

You And Your General Practice- <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/you-and-your-general-practice-english/>

BMA- Your Practice Charter

Dear Patient,

GPs and their practice teams provide the vast majority of NHS care outside of hospitals, supporting you and your family throughout your lives. In a perfect world, we want to be able to offer every patient:

- **Safety** – prompt access to a GP or practice nurse you trust, with well-staffed surgeries and enough resource so that no patient feels left behind.
- **Stability** – a family doctor who knows you, your medical history, and your community – without the stress and difficulty of finding it difficult to get an appointment.
- **Hope for the future** – care that focuses on keeping you well, not just treating illness. We want more time for meaningful consultations, joined-up support closer to your home, from modern GP surgery premises with safe and effective technology to make this possible.

The government talks of “bringing back the family doctor” but what politicians promise is often not planned properly or funded fairly to be able to be delivered in reality.

We aim to respond to all appointment and advice requests promptly, prioritising those most in need. Sometimes we may need to offer you an appointment on another day or direct you to another suitable service.

For safety reasons, urgent medical requests cannot be accepted via our online system. For something urgent, pick up the phone or walk into our reception.

The need to prioritise urgent cases to keep patients safe can result in longer waiting times for routine/non-urgent appointments.

The new requirement to allow patients unlimited online access for non-urgent medical requests, throughout core hours, makes it more likely that we will have no choice but to create hospital-style waiting lists to meet patient need.

We want to guide you through the NHS, co-ordinate your care, and support you to stay healthy. We want every patient to feel safe and confident in their GP practice – now and in the future.

GPs are on your side.

The Challenges Your Practice Faces

- Rising demand, fewer GPs – GPs care for 17% more patients than in 2015, but with fewer GPs. Funding has not kept pace, so many patients find it hard to see their GP quickly, leading to the stressful scramble to secure an appointment.
- Practice closures – Around 2,000 practices have been lost since 2010, that's one in four surgeries, leaving fewer local practices and longer waits or travel for patients.
- Funding pressures – Practices receive just 31p per patient per day to provide unlimited consultations with our doctors and nurses, making it hard to employ enough staff and sustain services.
- Workforce challenges – More GPs are leaving the NHS than joining. While our staff work tirelessly, system pressures and patient frustration can affect everyone's morale and wellbeing. We have unemployed GPs now – and practices lack funds to hire them.
- Unsafe workloads – Many GPs see far more than the accepted safe limit of patients per day, often working over 60 hours a week. Recent government changes risk making this worse.
- Ageing buildings – One in five GP surgeries is now over 75 years old – older than the NHS itself which started in 1948. There is very little investment to provide modern facilities fit for today's needs.
- Access versus continuity – Government policy means speed of an appointment comes before choice. This lack of continuity of care, means patients often don't get to see a familiar face who knows them well.
- Demand management – We always aim to respond to all appointment and advice requests promptly, prioritising those most in need. Sometimes we may need to offer you an appointment on another day or direct you to another suitable service.
- For safety reasons, urgent medical requests cannot always be accepted via our online system. For something urgent, pick up the telephone or walk into our surgery.

The need to prioritise urgent cases to keep patients safe can result in longer waiting times for routine/non-urgent appointments.

The new requirement to allow patients unlimited online access for non-urgent requests, throughout core hours, makes it more likely that we will have no choice but to create hospital style waiting lists to meet demand.

We may unfortunately sometimes face challenges beyond our control:

- Difficulties with accessing services at the local hospitals and long waiting lists
- Workforce challenges – not enough GPs to look after you
- The need to provide our teams with compulsory NHS training and education
- Unforeseen events
- NHS IT challenges with old and slow equipment
- Lack of investment in practice buildings and development
- Public health emergencies

- Our core contract hours are Monday – Friday, 8am– 630pm.
- Our consulting times are between these hours.
- Please note at certain times, e.g. lunch or the ends of the day, a clinician may not be present in the building (e.g. out on home visits).
- In any emergency, please dial 999 for an ambulance or attend the nearest Accident & Emergency department.

We believe patients deserve more

- At present, GPs and their teams are under huge pressure – caring for more people with fewer resources.
- Without proper investment, the safety, stability and continuity of care that patients value most are at risk.
- As your GP practice, we will always do what we can to deliver the best service possible for you and your family. With the right resources and support, we could expand our services, employ more staff, and deliver the safe, timely, and personalised care you deserve. Please remember that our current GP contract funds patient care on average at 31p per day per patient, which is not enough to meet rising demand and to provide the care you and your family deserve.

So please bear with us – and thank you for your support as we try our best for you and your family.

PRACTICE CHARTER

Thorpe Hesley Surgery

Our Responsibilities to You

- To always treat you with respect and courtesy.
- To treat you as an individual and to discuss with you the care and treatment we can provide.
- To give you full information on the services we offer.
- To give you the most appropriate care by suitably qualified staff.
- To provide you with emergency care when you need it.
- To refer you to a consultant acceptable to you when necessary.
- To give you access to your health records, in accordance with current legislation.
- To hold all information in the strictest confidence.
- To give you a full and prompt reply to any complaint you may make about our service.

Information about your health and our services

We will ensure that every effort is made to ensure that you receive all the information directly affecting your health and the care that is being offered including:

- Illness and its treatment including any alternative treatment.
- Possible side effects of the treatment.
- Likelihood of recovery.
- How to avoid/prevent the illness from recurring.
- Any other information you request.

Consent and confidentiality

- When the clinician is advising you to have treatment or further investigations at the surgery then your choices will be explained to you including their risks, in order that you can give your informed consent.
- We will keep your records and information confidential; only disclosing to others for purposes related to your health care in your best interest.

Your Doctor's Responsibilities:

To always treat you with respect and courtesy.

To treat you as an individual, and to discuss with you the care and treatment we can provide.

To provide you with all the information on the services we offer.

To give you the most appropriate care by suitably qualified staff.

To provide you with emergency care when you need it.

To refer you to a suitable consultant when necessary.

To give you access to your health records, subject to any limitations in the law.

We aspire to see all patients within half an hour of the booked appointment time. We will advise if you if the clinician is running behind.

Urgent referrals will be complete within 24 hours; routine referrals may take longer to process. You can contact the hospital/healthcare provider directly for any further queries once your referral has been sent by the practice.

If you have had tests at the practice, we will contact you if further action is required. The clinician carrying out the test should give you an estimated time frame on how long the results may take.

Your Responsibilities as a Patient:

To always treat all staff with respect and courtesy.

To tell us if you are unsure about the treatment we are offering you.

To ask for a home visit, only when you are unable to attend the medical centre through illness or infirmity.

To request a home visit if possible before 10.00am.

To ask for an out-of-hours visit only when necessary.

To keep up-to date and attend your appointments and contact the surgery in advance if you cannot attend.

To respect the premises which was built with you in mind.

Please do your best to be punctual for your appointment.

Please advise the hospital/healthcare provider if you cannot attend your appointment as soon as possible. Direct any queries regarding your appointment to the hospital/healthcare provider you have been referred to.

Please have the tests done if your clinician has advised you to do so. If you have not heard anything within the estimated time frame, then please contact the surgery directly.

Your care/treatment plan

- You clinician will agree your treatment or care plan with you. They will ensure you understand the choices and help you decide.
- Our clinicians will be understanding should you wish to seek a second opinion.

Please inform the clinician if your care/treatment plan isn't working for you or if you have any concerns. The clinician can then review the current plan that is in place and amend this based on your concerns.

Repeat prescriptions

- You will receive an NHS prescription for regular medication when this is available on the NHS.
- We will offer regular medication reviews/monitoring, so your medication remains effective.
- We aim to process your prescription request within 48hrs.

Please would you:

- Take all your prescribed medication as advised by the prescribing clinician and follow the instructions you have been given.
- Please do not allow yourself to run out of medication. Please plan ahead and order your medication within a reasonable timeframe.
- Consider ordering online via the NHS app.
- Please attend and keep up-to date with your medication review.
- Inform us if you are unsure about the medication, you are taking or wish to stop/change the medication you are taking.

Our commitment:

- We aim to answer calls promptly by having enough staff to do so.
- We provide access to a same-day clinician should you feel you need it.

Please would you:

- Cancel your appointment in advance if you no longer need it.
- Book one appointment per person.
- Only discuss one problem in each appointment.
- Request a longer appointment if you have more than one problem to discuss.
- Please tell us if your contact details change.

The premises and waiting room:

- We aim to meet the current standards with our both premises and our waiting rooms and aim to make them as comfortable as possible.
- We have a radio situated in the waiting room at our Thorpe Hesley Branch which plays music at an appropriate noise level to provide privacy to the clinician and the patient using the surrounding clinical rooms.

Please would you:

- Use your phone respectfully on our premises.
- Inform us if things go wrong for example the toilet is out of order.

Patient Rights and Responsibilities

You have a right to expect a high standard of medical care from our Practice, and we will always try to provide the very best care possible within the resources available. To assist us with this we require that you take full responsibility for ensuring that you do not abuse the service. For example, it is your responsibility to ensure that you keep medical appointments and follow the medical advice given.

Very occasionally a practice/patient relationship breaks down completely. In this situation the patient may choose to register with a different Practice. The Practice also has the right to remove that patient from their list. This would generally only follow a letter of warning that had failed to remedy the situation, and we would normally give the patient a specific reason for the removal.

Violent Patients - Zero Tolerance

The NHS operates a Zero Tolerance Policy regarding violence and abuse, and the Practice has the right to remove violent patients from the list with immediate effect to safeguard Practice staff, patients and other persons.

Violence in this context includes actual or threatened physical violence or verbal abuse which leads to fear for a person's safety.

In this situation we are obliged to notify the patient in writing of their removal from the list and record in the patient's medical records the fact of the removal and circumstances leading to it.

Feedback and complaints

- We respond and investigate to all complaints; please see our complaints policy.
- We aim to improve/change how we work as a result of the feedback and complaints we receive if this improves our care of standards.
- We are committed to patient involvement in the delivery of healthcare.

We ask that you consider providing feedback about our service. We value all patient feedback as this can help us improve the quality of service we provide.

New Online Service

All GP practices are now required provide access for patients to submit online medical/admin requests via the NHS app throughout core hours.

This service is **not** for urgent medical requests. So, we ask all patients with an urgent medical problem to contact the surgery via telephone or walk into our reception.

We ask patients to please take care when reading the symptom checklist that is provided on the NHS app before submitting the request as your problem may need more serious attention such as 999.

We aim to respond to all requests including (admin/medical) as soon as possible prioritising those most in need.

The need to prioritise urgent cases to keep patients safe can result in longer waiting times for routine/non-urgent appointments.
