

# WELCOME TO THE TONG MEDICAL PRACTICE NEWSLETTER!

**We are delighted to be re-launching our practice newsletter in partnership with our wonderful Patient Group.**

We would like to start by saying a huge thank you to all our patients and staff – we know we don't need reminding that the last two and a half years have been very difficult... for everyone.

We know the perception is that because our doors have been closed that we haven't been as busy as before the pandemic, but the reality is that we have been under more pressure than ever... working with reduced levels of staff and increased demand. All the staff at Tong MP chose to work in the Practice rather than remotely at home and were responding to daily changes to services and infection control directives to ensure everyone stayed safe. The team were involved on a daily basis working in the vaccination clinics and the clinicians were checking in with all our vulnerable patients.

The Tong Medical Practice Team appreciate that all our patients also had a very challenging time trying to work out how to access the service when they were ill and also isolating at home either alone or looking after loved ones who were very sick.

## We are here for you!

Demand may be high at the moment, but don't worry, Tong Medical Practice is open and ready to help just as we always have. We're here to make sure you see the right clinician at the right time, and to ensure you get the right care, fast.

## If you need a GP appointment urgently

Rest assured that we've changed the way we manage our appointment systems to ensure that you can speak to a doctor or other clinician as quickly as possible – before the Pandemic we didn't offer telephone appointments and so this has been a huge change for all of us. We are still offering patients face-to-face appointments as we have throughout the pandemic. Any patient who needs a face-to-face appointment will be booked into a slot once an initial assessment is made by telephone first.

***Check we have your up-to-date mobile number so we can text you an appointment reminder and information about when to expect your call.***

## Routine appointments

Are for ongoing monitoring of a condition or a new problem that does not need same-day attention.

If you need a routine appointment, we will contact you within a day or two of your call or online request to allocate an appointment. Please note that this could take longer during busy periods. If your condition gets worse during that time though, don't hesitate to call us.

Whether you call or complete an online request, you will be asked a few brief questions by our care navigator team. Please tell us about your issue so you we can book you in with the clinician who is best placed to deal with your problem, as soon as possible.

## Online Services



Connect to your GP services online and save time. Quick, easy, and secure. You can book, check, or cancel appointments with a GP, nurse or other healthcare professional, order repeat prescriptions, see parts of your health record, including information about medicines, vaccinations and test results, see communications between your GP surgery and other services, such as hospitals.

<https://www.tongmedicalpractice.nhs.uk/online-services/>

# Our extended team of clinicians

Our clinical team doesn't just consist of GPs and Nurses anymore. We have a wide variety of skilled clinicians who can help you – this includes Clinical Pharmacists, Paramedics, Physiotherapists, Mental Health Practitioners, and social prescribers to name a few. We will feature one of our members of the extended team every month... this month it is our Paramedic.

Paramedics are now becoming more commonplace in General practice and are able to help patients with a variety of minor ailments and injuries.

## Patient Group (PG)

The Patient Group, meet a few times a year to support the centre staff and GPs to deliver the best possible service to you – the patient.

We take your views to the staff to ensure needs are met and you have a voice.

Your views are appreciated and welcomed. Why not join us? It's fine if you can't always commit, but you would also gain knowledge of any changes or additions to the service.

If you are interested in joining the Patient Group, please leave your name and contact details at Reception for Helen.

## The NHS App - Haven't got it?

Download it for free here:  
[www.nhs.uk/http://www.nhs.uk/](http://www.nhs.uk/)

Did you know you can order your repeat prescriptions on here?

## Training days coming soon...

### THURSDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER

During this time – if you require a doctor, you can contact the 'Out of Hours' service (Local Care Direct) on 0845 129 4402 or by dialling the surgery number 01274 683331 to be automatically transferred. Alternatively, you can contact the NHS 111 service for health information and advice.

\*Calls to the NHS 111 service are free when calling from a landline or mobile.

## The National Situation

Workload has increased because of growing patient need (more patients have multiple conditions and are more complex) as well the widespread recruitment crisis and a lack of long-term investment in general practice.

**As that workload continues to increase, GP numbers continue to decrease.**

September 2022

## A few facts and figures

The average number of patients that the government recommends for a GP to see / consult with is 25–28 a day. GPs are now seeing an average of 37 patients per day, with one in ten GPs seeing 60 or more patients a day.

There are 1,565 fewer fully qualified full-time GPs in February 2022 compared to 2015 (NHS Digital official figures).

In February 2022 there were a total of 25.7 million appointments – this is 1 million more than in February 2020.

Beyond actual appointments, GPs are also doing a huge amount of work behind the scenes, like referrals, dealing with results, medication etc.

A single GP can easily make over 200 clinical decisions every day – a simple mistake in any one of which could spell disaster for patient and doctor alike.

Whilst we wish the situation was different... we thought it important that we shared this with you as the shortage of GPs affects every one of us, as we are all patients and are registered with GPs and we all need care from a GP at some point in our lives.

Not only that, but GPs and their teams make up most of the contacts in the NHS and their work helps to alleviate pressures on other parts of the NHS. Lack of GPs therefore affects the NHS and affects each and every one of us.

