

# RWT Primary Care Network

Safe & Effective | Kind & Caring | Exceeding Expectation

April 2021

## The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Primary Care Network Patient Newsletter

### Welcome from our Clinical Director

I am very pleased to inform you the COVID-19 rate in Wolverhampton has reduced. COVID-19 hospital inpatients and admissions are down significantly and we are starting a recovery plan. Work is underway to tackle the waiting lists which have built up as a result of COVID-19 admissions.

Although the improvement is partly due to lockdown, the roll-out of the vaccine programme has had a huge impact and has been very successful for RWT PCN.

Please protect yourself as well as friends, colleagues and family by taking up the offer of the vaccine as soon as you receive your notification.

Many consultations will still be by phone or video, but there will be a return to doing more face to face consultations than we have been doing during the pandemic.

**Please contact the GP practice if you are have worrying symptoms or you are struggling with your mental health.**

The team at RWT PCN are working on a number of shared services to ensure you are able to access everything you need, wherever you need it. This will include a centralised service for joint injections and sexual health; contraception advice as well as coil and implant fitting.

We are aware that there are issues with delays in answering the phone in the practices but the PCN are investing in a modern, responsive and versatile phone system across all our practices which will greatly improve the service we are able to provide to you.



Take care,

**Dr John Burrell**  
Clinical Director of RWT PCS/PCN

### Oximetry at Home Virtual Pathway

Within Wolverhampton we have developed a new service to support you at home if you have tested positive for COVID-19.

The purpose of this service is to monitor you virtually whilst at home by using an oxygen saturation probe which monitors your oxygen levels and heart rate.

Each patient will be shown how to use their device and will receive up to three calls per day for 14 days from the nursing team to obtain your readings and offer you any reassurance / support required.

If you are a patient over the age of 50 and have tested positive for COVID-19 or are aged under 50 but have a clinical need / underlying health conditions and you have a Wolverhampton GP, a referral can be made by yourself, your GP, the Emergency Department, 111 or West Midlands Ambulance Service.

Your daily check-ins may be done by phone call, a technology app and / or video consultation, which will be discussed and agreed with you.

At day 14, as long as you are stable and showing continued improvement, you will be discharged from the service and a discharge notification will be sent to your GP.

## Virtual COVID-19 Ward pathway

Along with the Oximetry at Home Service above, Wolverhampton Adult Community Services have launched a virtual COVID ward to support New Cross Hospital with a step-down service to facilitate an earlier discharge home from a hospital stay.

The purpose of this ward will be to enable stepdown patients who still require active COVID-19 treatment such as oxygen, steroids, antibiotics and / or enoxaparin during your recovery period. If you are discharged from hospital and are referred into this service, you will be monitored daily by our Community Hospital at Home Team, who will monitor oxygen saturation levels and pulse using an oxygen SATs probe with the objective of safely weaning you off oxygen.

You will be monitored for 14 days and can be stepped down to Oximetry at Home, if further virtual monitoring is felt to be required.

## Urgent Treatment Centre and GP Out of Hours service at New Cross Hospital

The Urgent Treatment Centre and GP Out of Hours service at New Cross Hospital is now provided by The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT).

The service, which is delivered by Vocare, is available for anyone who has an illness or injury that is not life-threatening but too urgent to wait for a routine appointment with their GP.

By transferring the facility to RWT it will ultimately result in patients being seen quickly by the most appropriate medical professional.

Patients will continue to have access to a team of highly-skilled GPs and specialist nurses, who are experienced at diagnosing and treating a wide range of minor injuries and illnesses. For example, they can treat sprains, burns, bites or stings, assess and treat wounds and request x-rays.

**For more information, please go to:**

<https://www.royalwolverhampton.nhs.uk/services/urgent-and-out-of-hours-care/>

## Your GP Practice is here for you

Your local NHS in the Black Country and West Birmingham is still here for you, but how you access our services has changed due to COVID-19.

If you are feeling unwell or if you have any health symptoms that you are worried about, please contact us online through this website or call us in the first instance. You can no longer walk-in to your GP practice without an appointment.

If advice and treatment is not possible through an online triage or a telephone consultation, a face-to-face appointment will be arranged for you.

Local GPs are currently supporting the COVID-19 response in many ways and our resources are limited. Our GPs and practice staff will advise you on the best treatment and whether it is required at this time, as we try to ensure that those in most urgent need get the care they need as a priority. This may mean you

need to wait a little longer than usual for treatment but if you have any concerns please talk to us.

We are open and fully operational, but these measures have been put in place to maintain and control social distancing and to keep local people and NHS staff safe.

If you are suffering a serious or life-threatening emergency, please call 999 immediately.



## Dedicated support line for Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) patients

The number for the line is 01902 694077 and is run by the IBD Nurse. It should be your first port of call if you have any concerns, questions or worries about your illness. The number will go straight to an answer phone so please leave your name, date of birth, hospital number (if you have one) and best contact number. The messages are picked up daily and we aim to return your call within one to two working days.

Calls will be returned between the hours of 10:00am and 4:00pm Monday to Friday. If you need urgent advice outside of these times, contact your GP practice for their emergency service. Please let the IBD team know if this is the case.

There will be occasions when the IBD support line will be switched off due to leave, there will be a message informing you of this and messages will not be able to be left during these times. Advice will be given in this message on who to contact during this period.

## IBD Email

If you would prefer to ask anything via email, please email [rwh-tr.IBDSupportRWHT@nhs.net](mailto:rwh-tr.IBDSupportRWHT@nhs.net). These messages are only accessed by the IBD Nurse and are looked at on a daily basis. Please be aware the Trust is not able to guarantee the security of emails outside of the Trust network. Please bear this in mind when including personal information in your email.

**For more information, please visit:**

<https://www.royalwolverhampton.nhs.uk/services/service-directory-a-z/gastroenterology/inflammatory-bowel-disease/>

## Urgent Notice to All Patients

Please ensure your records are up to date with your GP practice, including your mobile / landline number and your email address as many of our communication channels are dependent on this and we are keen to keep you up to date with all of our current service offers.



# How to get your COVID-19 vaccination

There are three ways you might be contacted to get your vaccination. Please do not try to book a vaccination if you have not received a letter.

**1 Using a local GP service:** GP services are working together in your area to vaccinate as many people as possible. You may be contacted by a different surgery to the one you usually go to.

**2 Local hospital services:** You might be contacted to have the vaccination as an inpatient or outpatient.

**3 At a vaccination centre:** If you live within 30 to 45 minutes of a vaccination centre, and haven't already been vaccinated, you may have received a letter asking you to book an appointment online at [www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination](http://www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination). Or if you can't access the NHS website you can **call 119 free of charge**.

If you can't travel to a vaccination centre, or there is another reason you can't book an appointment at the nearest vaccination centre, you can choose to wait until your local GP services contact you if they haven't already. If this is your preferred option – you don't need to do anything now – wait for your GP service to make contact. More locations will become available through [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) or 119 in the coming weeks so you could also try there again later.

If you receive a letter and already have an appointment booked to have your vaccination at a local GP service please ignore the letter. There is nothing you need to do and please attend your appointment.

**If you have had your first jab, you will be contacted about getting your second.**

For more information visit: [www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination](http://www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination)

**For all the up-to-date news and information follow us on;**



**@RWT\_PrimaryCare**



**@RWTNHS**



**rwt\_nhs**

You can also find out more information about our services by going to: [www.royalwolverhampton.nhs.uk/about-us/primary-care/](http://www.royalwolverhampton.nhs.uk/about-us/primary-care/)