

## **Further information on Appointment System Changes:**

From Wednesday 1st October 2025, East Park Medical Centre will be introducing a new triage system for all patient GP appointment requests.

This means that instead of calling at 8am to book, all patients will now be asked to complete an online medical triage form. The form will be reviewed by a GP, who will decide the most appropriate next step for your care and ensure you are seen in the right place, at the right time, by the most appropriate professional.

### **1. Why are we changing our booking system?**

Before now, we know patients faced the '8am scramble' to get through on the phones to book an appointment, so it worked on a first come, first-served basis. When patients eventually got through, they often found that appointments were already full and were therefore asked to call back the next day. This system also didn't suit patients who were unable to call us at 8am.

We agreed the new system would support all patients to access their GP practice fairly and more easily. The new triage system has been designed to allow for easier access to our healthcare professionals, ensuring that requests are assessed by a GP and patients are directed to the right clinician, at the right time.

### **2. When will the triage form be open?**

**Medical queries:** 8:00am-6:30pm, Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays)

**Administrative queries:** 8:00am-6:30pm, Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays)

### **3. How quickly will I get a response?**

All medical requests submitted via the form will be reviewed by a GP and actioned within 48 hours Monday-Friday (excluding Bank Holidays).

Life threatening emergency requests should **NOT** be submitted via the form - please use 999 or NHS 111 for urgent health concerns.

### **4. Can I use the form for non-medical or admin queries?**

Yes. Patients are encouraged to use AccuRx for:

- Requesting repeat prescriptions
- Requesting sick notes (fit notes)

This saves you time waiting on the phone and helps us respond more efficiently.

### **5. What does this mean for patients?**

ALL patients will be required to complete the online patient medical triage form at a convenient time for them. This will be submitted to the practice and triaged by a GP. The GP will decide the most appropriate clinician for your needs and the urgency of your appointment, ensuring that you are seen in a timely and safe way.

### **6. Do I need a log in for AccuRx to submit a medical form?**

There is no log in required to submit a request via AccuRx. Simply go to our homepage on our website, click on "Submit a new request" on the AccuRx banner and answer the questions on the form. You can fill the form in for yourself or on behalf of someone else.

### **7. What happens if I call the surgery to request an appointment?**

From Wednesday 1st October 2025, all administrative staff will **NOT** be able to directly book or override appointments for any patients. All patients will need to complete a medical triage form, which will then be reviewed by a GP.

### **8. What happens after I submit the form?**

Once the GP has received your medical triage form, they will determine the most appropriate outcome for your needs. This could be:

**An appointment within 24-48 hours:** if they feel you need to be seen urgently.

**An appointment within 2 weeks**

**For appointments bookable within 24-48 hours:** Firstly, you will receive acknowledgement message from the GP who has triaged your request. One of our reception team members will then call you to book you an appointment at a time that is convenient for you.

**For appointments bookable within 2 weeks:** You will be sent a text by the GP with a booking link, allowing you to choose a suitable time.

*If you require an interpreter, please do not book your own appointment online. Call the practice instead so we can arrange this for you.*

### **9. How do I submit the form if I don't have internet access or struggle with technology?**

We understand not everyone will be able to complete the form themselves.

You can either:

- Ask a family member or trusted friend to complete it on your behalf.
- Call our reception team, who will be happy to help explain the process or submit the form for you.

### **10. Will I still see a doctor?**

As every request will be reviewed by a GP, the GP will determine the most appropriate healthcare professional or pathway for your needs.

This makes the system more efficient and safer, as your request is assessed by a clinician.

Many health concerns can be dealt with effectively by other members of our healthcare team. At East Park Medical Centre, our teams includes:

- Pharmacy Technicians
- Pharmacists
- Social Prescriber
- Practice Nurses
- First Contact Physiotherapist (FCP)
- Physician Assistant

Patients may also be referred externally or advised to access services such as, but not limited to:

- Podiatry (foot problems)

- Opticians (eye/vision problems)
- Community pharmacy (minor illnesses such as coughs, colds, UTIs, rashes, sore throats, bites, back pain, some infections, and antibiotics)
- Local mental health services
- Eye Casualty
- Dentist

This ensures you receive the right care, at the right time, by the right professional.

#### **11. Do I need to give details about my health on the form?**

Yes, we encourage all patients to provide as much information as possible so your request can be processed efficiently by a GP.

We understand some information may be sensitive. If you are uncomfortable sharing certain details, our team will support you. If we require more information, we will contact you directly by phone or text.

#### **PLEASE NOTE:**

The new process outlined above will only be for GP appointments.

Please continue to contact the Surgery for other appointments, such as, but not limited to:

- Smear tests
- Blood tests
- Annual reviews
- Immunisations