



Lambton Road Medical Practice

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One year into the pandemic, COVID 19 is still the main subject of our March newsletter, which hopefully now contains some more positive news.

The Pan Merton GP Collaboration, using the Wilson Hospital & Hari Centre, has been extremely successful. All patients over 50 have now been offered vaccine and clinics continue to run throughout the week.

While there has been some patients who have declined the vaccine, as the data on the safety and efficacy of the vaccine emerges and exceeds all our hopes, we want to make it very clear that all previous 'decliners' can change their mind and contact us to arrange a vaccination.

Contact details

During this vaccination campaign we have texted and telephoned patients, but sadly find there are still many incorrect numbers on our system as patients have not updated their contact details. We would like to remind all of our patients how important it is to update your details, so we can contact you swiftly when you are due your vaccine. Please use the link on our website <https://www.lambtonroadmedical.nhs.uk/navigator/change-of-personal-details/>, or call/write to us.

We are aware that there have unfortunately been scam messages sent or shared by others during this pandemic. Any text message from us is prefixed by 'NHSNoReply'.

We would like emphasise that this is a personal message, and is not to be shared.

Sadly, much time is wasted when patients who are ineligible for the vaccine, or who are not registered with us, present at the vaccination clinics. This is often as a result of our patients (luckily a small minority) 'inviting' their friends or extended family by forwarding these texts. We now run a computer search to ensure all online bookings are eligible patients, so please do not try to claim a vaccine intended for someone else. We are moving rapidly through the cohorts and feel confident that we will have all of our adult population vaccinated by July, so your turn will come very soon.

As more mass sites go live locally at Centre Court Shopping Centre, Queen Mary's Hospital, and Plough Lane Football Stadium, they will also be sending out invitations via text message and appointments will be bookable on the NHS Website.

When your time comes, please do not turn the opportunity down. The vaccine is safe and efficacious and will allow all of us to get our lives back to normal.

Second doses

The vaccine delivery schedule is often only announced a few days ahead of the actual delivery, which has made organising clinics challenging.

Second doses are now arriving. We will contact all patients due their second doses to book appointments, but if you have not been contacted after 11 weeks, please get in touch.

Please take your vaccine record card with you to your second appointment. Please try to go alone (unless you need to bring a Carer) and on time, to help minimise footfall in the vaccination centre.

Volunteers

No mention of the COVID vaccination clinic can omit a huge thank you from all of us, to the amazing group of volunteers at the vaccination site, who have been key to enabling us to deliver this speedy vaccination programme.

They have helped with booking appointments, directing patients, organising queues, filling out vaccine cards and so much more. We owe you all a huge thank you, as do all of our patients.

“Normal” Work

COVID has taken over much of our lives for an entire year, yet General Practice continues. We have modified our working practices with more triage and virtual consultations, and nearly 100% of prescriptions sent electronically to local pharmacies. Our current plan is not to reopen fully online booking until early May. Please bear with us. This is to keep all of us safe, it makes our phones and staff busier but ensures all patients are triaged to be booked appropriately and safely.

If we ask you to attend the surgery, please be assured that it is safe. It is essential that child immunisations and smears continue, so if invited please attend. Chronic disease monitoring and medication reviews are also all ongoing, so please do not ignore your recall.

Mental health is a huge concern for us as we move forward. We recognise the impact COVID has had on many of us. Please consider using IAPT, the local counselling service you can refer yourself to, or our low mood service.

Local resources can be viewed on our website.

<https://www.lambtonroadmedical.nhs.uk/digitalpractice/wellbeing-centre/mental-health/>

<https://www.talkwandsworth.nhs.uk/>

Staff

We welcome two new paramedics to our team. Matt Childs was attached to us during a London Ambulance Pilot Scheme, and we are delighted that he is joining us as a permanent team member from April. Connor Brown is also a senior paramedic and comes to us after experience in the Ambulance Service and a GP Practice outside of London. Both paramedics will be involved in telephone triage, visits, and care planning. Sadie Rooney, our new Phlebotomist increases the availability of blood-taking slots we can offer.

Weight loss

Sadly, obesity is emerging as a key factor increasing the risk of a severe COVID infection and hospitalisation. Many of us have put on weight in the last year and this is important to address now!

Local resources to help with weight loss:

<https://www.lambtonroadmedical.nhs.uk/digitalpractice/wellbeing-centre/weight-management/>

We sincerely feel that life is getting back to normal, but wish to emphasise that we should all maintain a cautious approach by continuing to socially distance and wash hands. Vaccination is our main pathway out of the pandemic.

So, if there is just one last message we want to give all of our patients, it is to please take the vaccine when your turn comes!

With

Best Wishes,

Happy Easter!

Dr Penelope Smith