

# Spencer Street Surgery—Patient Newsletter

Welcome to our Spring Edition!

Dear patients, as the days get longer and the flowers bloom, we are excited to share the latest updates, health tips, and news from Spencer Street Surgery. Our goal is to keep you informed and help you stay healthy all year round!

SPRING 2025

## Health tips for Spring:

### Seasonal Allergies? -

Stock up on antihistamines and consider wearing sunglasses outdoors to reduce exposure to pollen

Stay Active: Enjoy the warmer weather with a brisk walk or light gardening, great for both physical & mental health

Spring Clean your diet: Add more fresh fruits and vegetables to your meals, like asparagus, berries and spinach, which are in season!

## NEW WAY OF WORKING

In December of last year we launched a new way of working. Our appointment system was not working and we needed to make a change.

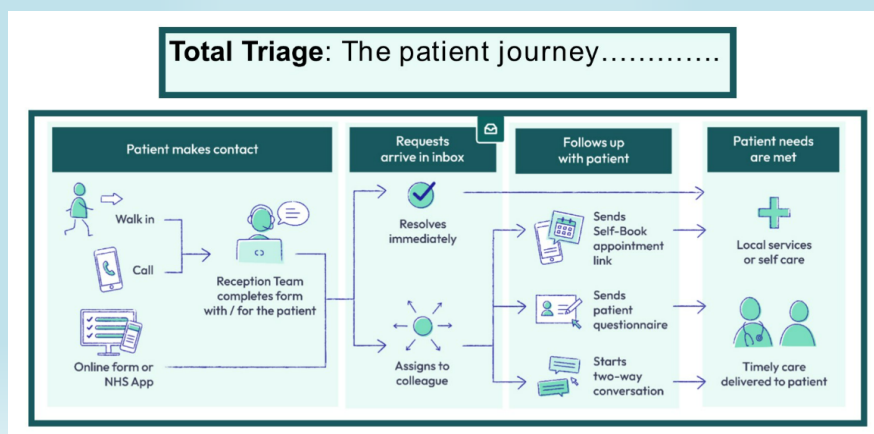
The new system which is called our Clinical Triage System or Total Triage as it is also known, means that all patient clinical requests are reviewed by a clinician/ GP to ensure that we provide a safe and timely service to you our patients.

Now, when you contact us, you are asked by our Care Navigation Team to provide some information for reasons of contact which allows our clinical team to make a decision on the best course of action and timeframe needed.

Whether you contact the practice by phone, walk in or complete your request online yourself, we follow the same process to ensure all patients are treated in the same way no matter how or when you contact us.

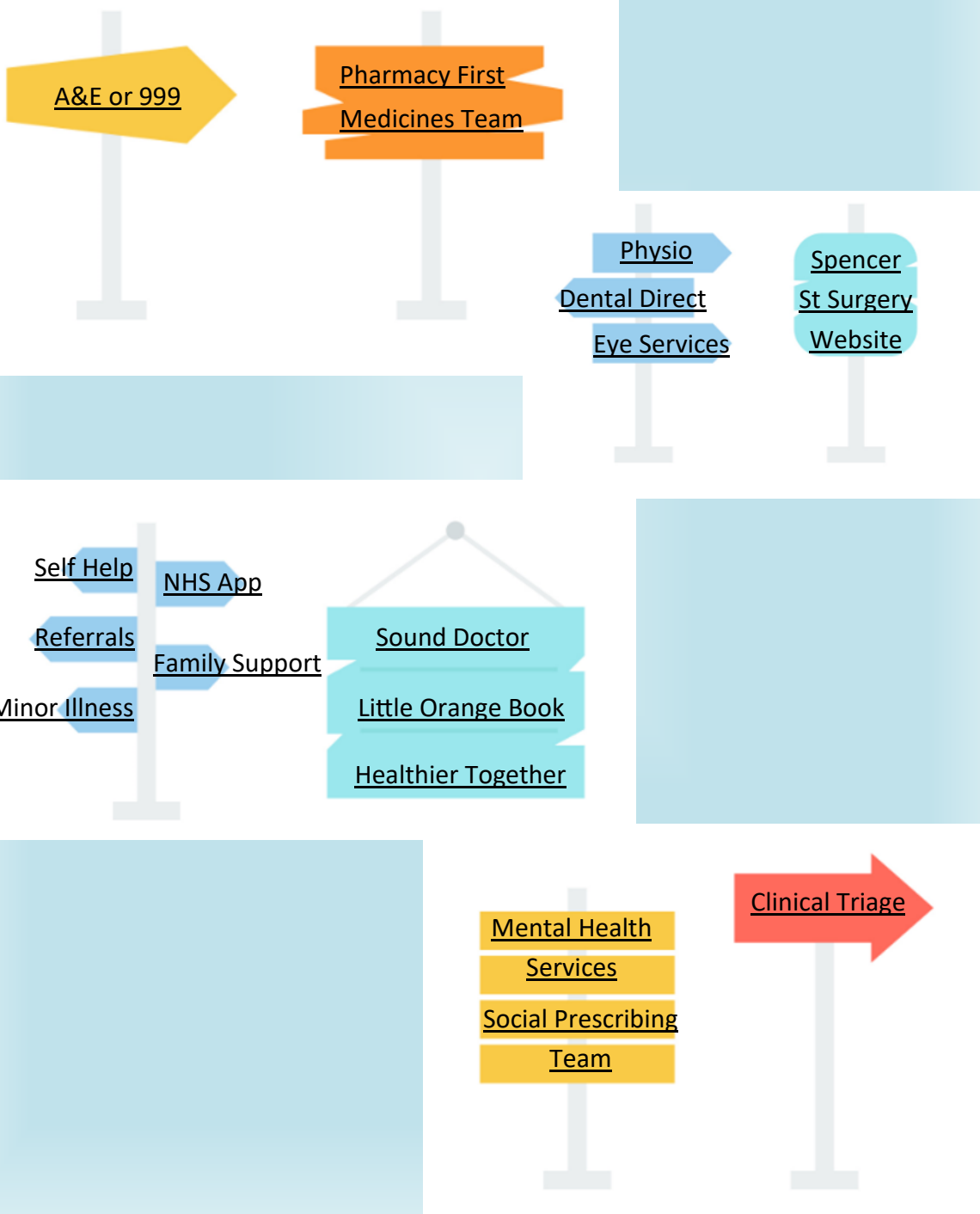
This now means that there is no need to call us at 8am as our new team are dealing with all requests throughout the day Monday to Friday. It is a much fairer process than first come first served at 8am!

There have inevitably been some bumps along the way as we navigate this new system but are continuously improving on the service day by day to ensure we get it right.



# NEW WAY OF WORKING continued

The GP is not always the most appropriate person to see and so our highly skilled Care Navigation and Clinical Triage Team are able to signpost you to the most suitable person or service to deal with your issue. See below for a range of different services or information that you may be signposted to: (Click on each one for further information)



# NEW WAY OF WORKING continued

## STAFF TESTIMONIALS

“So much better for our Patients, as we are able to offer a more efficient service, by signposting them to the appropriate health care they need”.

“Since we started the online consultation triage system in December it has been nice to be able to offer help to patients at any time during our opening hours. It has given us as care navigator’s peace of mind knowing that a clinician will be assessing the need for an appointment rather than us filling the appointments based on who got through on the phones first. It has also freed Care navigator’s to be able to help with patient queries more efficiently.”

“I understand that navigating the online consultation process initially is a bit daunting but once patients have grasped the new process it is actually quicker and easier to contact the practice meaning no more waiting in lengthy phones queues at 8am, you can submit a query at any time of the day, when it is most convenient for you.”

“I have had a lot of positive feedback from patients – they like the fact that if you find it difficult to ring at 8am you haven’t lost your chance of an appointment. “

“There is still a bit of misinformation out there – a lot of people think that you HAVE to do it online! I think as long as they know that we can do it for them if they really struggle then they’re much happier. “

“We hope that you have found this new way of working more receptive and we certainly find we are able to help you better. We really feel this change has been a great adaptation to our ability to make sure that when you need help you get it.”

“I feel the new triage system is a lot easier for patients, they are given an appropriate appointment in a quick time frame and I feel it has eased the pressure of us care navigators when scheduling appointments. Most patients appear to be happy with how the new system works. The clinicians are very supportive and helpful when you need some advice or guidance too. “

“I think the system is working really well with most patients taking to it well and understanding the new system. I think it will continue to go from strength to strength and be beneficial to all involved.”

## PRACTICE CLOSURES

### Protected Learning Time (PLT)

The surgery closes for half a day 6 times per year to allow staff time for training, education, further development and allows practitioners to keep up to date with best practice to help continuously improve their patient care and services.

If you require urgent medical help during this time please contact NHS111 or you can visit [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk). Always call 999 in an emergency if someone is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk.

2025 closure dates—from 1pm until 8am next day:

Thursday 3rd Apr 2025

Thursday 15th May 2025

Wednesday 11th Jun 2025

Wednesday 17th Sep 2025

Thursday 16th Oct 2025

Wednesday 12th Nov 2025

### Friends & Family

Feb= 96% of our patients would recommend our service to friends & family



Thank You for Being Part of Our Practice—Your health and satisfaction matter most to us. If you have any ideas or suggestions for the practice, please share them at the front desk or via our website

# NEW WAY OF WORKING continued

## PATIENT FEEDBACK

“Very efficient response to my online consultation request on Friday, telephone call with the Doctor first thing this morning and an appointment booked with the nurse this afternoon. I was sent a link to book my own appointment which made it much easier to manage childcare arrangements too! “

“First day of new way of working the receptionist was excellent helped me out with my phone definitely an improvement “

“Normally it would take me a few days to get an appointment if not a week, after sometimes ringing at 8am and 8:10am no appointments are left. This time I sent off the form and within 10mins the doctor phoned me discussing my symptoms and had me booked in that day to be seen f2f. Excellent!! Much better service “

“Had a phone call back within 10 mins of me sending my e consult, had an appointment less than an hour later “

“The care navigator helped me by filling for me a request to speak to a Doctor about my pain. Im 79 years old and been in your surgery for 60 years +. For people like me, it's difficult to fill in an email form to speak to a Doctor. The care navigator did that for me.”

“Online consult was easy and the doctors called quick and the appointment was so fast the dr we saw was thorough and so helpful sure my son will be on the mend soon”

“The form was easy to fill out ready to be triaged “

## Today's word "Triage"...



WORD OF  
THE DAY

So "Triage", or initial assessment is the process of assessing and prioritising patients based on the urgency of their medical needs. So why is this system beneficial to patients?

In primary care, this involves pathways put in place by your GPs and trained healthcare professionals so that care navigators can take the relevant details (over the phone, face to face or via an online form) symptoms and concerns so they can be triaged/ assessed and evaluated by a healthcare professional to determine the most appropriate next steps for the patient.

### How It Works:

Patients are asked appropriate questions about their symptoms or condition.

Based on this information, they are directed to the right care, with the most appropriate member of the practice team in the relevant time frame. This could include colleagues in community pharmacy as part of the Pharmacy First scheme. If required, you may be re-directed to an emergency service.

Routine cases may be scheduled for later dates, ensuring that more urgent cases are seen promptly. This is a way of safely ensuring practices manage access based on need rather than demand.

### Benefits for Patients:

**Faster Care for Urgent Cases:** Those with serious or time-sensitive issues promptly receive the relevant care.

**Efficient Use of Resources:** Patients are directed to the most suitable professional, avoiding unnecessary GP appointments when other services or specialists can help (e.g., pharmacy or physiotherapy).

**Reduced Waiting Times:** By prioritising cases effectively, triage/initial assessment minimises unnecessary delays and improves overall access to care for all patients.

Triage/initial assessment ensures that your local GP practice can manage high demand, by focusing on delivering the right care at the right time, with the right person.



# DID YOU KNOW?

The impact of GP practices on community health is immense and multifaceted. Here's a closer look at their overall influence:

**Accessibility to Care:** GP practices provide a first point of contact for healthcare, ensuring that people have access to timely and appropriate medical support.

**Disease Prevention and Management:** By offering vaccinations, routine screenings, and health check-ups, GP practices help prevent illnesses and detect diseases early, leading to better long-term outcomes.

**Chronic Condition Support:** For patients with conditions like diabetes, asthma, or heart disease, GPs provide essential management plans, education, and follow-up care, reducing complications and hospitalizations.

**Mental Health Advocacy:** GP practices play a vital role in identifying and addressing mental health issues. They offer initial consultations, refer patients to specialists, and provide ongoing support.

**Community Well-being:** Through social prescribing and lifestyle advice, GPs address broader determinants of health, such as loneliness, exercise, and diet, creating healthier and more connected communities.

**Cost-Effective Healthcare:** By preventing diseases and managing conditions effectively, GP practices reduce the need for expensive secondary or emergency care, saving healthcare systems significant resources.

**Public Health Integration:** They serve as a bridge between individuals and public health initiatives, such as campaigns against smoking or obesity, amplifying their reach and effectiveness.

In essence, GP practices form the cornerstone of community health, promoting both individual and population-level well-being. Their holistic approach to care makes them indispensable to the healthcare ecosystem. It's hard to imagine a community thriving without them.