



## **Patient Access Policy**

### **1 Introduction**

This information sets out how The Guildhall & Barrow Surgery ensures that all patients can access timely and appropriate clinical care.

### **2 Objectives**

2.1 Patients can access information, care, or treatment by a GP or appropriate member of the practice team in line with their clinical needs.

2.2 The ability of patients to access the above does not vary on account of characteristics such as age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, geography, or socio-economic status.

2.3 Clinicians and staff are able to manage available resources to meet demand effectively so that the best possible levels of service and access are maintained at all times.

2.4 Patients and carers are aware of how to get the best from the practice and are involved in monitoring and developing the systems and procedures to ensure that their needs are met. To join our Patient Participation Group please click on the link and complete and submit the form.

### **3 Rights and Responsibilities for the Patient**

#### **3.1 Patients' Rights**

As a patient, you have the right to: –

1. join the practice of your choice in the area where you live following acceptance by the practice;
2. easily accessible information about your practice and how to access care via the practice leaflet and website;
3. appropriate urgent care as per Section 5 Access Targets;
4. clear information about your treatment in a suitable format and language so that you and the clinician may make an informed decision about the best course of action;
5. privacy and confidentiality;



6. be treated with dignity and respect at all times (including access to a chaperone if required);
7. comment or complain if you are not satisfied with the service provided;
8. be registered in accordance with NHS England's 'Patient Registration' standard operating procedure;
9. Be registered or receive treatment without delay where the patient cannot produce a photo ID or proof of address unless the practice has reasonable grounds to decline.

### **3.2 Patients' Responsibilities**

As a patient, it is your responsibility to:-

- treat all practice staff with respect;
- ensure you attend any appointment made at the surgery and arrive on time;
- cancel an unwanted appointment as soon as possible so it can be offered to someone else;
- inform the practice if you change your address or telephone number so the practice can contact you urgently if needed;
- inform the practice if you have any special needs, including communication needs, so the practice can make any necessary arrangements;
- let a member of the practice staff know if you are unsure about or dissatisfied with your care so that it can be explained or put right;
- do your best to look after your own health;
- engage in annual reviews if you have any Long Term Conditions;
- use the services of the practice appropriately.

## **4 Surgery Opening Hours and Appointment Times**

4.1 The Guildhall & Barrow Surgery offers services 08:00 – 18:30

4.2 The practice telephone number is 01284 701601

4.3 The practice website is <https://www.theguildhallsurgery.co.uk/>



4.4 Our surgery opening times are as follows: –

**Opening Times – Guildhall surgery site, IP33**

Monday 08:00 – 18:30

Tuesday 08:00 – 18:30

Wednesday 08:00 – 18:30

Thursday 08:00 – 18:30

Friday 08:00 – 18:30

Weekend closed

**Opening Times – Barrow surgery site, IP29**

Monday 08:00 – 18:30

Tuesday 08:00 – 18:30

Wednesday 08:00 – 18:30

Thursday 08:00 – 18:30

Friday 08:00 – 18:30

4.5 Appointments can be made using E-consult or contacting the surgery on 01284 701601

4.6 Approx. 5 times per year, the surgery is closed at 12:30 for staff education sessions. During this time NHS 111 can be contacted for urgent medical appointments. The practice provides a standard appointment length of 15 minutes to see a GP/ ANP. Nursing appointment times vary in length dependent on the nature of the consultation.

Longer appointments are available on request for patients who feel they need more time. If you have more than 1 condition to discuss with a GP, please ask for a longer appointment as this allows the GP more time to discuss your concerns, and also means they won't be running over for their next appointment. If a double appointment is unavailable, you can book a second appointment for an alternative date and time.

4.8 Between the hours of 18.30 – 08.00 daily, the practice phone system will automatically direct callers to NHS111.

4.9 NHS 111 will also provide this service on weekends and Bank Holidays.



## **5 Access Standards**

### **5.1 Routine Consultation Standard**

All patients will be offered a face-to-face or telephone consultation with a doctor or other suitable practitioner (such as a Nurse) as soon as is practicably possible, the patient may choose to wait longer if they want a more convenient appointment or to see their preferred GP if it is safe to do so.

Patients are to clearly identify themselves to the receptionist and supply a contact telephone number and a possible a brief indication of the problem in order to enable the clinical support team to navigate the patient to the most appropriate health care professional.

### **5.2 Urgent Clinical Assessment Standard**

All patients stating they have an urgent medical problem that needs to be dealt with on the same day will be offered a telephone or face-to-face consultation after triaging unless the practice has met its safe working limits as supported by the BMA. In cases where capacity has been met, you will be diverted to NHS 111. The patient must inform the receptionist if he/she believes the problem requires attention more quickly.

This is due to the fact that we offer emergency on-the-day appointments which are taken very early on in the morning. However, if a patient is presenting with urgent medical symptoms, an urgent task will be sent to the clinicians for advice.

For **all** medical problems, patients are asked to answer a series of questions about their symptoms, this means the GP can quickly work out the best way to help.

### **5.3 Home visits**

We have developed a definition of “housebound” to encourage people, who are able, to attend clinics for their routine appointments with the GP or the Nursing Team (Practice Nurse/Health Care Assistant) for blood pressure checks, vaccinations, Asthma reviews etc) and to limit the use of home visits.



Our agreed definition of housebound guidelines aims to ensure that GP clinical teams are providing routine clinical appointments in the home setting only when it is appropriate. It is acknowledged that an individual's needs may change and therefore eligibility for a home visit should be reassessed on a regular basis.

A patient is deemed to be housebound when they are unable to leave their home environment through a physical or psychological illness. A patient is not considered housebound if he or she is able to leave their house with minimal assistance or support. For example:

unassisted/assisted visit to the doctor, dentist, hairdresser, supermarket, social events or hospital outpatients.

Some patients may not be housebound permanently but rather are housebound temporarily as a consequence of an episode of illness".

Minimal assistance would be described as a person who can leave their own home and travel to a clinic appointment in a vehicle such as a personal car, taxi or public transport adapted for their use or not and with or without the use of a wheelchair either by themselves or with an escort.

To avoid confusion any person who requires a specialist vehicle (Ambulance) or a two person escort would be regarded as housebound.

To avoid further confusion a person will not be regarded as housebound because they do not personally have a companion to escort them to a clinical appointment.

We regret that we are unable to offer home visits for patients who are prevented from attending the surgery by lack of transport or childcare issues.

To request a home visit please phone the practice before 10:00am.

All requests for home visits will be triaged by a member of the practice team in order to assist the GPs and nurses in prioritising visits. Your GP will also decide if/how urgently a visit is needed (please be aware that a request for a home visit does not mean that one will be undertaken if the GP thinks it inappropriate).

## **5.4 Repeat Prescriptions Standard**

The practice will generate and aim to sign all repeat prescriptions within 72 working hours of receiving a request to do so, except where:-



- the practice has tried and failed to contact the patient where this is needed before the prescription can be issued safely;
- or where a medication review is pending and must be undertaken before the prescription can be issued safely. The request for a medication review will be highlighted on the patient's most recent prescription;
- the practice aims to generate, and sign repeat prescriptions within 72 hours of request but because of the need to ensure patient safety patients should allow two working days. The practice will do its best to provide prescriptions in urgent circumstances but will not compromise patient safety to do so;
- if you think you need antibiotics, you will need to contact the clinical support team for an appointment.
- for any medications that you have not had for over 3 months, please book a medication review to see if your medical symptoms have changed as you may need something else;
- the practice will do its best to provide prescriptions in urgent circumstances but will not compromise patient safety to do so;
- Patients' can order repeat medication by posting repeat slips in the post box inside the surgery or ordering online.
- the practice uses the 'Electronic Prescription Service (EPS)'. EPS enables our practitioners to send prescriptions electronically to a Pharmacy of your choice. This makes the prescribing and dispensing process more efficient and convenient for patients and staff.

## **6 If you miss your appointment or are late**

6.1 There would be much shorter waits for appointments if every unwanted appointment was cancelled and made available for another patient to use.

It is frustrating for GPs and nurses to be under pressure to provide better access when up to 1 in 10 appointments are wasted by people who simply do not turn up.

6.2 Appointments can be cancelled via E consult and via telephone

6.3 If you attend the surgery more than 10 minutes late for your appointment, you will be asked to rebook for another time.



Please try to attend just before your appointment slot but not too early.

6.6 We do have a Did Not Attend policy if you miss a number of appointments within a 6 months period and good cause is not demonstrated it could result in being removed from our practice list.

## **7 See the Doctor or Nurse you Prefer**

For some problems, you may not mind which doctor or nurse you see but there may be times when you may have a firm preference, or it is best for you to see a particular practitioner.

The practice has allocated patients to a named/registered GP based on the number of hrs/shifts the GP works & a proportionate share of the total patients.

We promote our personal list system for continuity of care and where possible your will be booked in with your named GP for ongoing medical issues.

## **8 Improving Access for Patients**

8.1 The practice is always pleased to receive comments and suggestions about its services including how easy it is to access them. Please contact the Practice Manager if you have comments or suggestions to make.

8.2 Patients are encouraged to join our Patient Participation Group (PPG) and the practice keeps the group up to date. If you wish to join the group, please let the Practice Management team know.

8.6 For patients who require translators or access to British Sign Language, the practice uses DA Languages. Please let members of staff know if you need an interpreter for your appointment for longer appointments.