

Why are GP practices still working differently?



IF THE PANDEMIC IS OVER WHY CAN'T I BOOK A FACE TO FACE GP APPOINTMENT?

The pandemic is not over.

GP Practices are open but are working differently in order to protect patients and staff.

In order to protect the most clinically vulnerable people who are in contact with our health services, some social distancing requirements remain in place.

HOW IS ST AUSTELL HEALTHCARE WORKING NOW?

We are now using a "Telephone First" service.

This allows the team to assess patients over the phone and consider who needs to be seen in person and when a telephone consultation or video may be appropriate. This helps to ensure that everyone gets the type of appointment they need, and that people don't have to travel to the surgery if they don't need to.

In many cases the issue can be as effectively managed with a telephone consultation as a face to face meeting.

If you need to attend the practice for an examination you will be given an appointment.

WHY DO RECEPTION STAFF ASK PERSONAL QUESTIONS?

GP reception staff are vital members of the practice team. The questions they ask are on behalf of the GPs, and they treat all information as confidential.

They ask questions to ensure that patients are directed to the best support, within and outside the practice.

They are trained to ensure patients are seen by the most appropriate member of the practice team, and to ensure GPs can prioritise the patients with the greatest clinical need.

WHY AM I SEEING SOMEONE WHO IS NOT MY GP?

St Austell Healthcare has a team of specialists working along side the GPs.

Our team has widened over recent years and includes Nurses, Healthcare Assistants, Advanced Nurse Practitioners, Nurse Practitioners, Emergency Care Paramedics, Integration Team, Clinical Pharmacists, Physiotherapists, Mental Health Practitioners, Physicians Associates and Social Prescribing Team.

The GPs may decide that your needs can be dealt with more effectively by one of the team members above.

Details of what all the roles are, can be found on our website at [Staff - St Austell Healthcare](#)

WHERE ELSE CAN I GET HELP?

NHS.UK (<https://www.nhs.uk/>) has lots of information to help you to help yourself

Community Pharmacists can help with many common illnesses and can prescribe some medications.

Community Optometrists will advise people with urgent eye complaints.

Community Dentists will manage any dental problems.

WHAT ABOUT EMERGENCIES?

If you have an urgent health issue please contact St Austell Healthcare Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm.

Alternatively if you have an urgent issue and think you need to go to the A&E or Minor Injuries Unit please call 111 day or night.

If you have a life threatening emergency please call 999.

PLEASE BE PATIENT. PLEASE BE KIND.

All our health services are under enormous pressure and our staff are working extremely hard. St Austell Healthcare are open and here if needed. Please work with us to help us ensure you get the right care, in the right place and at the right time by the appropriate health professional for your needs.

Please treat those who are trying to help you with respect and kindness.