



Dear Patients

Over recent weeks the team at Hanham Health have had to adapt our ways of working in response to the Covid-19 outbreak. Changes have been made in order to protect both our patients and staff and to ensure that we are continuing to offer the safest and best possible care that we can to our local community.

At the outset of the pandemic it was necessary for us to temporarily withdraw a number of services (under guidance from the Royal College of General Practitioners) and we thank you for your patience and understanding during these unprecedented times.

Sadly, the impact of coronavirus is unlikely to be short term and we are now reviewing our ways of working again to allow us to reintroduce services whilst continuing to deliver high quality healthcare in a safe way.

We want our patients to understand the best way to access the care that they require whether that be from us or an alternative service. There may also be a more efficient way for you to obtain the information you require and we will talk about what we mean by this later in this letter.

We hope that the following information will be helpful and as usual we welcome any comments / suggestions that you may have. Patient feedback is vital in helping us shape the service that we deliver and we are always grateful to hear from our patients. This can be done via email ([Sgccg.L81079.enquiries@nhs.net](mailto:Sgccg.L81079.enquiries@nhs.net)) or letter for the attention of Kelly Cole, Customer Service Manager.

During this difficult time we urge all patients not to ignore symptoms that could indicate serious illness. Please use the following information to help identify the best service for your need and rest assured we are open and seeing patients where this is clinically necessary. Our Patient Care Co-ordinators are available during our opening hours and will happily assist with any enquiries that you may have.

Finally the support of our patients and local businesses has been overwhelming. Your donations, offers of support and kind comments have been very much appreciated.

Thank you

**The Hanham Health Team**

## How to access services

Do you have a life threatening emergency?	Contact 999 or attend the nearest A&E department
Are you concerned you have Covid-19?	Use the NHS online service for advice <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/">https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/</a>
Do you feel you need medical advice from a clinician at the surgery?	Please call our main switchboard number (0117 9352 318) and one of our Patient Care Co-ordinators will be able to assist. Our team are trained to 'signpost' patients and will ask some questions to establish the most appropriate advice / service for you. This could be contacting a local pharmacy or other service, having a routine telephone consultation in the following days with a clinician or a same day call back if your medical concern is identified as urgent.
Do you have a medical need that doesn't require an urgent response? (including administrative issues such as med 3 requests (Sick notes).	Please use Econsult available on the homepage of our website ( <a href="https://www.hanhamhealth.co.uk/">https://www.hanhamhealth.co.uk/</a> ) You can use this service to submit information electronically and receive a response by the end of the next working day.
Do you require a repeat prescription?	As access to our surgeries is restricted we have made some changes to the way that prescriptions can be ordered and collected. <b>Ordering</b> Repeat medications can be ordered electronically (Via online services if you are registered or via the NHS App), over the telephone with a local pharmacy or by posting your repeat slip into the post boxes outside of each surgery. (Please remember that our surgery team are unable to take orders over the phone). <b>Collecting</b> We will not be issuing green prescription slips for the foreseeable future and are asking patients to nominate a local pharmacy for receipt of prescriptions electronically. Patients can then visit the pharmacy directly to collect their medication instead of visiting the surgery. Please contact us and let us know if you have a pharmacy of preference and we will update your records to reflect your choice. ( <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/pharmacies/electronic-prescription-service/">https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/pharmacies/electronic-prescription-service/</a> )

<p>Services that are running</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Blood test clinics</li> <li>○ Wound dressing appointments</li> <li>○ Cervical smear clinics</li> <li>○ Immunisation clinics including child, pneumococcal and shingles vaccinations</li> <li>○ Routine medication reviews</li> <li>○ Chronic disease review clinics (for example diabetic and asthma reviews)</li> <li>○ Mother and baby post-natal checks</li> <li>○ Home visits for those patients truly housebound where clinically necessary</li> <li>○ Telephone appointments with GPs and Nurse practitioners for routine health concerns (face to face appointment if needed).</li> <li>○ Referrals for secondary care investigation and / or treatments where needed</li> </ul> <p>Please note that medication reviews and chronic disease management appointments are likely to be held via telephone.</p> <p>Appointments that are held in the surgery but hosted by external services (for example Diabetic eye screening or AAA screening) will shortly be recommencing and subject to all the same safety measures that we have put in place.</p>
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**Practical measures we have taken**

We have made a number of changes to the surgery environment to protect both patients and staff.

- Perspex screens have been installed in our back office areas as well as our patient facing front desks.
- We are controlling access to our waiting rooms to manage numbers and you may find that you are either asked to wait outside or in your car (and call the surgery on arrival) until access can be allowed.  
Some chairs in our waiting areas have been removed to allow for distancing to be adhered to and sample pots / sample drop off boxes and correspondence post boxes have all been moved to outside.
- Hand sanitiser must be used on entrance to and exit from the building.
- If you are invited to attend the surgery we ask that you come alone wherever possible (with the exception of necessary carers, parents escorting children) and all patients coming into the surgery will be asked to wear a face mask / covering.

Information on how to make one of these can be found here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering>

All of our clinicians will be wearing Personal protective Equipment (PPE) including masks, gloves and visors and we hope that you find this reassuring.

If your symptoms suggest infection and face to face assessment is required you will be asked to attend Hanham Surgery and access to the building will be via a segregated side door.

### **Shielding patients**

For those patients who have been advised to shield due to underlying health conditions, any face to face appointments will be held at Oldland Surgery. Please ensure you advise our Patient Care Co-ordinators that you are a 'shielding patient' when booking appointments for regular blood monitoring or other treatment room procedures.

### **Remote management of patients' requests**

For the time being all clinicians will continue to remotely manage patients wherever possible. This could be via telephone or video consultation and you may be asked by our Patient Care Co-ordinators to submit photographs via text message in advance of any telephone call with a clinician if it is deemed helpful to the consultation (for example a picture of a rash).

Working in this way allows us to safely manage those patients that do need to attend the surgery and ensure social distancing as much as possible. It is important to note that all photographs submitted will form part of your medical record.

Remote management will also be extended to routine medication reviews with our Clinical Pharmacist and chronic disease management with our nursing team. Further details will be shared on the practicalities of this.

### **Econsult**

We have been using Econsult in the surgery for a number of months and the service is now well established with many patients making use of this valuable service. Please visit the home page of our website where you will be able to submit a simple online form regarding your medical concern. This will be reviewed by a clinician (or administration team member if the matter is administrative) and you will receive a response by 6pm the following working day.

The service is ideal if you are looking for advice on common health problems and self-care as well as requesting items like med 3s (sick notes) or test results.

Please do not worry however if you do not have a smartphone or are less digitally enabled. Our team will continue to be available on the telephone if you need us.

In addition we also have a collection of health and care videos available on our website.

These short, simple videos cover a range of common health concerns including minor ailments as well as longer term conditions and some services that you may need to access for yourself or a member of your family. Further details are available here <https://onecare-southglos.healthandcarevideos.com/>

### **Antibody testing**

We are not routinely offering Covid-19 antibody testing at this time whilst we wait for further guidance from NHS England. Further information on this will be shared with our patients in due course.

### **Latest News**

Finally, please follow us on Facebook and check our website as we regularly update these with the latest news from the surgery as well as the latest changes we may have made in relation to the pandemic.

We will also share information that we receive from local community services and health promotion campaigns that we feel will interest our patients.

**It is important to note that government and NHS England advice on the current pandemic can change rapidly and the steps we have taken mentioned above could be subject to change. Any subsequent updates will be communicated via our Facebook page, website, SMS, email etc.**