

Version:	Review date:	Edited by:	Approved by:	Comments:
2.0	November 2025	Jo Shaw	GP Partners	

## 1 Introduction

This information sets out how Victoria Surgery ensures that all patients can access timely and appropriate clinical care.

## 2 Objectives

2.1 Patients can access information, care, or treatment by a GP or appropriate member of the practice team in line with their clinical needs.

2.2 The ability of patients to access the above does not vary on account of characteristics such as age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, geography, or socio-economic status.

2.3 Clinicians and staff can manage available resources to meet demand effectively so that the best possible levels of service and access are maintained at all times.

2.4 Patients and carers are aware of how to get the best from the practice and are involved in monitoring and developing the systems and procedures to ensure that their needs are met.

## 3 Rights and Responsibilities for the Patient

### 3.1 Patients' Rights

As a patient, you have the right to: –

1. join the practice of your choice in the area where you live following acceptance by the practice.
2. easily accessible information about your practice and how to access care via the practice leaflet and website.
3. appropriate on the day care as per Section 5 Access Targets;
4. clear information about your treatment in a suitable format and language so that you and the clinician may make an informed decision about the best course of action;
5. privacy and confidentiality;
6. be always treated with dignity and respect (including access to a chaperone if required);
7. comment or complain if you are not satisfied with the service provided;
8. be registered in accordance with NHS England's 'Patient Registration' standard operating procedure;
9. Be registered or receive treatment without delay where the patient cannot produce a photo ID or proof of address unless the practice has reasonable grounds to decline.

### 3.2 Patients' Responsibilities

As a patient, it is your responsibility to:-

- treat all practice staff with respect;
- ensure you attend any appointment made at the surgery and arrive on time;
- cancel an unwanted appointment as soon as possible so it can be offered to someone else;
- inform the practice if you change your address or telephone number so the practice can contact you urgently if needed;
  
- inform the practice if you have any special needs, including communication needs, so the practice can make any necessary arrangements.
- let a member of the practice staff know if you are unsure about or dissatisfied with your care so that it can be explained or put right;
- do your best to look after your own health;
- engage in annual reviews if you have any Long Term Conditions;
- use the services of the practice appropriately.

### 4 Surgery Opening Hours and Appointment Times

4.1 Victoria Surgery operates from **Victoria Street, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3BB.**

4.2 The practice telephone number is 01284 725550

4.3 The practice website is [www.victoriasurgery.co.uk](http://www.victoriasurgery.co.uk)

4.4 Our surgery opening times are as follows: –

#### **Opening Times**

Monday 08:00 – 18:30

Tuesday 08:00 – 18:30

Wednesday 08:00 – 18:30

Thursday 08:00 – 18:30

Friday 08:00 – 18:30

Saturday 09:00-17:00 **(by prebooked appointment only)**

4.5 Appointments can be made by contacting the surgery by telephone or in person, via NHS app or making a request via our online platform Accurx.

4.6 For a maximum of 5 afternoons each year, the surgery is closed (from 12 noon) for staff training. Details are displayed clearly on the practice website/social media at least two weeks in advance together with instructions on what to do if you need help when the surgery is closed.

4.7 The practice provides a standard appointment length of 10 minutes to see a GP. Nursing appointment times vary in length dependent on the nature of the consultation. Longer appointments are available on request for patients who feel they need more time. If you have more than 1 condition to discuss with a GP, please ask for a longer appointment as

this allows the GP more time to discuss your concerns, and means they won't be running over for their next appointment.

4.8 Between the hours of 18.30 – 08.00 daily, the practice phone system will automatically direct callers to NHS111.

## **5 Access Standards**

### **5.1 Routine Consultation Standard**

All patients will be offered a face-to-face or telephone consultation with a doctor or other suitable practitioner (such as a Nurse) within 10 working days of contacting the practice, as the patient may choose to wait longer if they want a more convenient appointment or to see their preferred GP if it is safe to do so.

Patients are to clearly identify themselves to the receptionist and supply a contact telephone number and where possible a brief indication of the problem.

### **5.2 Urgent Clinical Assessment Standard**

All patients stating they have an urgent medical problem that needs to be dealt with on the same day will be offered a telephone or face-to-face consultation after triaging.

### **5.3 Home visits**

We have developed a definition of “housebound” to encourage people, who are able, to attend clinics for their routine appointments with the GP or the Nursing Team (Practice Nurse/Health Care Assistant) for blood pressure checks, vaccinations, Asthma reviews etc) and to limit the use of home visits.

Our agreed definition of housebound guidelines aims to ensure that GP clinical teams are providing routine clinical appointments in the home setting only when it is appropriate. It is acknowledged that an individual's needs may change and therefore eligibility for a home visit should be reassessed on a regular basis.

A patient is deemed to be housebound when they are unable to leave their home environment through a physical or psychological illness. A patient is not considered housebound if he or she is able to leave their house with minimal assistance or support. For example: unassisted/assisted visit to the doctor, dentist, hairdresser, supermarket, social events or hospital outpatients.

Some patients may not be housebound permanently but rather are housebound temporarily as a consequence of an episode of illness”. Minimal assistance would be described as a person who can leave their own home and travel to a clinic appointment in a vehicle such as a personal car, taxi or public transport adapted for their use or not and with or without the use of a wheelchair either by themselves or with an escort.

To avoid confusion any person who requires a specialist vehicle (Ambulance) or a two person escort would be regarded as housebound.

To avoid further confusion a person will not be regarded as housebound because they do not personally have a companion to escort them to a clinical appointment.

We regret that we are unable to offer home visits for patients who are prevented from attending the surgery by lack of transport or childcare issues.

To request a home visit please phone the practice before 10am on 01284 725550

All requests for home visits will be triaged by a member of the practice team to assist the GPs and nurses in prioritising visits. Your GP will also decide if/how urgently a visit is needed (please be aware that a request for a home visit does not mean that one will be undertaken if the GP thinks it inappropriate).

#### **5.4 Repeat Prescriptions Standard**

The practice will generate and aim to sign all repeat prescriptions within 72 working hours of receiving a request to do so, except where:-

- the practice has tried and failed to contact the patient where this is needed before the prescription can be issued safely;
- or where a medication review is pending and must be undertaken before the prescription can be issued safely. The request for a medication review will be highlighted on the patient's most recent prescription.
- the practice aims to generate, and sign repeat prescriptions within 72 hours of request. The practice will do its best to provide prescriptions in urgent circumstances but will not compromise patient safety to do so;
- for any medications that you have not had for over 3 months, please book a medication review to see if your medical symptoms have changed as you may need something else;
- Patients' can order repeat medication by posting repeat slips in the post box inside the surgery, via the order line, email or via the NHS app.
- the practice uses the 'Electronic Prescription Service (EPS)'. EPS enables our practitioners to send prescriptions electronically to a Pharmacy of your choice. This makes the prescribing and dispensing process more efficient and convenient for patients and staff.

#### **6 If you miss your appointment or are late**

6.1 There would be much shorter waits for appointments if every unwanted appointment was cancelled and made available for another patient to use.

It is frustrating for GPs and nurses to be under pressure to provide better access when up to 1 in 10 appointments are wasted by people who simply do not turn up.

6.2 Appointments can be cancelled online (if booked online) and via telephone.

6.3 If you attend the surgery late for your appointment it may be difficult to fit you in without making other patients wait longer.

Please try to attend just before your appointment slot but not too early.

If the surgery is running late, you will be informed by reception so that you have the option of re-booking.

6.4 Where possible, the GP or Nurse will aim to see patients who arrived late, however, you may have to wait to be seen at the end of the surgery or be asked to rebook your appointment.

6.5 Members of the Reception team will advise patients when a GP or Nurse is running late, and this will either be on arrival (by suspending self-check-in) or by making an announcement in the waiting area.

6.6 We do have a Did Not Attend policy if you miss several appointments within a 6 months period and good cause is not demonstrated it could result in being removed from our practice list.

## **7 See the Doctor or Nurse you Prefer**

For some problems, you may not mind which doctor or nurse you see but there may be times when you may have a firm preference, or it is best for you to see a particular practitioner.

The practice has allocated patients to a named/registered GP based on the number of hrs/shifts the GP works & a proportionate share of the total patients.

This does not mean you ONLY have to see your allocated GP; you can see ANY clinician who is available.

## **8 Improving Access for Patients**

8.1 The practice is always pleased to receive comments and suggestions about its services including how easy it is to access them. Please contact the Practice Manager if you have comments or suggestions to make alternatively you can leave a card in one of our suggestion boxes or submit feedback via our website.

8.2 Patients are encouraged to join our Patient Participation Group (PPG) and the practice keeps the group up to date. If you wish to join the group, please complete an application, and return it to the Patient Services Lead. Forms are available online or from reception.

8.6 For patients who require translators or access to British Sign Language, the practice uses Language Line. Please let members of staff know if you need an interpreter for your appointment for longer appointments.