



IMPROVING ACCESS TO GP SERVICES

Patient Information

The majority of GP practices across the borough who have historically worked independently, have come together to work in a federated model to improve healthcare across the borough. Retaining their own identity and autonomy GP practices will work together and support community and hospital services including the public and voluntary sector to ensure healthcare is coordinated for the residents of the borough.

Patient views are vital to helping us to improve services and that is why we are asking you to complete a very simple questionnaire.

This leaflet will hopefully provide information about some of the planned changes that will be implemented in all practices across Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale that will help to improve access to your practice.

So how can we improve access to general practice services?



Public satisfaction with general practice remains high, but increasingly, patients are reporting more difficulty in accessing services. Practices would like to offer better access, but that they are experiencing increasing pressure and are having difficulties in offering their patients timely appointments. This is frustrating for both practice staff and for patients alike

Rochdale Health Alliance is working closely with all practices in the borough and with the Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale Clinical Commissioning Group on a new scheme which aims to help improve access to general practice services. This is a scheme that aims to improve access for patients and support practices.



Care Navigation / Sign Posting

When you contact the practice you will be asked some questions by the care navigator who will have had specialist training. This helps to ensure that you see the right professional for your needs, which is not always the GP. Please be assured that if you need to see the GP you will still see the GP.

All GP Practices in Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale will have trained Care Navigators in place later this year and will begin Active Signposting. There may be a settling in period for this new service, we ask for your support and patience whilst this takes place. Hopefully you will then begin to see improvements to how they access primary care services for the future.

Examples of services that you may be signposted to include:

HMR Minor Eye Conditions' Service (MECS)

The HMR Minor Eye Conditions' Service provides assessment and treatment for people with recently occurring minor eye conditions. The service is provided by MECS accredited optometrists (also known as opticians) across Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale who have specialist knowledge, training and skills.

The service is for people registered with a GP in Heywood, Middleton or Rochdale. It is for people of all ages -adults and children. Children under 16 years must be accompanied at their appointment by an adult.

HMR 7 Day Access Service (7DAS)

The service has been introduced to give patients more flexibility in where, when and how they use local health services. It has been designed to help those who find it hard to get to the doctors during the week, perhaps because of work and family commitments.

While patients may not get to see their own doctor during these hours, the GP or nurse they do see will have access to the patient's medical record, subject to their consent.

Emergency dental treatment (for Patients without a dentist)

The Dental Access Centre in Rochdale provides emergency dental treatment to patients who are in acute pain

Oral Care by the Community Dental Service in Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale, Bury and Oldham

Referrals are accepted for patients with additional care requirements or that require specialist care that is unable to be managed by a General Dental Practitioner



Clinical Triage

Requests for urgent appointments are passed to a dedicated GP who will ensure the patient is dealt with by the most appropriate person in the Healthcare Team. This will result in fewer inappropriate GP appointments and better use of the surgery Nursing Team and other Healthcare professionals (e.g. District Nurses) and services, such as pharmacists and opticians. The aim is to ensure that patients are seen quickly and efficiently by the most appropriate person, dependant on the individual problem.



Patient on Line Services

Many patients already use the on line services available for their GP Practice.

GP online services allow you to access a range of services via your computer or mobile. Once you have signed up, you will be able to:

- book or cancel appointments online with a GP or nurse
- renew or order repeat prescriptions online
- view parts of your GP health record, including information about medication, allergies, vaccinations, previous illnesses and test results

The service is free. Everyone who is registered with a GP can have access to their practice's online services.

There is extremely good feedback from patients for these new services. If you have not tried these services then please ask the receptionist at your GP Practice, where they will be happy to register and guide you through these options

GP APPOINTMENT?
CAN'T MAKE IT?
DON'T NEED IT?

CANCEL IT!

Reducing DNA (Did Not Attend) Appointments

You will all have seen figures in your GP Practice waiting room which highlights the number of DNAs per month. These are usually very high. Each DNA is an appointment that could have been rebooked for another patient.

Please support your GP Practice by contacting the surgery if you are unable to keep an appointment. This may be hard if phones are busy, but as part of the GP Access Programme we are implementing new avenues which may help. The text system used by practices to remind patients of their appointments has an option to inform whether you can attend or not. Some GP Practices are also looking at specific phone lines, where a message can be left by a patient if they cannot attend an appointment

Again, these systems will take time to settle in, but please help support your GPs and their staff whilst this occurs.



Practice opening times

All practices across Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale will be open from 8.00am to 6.30pm by the end of September 2017 and will have their telephone lines on. This means that appointment requests can be made from 8.00 in the morning or that patients could call in on their way to and from work to pick up a prescription or book an appointment. Please note that surgery consultation times are not changing, this is about patients being able to access the practice during those hours.