



PATIENT NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our bimonthly patient newsletter. Our aim is to keep you informed of services at Compass House and give you important insights into getting the most out of the practice.



FLU...HAVE YOU BOOKED YOUR VACCINE?

Influenza, or flu, is a viral infection that mainly affects the respiratory system. It is usually characterised by fever, chills, headache, aching muscles, joint pain and fatigue. Flu is very contagious meaning it can be spread to others easily.

The NHS is preparing for a difficult winter ahead as the coronavirus pandemic coincides with flu season. Patients eligible for a flu vaccine are encouraged to get their free flu vaccine to protect themselves, communities and the NHS from the impact of treating patients with flu symptoms and coronavirus.

You should have a flu vaccine if you:

- Are 65 years old or over
- Are pregnant
- Have certain medical conditions, including Diabetes, Liver Disease, weakened immune system, COPD, chronic Asthma, BMI over 40
- Are living in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility
- Receive a carer's allowance, or you are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill
- Have been shielding due to COVID-19

Our flu clinics have been running for a couple of weeks now and general feedback has been very positive. Patients have commented on how well organised and hassle free the experience has been, they have received their vaccination after waiting only a few minutes and have felt very safe in the process.

We recommend you book in for your appointment as soon as possible; we have set up a dedicated flu line on our phones so you shouldn't have to wait too long to get through, as well as making the appointments available on the NHS app and Patient Access. As with all appointments if you develop COVID symptoms prior to your appointment please DO NOT attend the surgery as you will put other patients at risk.

SCREENING PROGRAMMES

Screening is a way of identifying apparently healthy people who may have an increased risk of a particular condition.

The NHS offers a range of screening tests to different sections of the population. The aim is to offer screening to the people who are most likely to benefit from it. During COVID-19 some screening programmes were operating on a reduced service and prioritising patients most at risk. They are now trying to work their way through the patients who may have missed their original planned appointments. It is vital that if you missed your screening you attend as soon as possible when offered a new appointment.

Safety measures to protect patients against Covid-19 have been put in place in both hospital & GP surgeries, including social distancing, wearing of PPE and regular cleaning, so please do not feel put off from attending.

Below is some information about the NHS screening programmes including the age you will be called from and their current arrangements.

Cervical Screening

Cervical screening is offered to women aged 25 to 64. It is offered every 3 years for those aged 25 to 49, and every 5 years from the ages of 50 to 64.



To help accommodate as many people as possible, we have made appointments available for cervical screening on a Tuesday evening at Brixham, Friday morning at Galmpton and every weekend at our HUB site Pembroke House in Paignton.

You will usually be sent a letter when you are due your cervical screening, you will then need to call us on 01803 855897 to book in for your smear appointment. If you think you may be overdue then please contact us and we can look into this for you.

Breast Screening

Breast screening is offered to women aged 50 to 70 to detect early signs of breast cancer. Women over 70 can self-refer.



The Breast screening team are currently working their way through patients who are overdue their screening but if you are concerned you may have missed your appointment or to check you are on the list call 01803 655353.

If you notice a lump, dimpling or changes in your breasts then please call us to book an appointment on 01803 855897

SCREENING PROGRAMMES CONTINUED..

Diabetic eye screening

From the age of 12, all people with diabetes are offered an annual diabetic eye test to check for early signs of diabetic retinopathy. Due to COVID They will invite people to screening appointments in the following order:

- Over the next few weeks and months they will invite – those who are pregnant, under digital surveillance, newly diagnosed, had background retinopathy at last appointment or Did Not Attend their last appointment.
- From January 2021 they will invite those who at their last appointment had no retinopathy or maculopathy (R0M0) as they are at much lower risk of developing diabetic retinopathy.

If you have missed your screening appointment call 01803 241000



Bowel cancer screening

There are 2 types of screening for bowel cancer:

- 1) A home testing kit is offered to men and women aged 60 to 74. If you have misplaced your test kit call 0800 707 6060
- 2) Bowel scope screening uses a thin, flexible tube with a tiny camera on the end to look at the large bowel. It is offered to men and women at the age of 55.

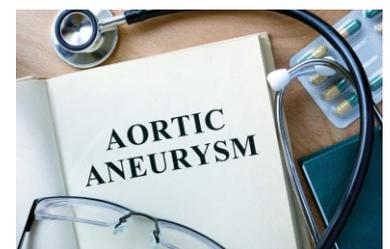


Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening

Abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) screening AAA screening is offered to men in their 65th year to detect abdominal aortic aneurysms (a dangerous swelling in the aorta).

Men over 65 can self-refer. If you have missed your screening appointment call 01803 655441

Appointments for screening are currently being offered monthly at Brixham Hospital.



POSITIVE FEEDBACK

We've been overwhelmed with the amount of patients who have gone out of their way to thank us for the care we have provided during this difficult time. The staff are working extremely hard and are facing many challenges, but patient care is our main priority so it's great to receive feedback. Here are some examples of feedback we have received recently...

"I have recently moved to your surgery and want to thank you for the consistent excellent service that I have received from the team, the service is friendly and super-efficient."

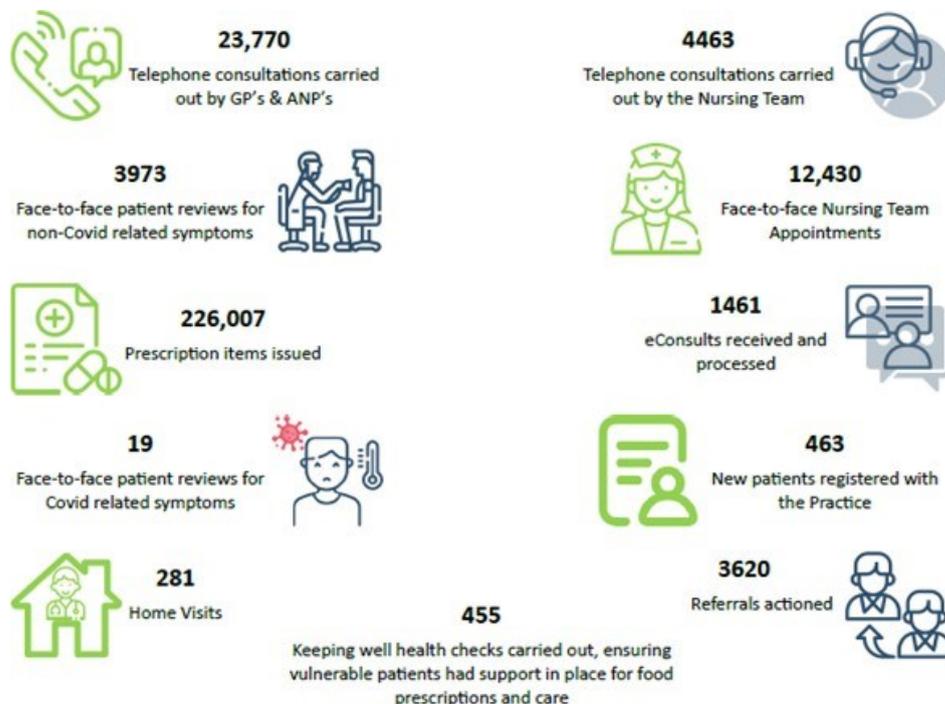
"On ringing for advice I was contacted within the hour and called in as my symptoms were potentially serious. On seeing the doctor he contacted the hospital and made it possible for me to be admitted directly and gave me all the paper work I needed and clear instructions."

"Just wanted to say how well organised everything is here and you are doing an amazing job!"

"I just wanted to say thank you for all the helpful messaging you have shared in recent months. Just seen your recent post sharing helpful tech guides which could really help others to be able to do what my Mum can do. She'd have been very isolated without her smartphone, keep up the good work!"

COMPASS HOUSE COVID FIGURES

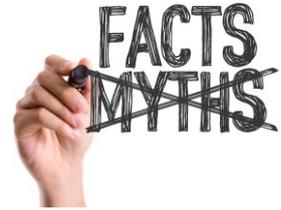
During the 6 month period of 1st March to 31st August we have provided:



** If using a reading machine please check the Compass House Covid Figures document attached in Newsletters section

MYTHBUSTERS

We appreciate at the moment it can be hard to know what to do if you are unwell. It is still important to get medical help if you need it and there are ways to get help and prescriptions online or over the phone, so here are some myths that just aren't true:



Myth 1 - GP Practices are not open

The Practice has remained open throughout the pandemic, serving our Patients, offering emergency appointments and routine appointments with doctors, nurses, healthcare assistants and other members of the Practice Team.

Myth 2 - There are no face to face appointments

Where you would benefit from a face-to-face appointment; for example, if you need a physical examination, the doctor or nurse will arrange this for you.

We have followed national guidelines to ensure Patient safety by operating a telephone triage model, this means all patients are first called by a clinician if they require a GP appointment.

Some of our NHS colleagues at local hospitals and clinics are carrying out mostly video and/or telephone consultations too.

Myth 3 - I cannot get a routine appointment

Routine appointments are available every day with our nursing team. Over the last 6 months our nurses have carried out 12,430 face to face appointments.

Our clinicians have carried out 23,770 telephone consultation and also seen over 4000 patients face to face, where required.

As we continue with a telephone triage model if you require a GP appointment you must first be called by the GP/ANP as our Patient Care Advisors are unable to book these appointments, but rest assured if the clinician feels they needs to see you they will book you in.

Myth 4 - I am not allowed to go to A&E

Yes, you can. If you have a life-threatening emergency such as chest pain, a fracture, difficulty breathing, collapse, please ring 999 or go directly to A&E.

A&E is open and ready to see Patients.

Myth 5 - Why can't I walk into the Practice anymore, like I can in a supermarket?

Supermarkets and other stores have had to change their way of working during COVID, including limiting the number of people allowed in and regular sanitising but at Practices we see people every day who are unwell, as well as those who are vulnerable. So, unlike local high street shops and supermarkets we must be extra careful to ensure your safety, your family, your friends and neighbours, and our team's safety too, which is why we have extra measures in place.

OUR WORK WITH BRIXHAM HOSPITAL

Compass House has always had a close, supportive working relationship with Brixham Community Hospital, where for many years we have carried out the daily ward round for all the in-patients. For the last 4 years we have also been running acute, on the day clinics, GP appointments and nursing clinics at the Brixham Hospital site for our patients.

During COVID-19, for safety reasons, we can no longer run the patient facing clinics at Brixham Hospital but we are committed to getting these services back on site as soon as is safely possible. Meanwhile, throughout COVID-19 we have continued to lead the ward round at the Hospital providing the doctor cover daily and we are pleased to confirm we have recently agreed with Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust to continue providing this service for our Brixham Community for at least the next 3 years.

We are also currently working with the Trust and the Brixham League of Friends on exciting plans to upgrade the rooms and area we use for our own patient clinics to create a new modern Primary Care Wing to help us meet the demands of our growing patient list size. This new space will be in addition to the surgery we have on King Street and at Galmpton. We will continue to invest in all 3 sites plus additional staff to ensure we can continue to meet our patients' needs and introduce other new services that benefit our local community such as Social Prescribing and group consultations.

We are still in the planning stages of this development, but COVID-19 dependent, we hope to be back to providing patient facing clinics in this new wing at Brixham Hospital sometime next year.



EAR SYRINGING

We are now able to offer our patients ear syringing at our HUB site Pembroke House. These appointments are available most Saturday or Sundays and can be booked by calling our Patient Care Advisors.

We are currently unable to offer this service at Compass House, however if you are required to have an ear check prior to your ear syringing appointment we can do this at the surgery and our Patient Care Advisors will be happy to arrange this for you.

