

The pandemic is not over.

To protect everyone, meet increased demand from winter illnesses and deal with the back log general practice will continue to work differently for some time to come.

General Practice has evolved over the pandemic and this new way of working has many benefits. You can now access your GP through telephone appointments, video consultations, E-consults as well as face to face appointments and home visits. You may find the alternatives are more convenient and you may not have to take time off work.

How are practices working now?

Practices are all open but may need to speak to you by phone to decide how best to meet your needs. This may or may not include a face to face appointment.

What about emergencies?

Always dial 999 in a life-threatening emergency. If you need help with minor injuries at any time or urgent care when your GP practice or community pharmacy is closed visit 111.nhs.uk or dial 111 if you do not have internet access.

Why do receptionists ask personal questions?

GP reception staff are a vital part of the health care team and ask questions to direct you to the best support. They are skilled in assisting with triage and treat all information confidentially.

What is triage?

The benefits of triage mean not waiting a long time for a first assessment and not needing time off work to see the Doctor. You may be assessed to decide who needs:

- to be seen in person
- a phone consultation
- a video consultation
- help from a community pharmacy.

Following triage if a face-to-face appointment is clinically required it will be booked.

I wanted to see my GP, so why am I seeing someone else?

Many GP practices now include a range of professionals (e.g., advanced nurse practitioners) who can diagnose and treat health conditions. This ensures that you see the right person at the right time more quickly

Where else can I get help?

Visit www.nhs.uk for advice on common symptoms and a list of local services or speak to your community pharmacist first for advice on minor illnesses. Find your nearest: nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-pharmacy/

Please be patient

Our health services are under enormous pressure, but we are open and here if needed. Please continue to be kind to our staff, socially distance where possible and wear a face mask in healthcare settings.

The population of Co Durham is 530,000

At present patients contact their GP 280,000 times each month in the County. 140,000 patients are seen face to face each month

*Help us
to help you*