered at around one year and the second at 3 years and 4 months.

MMR protects against measles but also mumps and rubella (German measles).

We believe a significant number of adults may also be unprotected due to disproven concerns about the vaccine when their vaccinations were due. Measles is one of the most studied vaccines in the world and is safe. All of our doctors have immunised their children and would encourage all parents to do the same.

We are sending out reminders to all we believe to be unprotected or not fully protected and encourage you to book into the additional clinics we are running in August before the new school term.



## Polio Vaccination

The polio catch-up campaign also continues – please contact us to book a slot if you feel you or your child have been left out of our invitation process.

For more information on child vaccinations, please visit [www.nhs.uk/vaccinations](http://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations) or see our own website.

## Travel Immunisations

As travel opens up again, we have restarted travel vaccines. However, we are no longer a Yellow Fever vaccination centre.

Please see [www.nhs.uk/conditions/travel-vaccinations](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/travel-vaccinations) for further information.

Please try to book in at least 6 to 8 weeks before you are due to travel as some vaccines may involve more than one dose.

NHS routine vaccinations protect you against a number of diseases but do not cover all of the infectious diseases found overseas.

## Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)

A reminder of a useful number. We receive many calls for advice as to how to raise issues with our acute trust.

PALS can be contacted on 020 8725 2453 or, alternatively, by email at [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk).

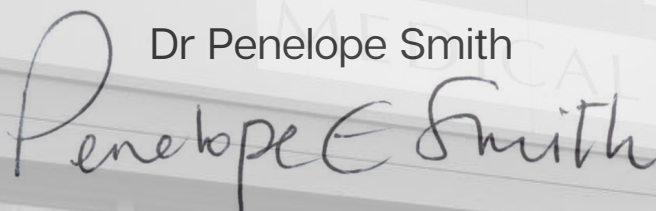
PALS accepts compliments and complaints about any aspect of their service.

## Staff

We welcome our new GP registrars and F2 doctors, Matthew Martinucci, Andrew Wiggam and Elizabeth Nash.

With best wishes,

Dr Penelope Smith

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Penelope E Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P'.

Senior Partner