

**STAYWELL
THISWINTER**

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If you require urgent medical assistance when the surgery is closed and cannot wait until the surgery opens, please call the Out of Hours service on 0161 7638940.

Reception Opening Times:

Mon to Fri – 8.00am to 6.30pm

**Dr Uddin & Dr Anwar
Halliwell Surgery**

Practice Newsletter

Winter Newsletter 2021

Coronavirus Vaccination Update

There are plenty of walk in clinics that you can attend for your 1st, 2nd or booster COVID19 vaccination – the Bolton CCG website updates each week where the clinics are - <https://www.boltonccg.nhs.uk/patient-zone/coronavirus>

If you have received an invitation to confirm you are due your booster vaccination or you have not had your 1st or 2nd dose yet, you can attend at any of the walk in clinics or you can book in to an appointment only local clinic via this link - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>

Flu Vaccination Update

If you are aged 50 and over, or under 50 and have a long term medical condition, e.g. asthma, COPD, heart disease, diabetes etc., you are eligible for a flu vaccination. You should have already received invitations from the surgery to book your appointment and most eligible patients will have already had their vaccination.

We have had some really successful clinics throughout October and November but we do still have some availability if you have not already had your vaccine. Please contact the surgery and speak to one of our receptionists to book your appointment. If you are unsure if you are eligible, you can contact us and we will check.

Children aged 2-3 year old are also being offered the vaccination. They are offered the nasal vaccination, which is a spray up their nostril. In some cases, parents may prefer the injection for their child and if you let us know, we can arrange this.

All school children from Reception to Year 11 will be offered the nasal flu vaccination in school and this will be done by the School Nursing Team. If your child misses the vaccination in school, you can contact IntraHealth on 03333583397 to arrange another appointment - we will not be able to offer this to your child unless they are in an at risk group.

Our appointment system

We offer a mixture of appointment types across various healthcare professionals in practice.

- Routine pre-bookable telephone consultations
- Routine pre-bookable face to face appointments
- On the day urgent telephone appointments, if the clinician needs to examine you after an on the day urgent appointment, they will arrange for you to come to practice for a face to face consultation

As you know, we are still in a COVID19 pandemic and we are still in a position of where staff may have to self-isolate and be tested if they display COVID19 symptoms, this may result in the practice contacting you to cancel and re-arrange your routine appointments. Patients may also develop COVID19 symptoms or test positive for COVID19 and may be unable to attend their face to face appointment due to self-isolation, if this happens you can contact the practice and we can convert the appointment into a telephone consultation, this avoids you waiting for the next available routine appointment.

If a patient needs to discuss more than one problem, please advise our reception team, who will book a longer appointment for you.

It is still government guidance that everyone should still wear a face mask/covering in a healthcare setting

Positivity in Practice

Throughout the COVID19 pandemic, our doors have never been closed and we have been here for our patients throughout. At the practice we are currently offering a mixture of appointments - these are routine pre-bookable face to face appointments, routine pre-bookable telephone appointments, on the day urgent telephone appointments (and if the clinician decides they need to see you after an urgent on the day telephone consultation, they will arrange to see you in practice).

Alongside our doctors, we have a brilliant team of more specialised healthcare professionals. We have:

- a paramedic, who supports our doctors and can review patients with acute medical conditions
- a MSK (musculoskeletal) practitioner, who specialises in joint pain and issues
- a mental health practitioner, who specialises in dealing with patients with anxiety and stress
- a pharmacist, who can spend more time with you carrying out medication reviews

The reason you are asked by our trained reception team regarding why you require an appointment, is so they can signpost you to the right person in practice.

To give you an idea of how many appointments we carry out in practice, in the week commencing 22nd November, we carried out 473 appointments in total across our whole practice team and 54.3% of these appointments were face to face. 25 patients did not attend their face to face appointments this same week, and did not contact the practice to cancel.

Winter Pressures on the NHS

Every year, the NHS is very busy during winter and even more so since the COVID19 pandemic.

There are many ways that you can help keep well during the winter months including:

- self-care – treating winter illnesses at home (you can get some great advice from your local pharmacy)
- get vaccinated – if you are eligible for a Flu vaccination - book your appointment with us as soon as possible
- Protect against COVID19 – if you are not already vaccinated, you can visit local walk in clinics or book on the government website and book in an appointment only clinic. Wash your hand, wear a face mask & self-isolate and get tested if you get COVID19 symptoms – you need to get a PCR test to confirm if you are positive or not.
- be prepared - stock up your medicine cabinet and ensure you order your repeat prescriptions in a timely manner so you do not run out (we require 48 working hours' notice to have your prescription ready)
- access NHS services, when appropriate - there are lots of services in Bolton that can help patients and the Bolton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) website as a very useful section - <https://www.boltonccg.nhs.uk/patient-zone/your-services>

You can also visit the nhs.uk website for more tips on how to stay well this winter - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/keep-warm-keep-well/>

While You Wait - Supporting Bolton patients waiting for hospital treatment

The Covid-19 pandemic has meant that some operations and procedures have been postponed, leading to understandable concern for those waiting for treatment. Due to Covid-19 and its impact on our local hospitals, as of August 2021 there were approximately 30,000 Bolton residents on waiting lists for procedures.

The NHS is working hard to get people seen as quickly as possible. The Royal Bolton Hospital, GP practices and everyone involved in your care are doing their best to reduce waiting lists and waiting times for patients - while also supporting you while you wait.

Bolton CCG are working with colleagues throughout Greater Manchester to provide: up-to-date information about keeping fit and healthy while you wait; useful information, documents and links; information on what to do and who to contact if your condition worsens.

You can visit the Greater Manchester While You Wait website for more information on - <https://whileyouwait.org.uk/>

This website includes:

- How to stay as fit and healthy as possible while you wait for your treatment
- Where to find any extra support online
- Where to find further information about approximate waiting times at different hospitals
- What to do if your condition deteriorates

Opening Times during Christmas/New Year

- Monday 20th December 2021 – 8am to 6.30pm
- Tuesday 21st December 2021 – 8am to 6.30pm
- Wednesday 22nd December 2021 – 8am to 6.30pm
- Thursday 23rd December 2021 – 8am to 6.30pm
- Friday 24th December 2021 – 8am to 6.30pm

- **Monday 27th December 2021 – Bank Holiday – Closed**
- **Tuesday 28th December 2021 – Bank Holiday – Closed**
- Wednesday 22nd December 2021 – 8am to 6.30pm
- Thursday 23rd December 2021 – 8am to 6.30pm
- Friday 24th December 2021 – 8am to 6.30pm

- **Monday 3rd January 2022 – Bank Holiday – Closed**
- Tuesday 4th January 2022 – 8am to 6.30pm
- Wednesday 5th January 2022 – 8am to 6.30pm
- Thursday 6th January 2022 – 8am to 6.30pm
- Friday 7th January 2022 – 8am to 6.30pm

For anything urgent during our closing hours, you can contact the out of hours service on 0161 7638940.

If you have a **life threatening emergency**, please dial 999.

The evening and weekend GP service in Bolton should also be running some clinics on the bank holiday, you will be offered any available appointments by our reception, where appropriate.

