

Provision of services at The Wharfedale Clinic during the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Outbreak

Following enquiries by patients and some of our independent practitioners, I am writing to clarify the clinic's position on service provision. The decision we have arrived at is based on the following two pieces of information, which is clearly subject to change and we continue to monitor government advice closely.

1. Our services are NOT listed on the government's website of the businesses that have been asked to close.
2. The NHS has said that "We have a responsibility to ensure that essential musculoskeletal care continues with minimal burden on the NHS"

All of our practitioners are independent so each has reached a decision about the restructuring of their services having considered available advice from their professional bodies as well as their own personal circumstances.

We are also aware that if everyone closes their service, patients who are in acute/severe pain may, in desperation, go to A&E if they are unable to access care in the community. This would put patients at greater risk and would, contrary to NHS requests, increase the burden on our hospitals. For this reason, some of our practitioners will continue to operate a reduced face to face service for those patients in greatest need. In other words, subject to strict conditions, they will continue to provide services to those who would struggle if the management of their condition was delayed.

Practitioners providing a reduced face to face service are:

- Dr Martyn Speight (Musculoskeletal Medicine Physician)
Dr Speight will offer face to face appointments where the clinical need dictates but will also be supporting existing patients with less severe conditions via telephone consultations.
- Bob Longworth (Podiatrist)
Again, Bob is happy to continue a face to face service for those in greatest need.

Practitioners who will NOT be offering a face to face service are:

- Juliana Samson (Physiotherapist)
Juliana will continue to provide her services through telephone and Skype consultations until further notice. (Please contact the clinic for details)
- Amy O'Halloran (Osteopath)
Amy has decided to close her practice until after Easter when she will review the situation.

How we will be managing the reduced face to face service

Our priority is to keep both patients and staff safe so we will be implementing the following:

- (i) We will be spacing patient's appointments further apart to reduce patient's exposure to one another and we will be rearranging our waiting room to comply with social distancing advice for people to stay 2 metres apart. We can allow a maximum of two people in the waiting area at any one time.
- (ii) We will be cleaning all patient contact points between patients, not only in the clinical rooms, but throughout all public areas to include equipment, seats, treatment couches and vinyl pillows, door handles and bathroom fittings etc.
- (iii) It impossible to perform social distancing whilst carrying out clinical examinations but strict infection control measures will be adhered to, to reduce the risk to both patient and practitioner.

What we ask of our patients

- (i) Consider your clinical need and your vulnerability risk to the Covid-19 virus (i.e. your age and any underlying health conditions). If you feel that you could reasonably delay a face to face appointment and manage your condition at home, please do so. Staying at home is the safest option for everyone.
- (ii) Please consider the SAFETY of our staff. DO NOT ATTEND IF:
 - (a) You have been diagnosed with Covid-19 or if you have any symptoms which could be due to this virus, or

- (b) If you have knowingly been in close contact with another person, either diagnosed with this illness or displaying possible symptoms.

Please note: We will be waiving all late cancellation fees. If a patient develops symptoms of Covid-19, the last thing we want is for them to attend an appointment for fear of being charged a late cancellation fee.

- (iii) We have a no-touch dispenser containing alcohol based hand sanitiser in the reception area for patients to use on entry to the building and on exit. Please use it.

SUMMARY:

We have a duty of care to all of our existing patients and we are also committed to the continuation of essential services. If you have any questions or concerns about your care, please do not hesitate to contact us on:

Tel: 01943 850950 or by email at admin@wharfedaleclinic.co.uk and we will do our best to help.

Thank you for your co-operation and understanding at this difficult time.

Lisa Speight, Practice Manager