

Why are GP Practices Working Differently: General Practice Communications Toolkit

October 2021

Due to the pandemic, practices have had to adapt the way they work and how services are provided in order to keep both patients and staff safe.

To support local GP practice staff and help stem the ongoing criticisms and the worrying rise of physical and verbal abuse, we have developed this communications toolkit that contains a number of resources that we hope you will find useful.

Firstly, we want to make it clear that the NHS in mid and south Essex takes a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and aggression towards our staff and our patients. All staff have a right to work in a safe environment.

Last night, the Government and NHS England announced a plan to work with the trade unions and the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges to launch a zero-tolerance campaign on abuse of NHS staff. We will be keeping an eye out and sharing any resulting communications and hope these materials will prove to be a useful resource in the interim.

Important: Please ensure that you report all incidents of abuse that threaten staff safety and wellbeing to: meccg.msejc.si@nhs.net.

Links to existing zero tolerance resources

Please visit [this website](#) to locate existing resources that can be used to support your practices' zero tolerance policies.

Please note: new national materials are also expected.

Staff health and wellbeing support and training

All health and care staff in Essex can receive support by calling **Here For You**. You can call them 24/7 to confidentially talk through any problems you're facing, whatever they may be on 0344 257 3960.

Here For You also has a range of additional support options. Visit <https://www.hereforyou.info> to find out more.

We are currently looking to set up some training specifically for practices in mid and south Essex to support practice staff in de-escalation techniques to support and empower those involved having to deal with people who are angry or frustrated.

Communications resources

To support the understanding of primary care currently, the Mid and South Essex Partnership has produced a suite of materials to help explain and address why GP practices are continuing to work differently. This is in response to ongoing patient need and public perceptions about the ways in which primary care continues to operate. The aim is to explain why practices are working differently and what is being done to support patients, to help stem some of the frustrations that people have.

We encourage practices to use these as appropriate on their websites and across other channels such as social media. The mid and south Essex communications team will also be sharing these through social media and exploring paid for adverts in local newspapers, in line with local resident feedback. These have been developed based on insight from local people and a behavioural specialist.

We have launched a [new webpage for this campaign](#) to give residents information about additional ways to access support, explain why access to services has changed, and answer some of the common questions they may have. Please signpost people to this page when using the below campaign materials. You may also wish to use this information on your own GP practice website.

Social media graphics and copy:

Graphic	Suggested copy for social media
 <p>The graphic is a teal square with the NHS logo in the top right. On the left, there is a white bar with the text 'GP services remain very busy, delivering more appointments than ever before'. Below this, there is a white bar with the text 'We are sorry to hear experiences of people struggling to get through on the telephone. If you need to see someone in person, you still can.' followed by 'We appreciate your patience during this difficult period.' and the URL 'www.msehealthandcarepartnership.co.uk/gps'.</p>	<p>Our practice is very busy delivering more appointments than ever before.</p> <p>We're sorry if you have had trouble getting through to speak with us on the phone. If you need to see one of our team in person, you still can.</p> <p>www.msehealthandcarepartnership.co.uk/gps</p>



  <p>If you need to see someone in person, you still can</p>  <p>To keep you and everyone else safe, GP practice teams may need to do an initial assessment over the phone first. This helps give you the type of appointment you need ▶</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be seen in person • a phone consultation • a video consultation • help from your local pharmacy <p>www.msehealthandcarepartnership.co.uk/gps</p>	<p>If you need to see someone in person, you still can.</p> <p>An initial phone assessment keeps you and others safe. This helps give you the type of appointment you need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  seen in person  phone consultation  video consultation  help from a local pharmacy <p>Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.</p>
  <p>"I can visit a nightclub, why not my GP?"</p>  <p>While it's true that large numbers can now visit pubs, nightclubs and sports grounds - how many invite very sick people, many of them elderly and living with a number of long-term illnesses, into a confined space at the same time?</p> <p>We want to keep you and everyone else safe.</p> <p>www.msehealthandcarepartnership.co.uk/gps</p>	<p>We want to keep you and everyone else safe.</p> <p>Whilst large numbers can now visit pubs, nightclubs and sports grounds - how many invite very sick people, many of them elderly and living with long-term illnesses, into a confined space?</p> <p>www.msehealthandcarepartnership.co.uk/gps</p>
  <p>"Why do I need to give personal information to receptionists at GP surgeries?"</p>  <p>The information you give will ensure you get the right care, in the right way, by the right professional. All staff operate according to strict guidelines and work under clinical supervision. You can trust them to treat all information confidentially.</p> <p>www.msehealthandcarepartnership.co.uk/gps</p>	<p>Our receptionists play an important role in helping to ensure you get the right care, in the right way, by the right professional.</p> <p>All staff operate according to strict guidelines, and you can trust them to treat all information confidentially.</p> <p>www.msehealthandcarepartnership.co.uk/gps</p>



  <p>More staff are now working in GP practices to help care for you</p>  <p>Many GP practices now include a range of professionals, e.g. physiotherapists, paramedics and mental health professionals, who can diagnose and treat a range of health conditions and make sure you get the support you need more quickly.</p> <p>www.msehealthandcarepartnership.co.uk/gps</p>	<p>We now have more staff working in our practice to help care for you. These include [INSERT NEW ROLES AVAILABLE IN YOUR PRACTICE / PCN], who can diagnose and treat a range of health conditions.</p> <p>This means you can get the support you need more quickly.</p> <p>www.msehealthandcarepartnership.co.uk/gps</p>
  <p>Did you know...</p> <p>You don't need to call your GP practice to order repeat prescriptions.</p> <p>You can now do this online or through the NHS App.</p> <p>Download it today at www.nhs.uk/app</p> 	<p>Did you know... you don't need to call us to order repeat prescriptions. You can do this safely and securely using the NHS APP.</p> <p>Find out more about the NHS App and download it today at www.nhs.uk/app</p>
  <p>Did you know...</p> <p>You don't need to call your GP practice to get information about the COVID-19 vaccination programme.</p>  <p>You can visit: www.essexcovidvaccine.nhs.uk</p>	<p>Did you know... you don't need to call us to get information about the COVID-19 vaccination programme.</p> <p>You can find out information about the rollout and booster vaccinations, details on local walk-in clinics and reassurances on vaccine safety at https://www.essexcovidvaccine.nhs.uk</p>



  <p>Did you know...</p> <p>You don't need to call your GP practice to get advice about lots of common ailments. Your local pharmacist can give FREE confidential advice.</p> 	<p>Did you know...you don't need to call us to get advice about lots of common ailments. Your local pharmacist can give FREE confidential advice.</p> <p>You can find more information about your nearest pharmacy on the NHS website here: https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/</p>
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Reminder: a new [IPC communications toolkit](#) has also recently been developed to reiterate the ongoing need for masks and infection prevention measures in GP practices.

We hope that you find these resources helpful and thank you for your tireless efforts to meet the unrelenting demands being placed on GP services.