



## **PRESS RELEASE: Issued 13.3.2020**

### **Derbyshire General Practice response to COVID-19 Pandemic**

The COVID-19 Pandemic is having an unprecedented impact on the National Health Service across the country, stretching services which were already struggling. Derbyshire general practice is adapting to these pressures on a day-by-day basis; reacting and implementing the expert advice from NHS England and Public Health England. Therefore, it is **imperative that patients understand that they will see rapid changes in the way Derbyshire General Practice functions.**

All changes will be designed to **reduce the spread of the virus and minimise the impact of COVID-19 on our most vulnerable and frail patients.** It is likely that:

- 1) Routine GP appointments will be suspended whilst surgeries concentrate on urgent care for the most unwell.
- 2) Patients will see a move from face-to-face appointments to telephone and virtual appointments.
- 3) Practices will move to a system where **ALL patients will need to speak to a medical professional to determine the need for an appointment** (telephone triage).

On behalf of all practices we ask Derbyshire residents to bear with GPs and their teams during this period of high demand and uncertainty and follow updates on practice websites and SMS messages.

We would like to highlight the following from the Government's announcement on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2020:

- Patients can find regularly updated information via the [NHS](#) website
- If you think you have COVID-19 symptoms please go to [111 online](#) **DO NOT ATTEND YOUR GP SURGERY**
- Please follow the [new NHS advice to self-isolate at home for 7 days](#) if you have:
  - o a fever AND / OR
  - o a new persistent cough
- if your symptoms are manageable at home and you would **not** ordinarily require medical attention please **do not** call 111 unless your condition deteriorates.
- At this point in time **GPs CANNOT test for the coronavirus** which causes COVID-19

Derby & Derbyshire Local Medical Committee would like to thank patients for their understanding and thank all our front-line NHS staff for continuing to do the very best for Derbyshire's patients under very difficult circumstances.

**Dr Kath Markus**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Derby and Derbyshire Local Medical Committee**

**ENDS**



### **Additional Information**

**COVID-19** is a novel illness that can affect lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called coronavirus.

**Derby and Derbyshire Local Medical** Committee is the supportive body for Derbyshire general practice with a statutory duty to represent GPs at a local level.

The information provided in this document is correct at the time of publication.  
Please see the Derby and Derbyshire LMC website for any revisions.