

Appointment System Policy

Northlands Wood operates an appointment system for seeing a GP or Practice Nurse. We do not operate a 'walk in' clinic at any time except for seasonal flu clinics, generally held in October each year.

Protocol for booking appointments with GP

1. Each appointment with a GP is for 10 minutes which is usually sufficient for the doctor to deal with one medical problem. If you have multiple medical problems that you wish to discuss, the doctor may ask you to make a further appointment.
2. An appointment is for one person only. If there are other members of the family who need to see a doctor, they must make a separate appointment.
3. Patients may make an appointment to see any of the doctors. Although we will do our best to offer appointments with the doctor of choice, this may not always be possible.
4. The receptionist will ask the reason for the appointment. This is the doctor's request in order to give an indication of the medical problem and in case it is best dealt with by another team member eg specialist nurse. It is not obligatory for a reason to be given.
5. GPs are not able to make appointments for patients. Follow up appointments must be made through reception.
6. Patients may book an appointment by
 - a. Phoning the practice on 01444 458022
 - b. In person at the desk
 - c. By logging onto the EMIS Access website (pre-bookable appointments only and password required)
7. GP appointments are released for booking in three phases as stipulated by the Department of Health:
 - a. Pre-bookable appointments can be booked up to one month in advance
 - b. 48 hour appointments may be booked within 48 hours of the appointment date
 - c. On the day appointments can only be booked on the same day
8. Pre-bookable appointments are for routine, non-urgent matters. There are some available for each doctor at each surgery. We also operate extended hours surgeries on some Saturday mornings and one late evening per month, for pre-bookable appointments only.
9. 48 hour appointments are for patients who need to see a doctor quickly, but not necessarily on the same day. There are some available for each doctor most days.

10. Same day appointments are for patients who need to see a doctor that day. These appointment slots make up the majority of available appointments for each doctor.

11. Telephone consultations are available each day with each doctor, for patients who need to speak to a doctor for advice or guidance, but don't need to see the doctor. These appointments are 5 minute slots at the end of morning surgery, and the doctor will phone the patient when the surgery is finished.

12. If all the appointments for the day have been filled, and a GP appointment is urgently needed, an extra appointment will be added after the morning surgery. This will only happen after all the appointments are filled. The patient will be seen by one of the doctors on duty that day, but not a specific doctor.

13. If a patient is too ill to attend the surgery, but wishes to see a doctor, a GP will phone the patient, and make alternative arrangements, which may mean a home visit if appropriate. Home visits are generally made after morning surgery or before evening surgery.

14. Surgery times for each doctor vary so that appointments are available throughout the morning and afternoon wherever possible.

15. There may be times when the doctor has to deal with complex or emergency situation and the clinic subsequently runs late. Whilst we make every effort to run on time, we cannot always achieve this.

16. Patients who arrive late for their appointment forfeit their appointment with the doctor. It is at the doctor's discretion whether late arrivals can be seen, and although we make every effort to do so, this cannot be guaranteed. Receptionists are unable to decide on behalf of the doctor.

17. Patients often do not need to see a doctor for blood pressure checks, blood tests, ear syringing, or chronic disease reviews. Please ask the receptionist for an appropriate nurse or phlebotomist appointment.

18. Clinics for minor operations are pre-bookable through reception.

Protocol for booking appointments with a Nurse, HCA or Phlebotomist

The same protocols apply to booking an appointment with a Practice Nurse, Health Care Assistant or Phlebotomist, with the following exceptions:

1. Appointments are of varying length according to the type of appointment required. The receptionists know how long is required for different procedures and will book you an appropriate slot.

2. Nurse appointments are available to book at any time.