

Autumn
2021



MASWELL PARK
HEALTH CENTRE

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KINGFISHER PRACTICE

The Kingfisher Practice

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Dr. Simran Dehal & Dr. Tina Rajapakse*

Dear Patients,

First and foremost, we hope everyone is continuing to adopt the now well-known common-sense measures to avoid getting Covid. It certainly isn't going away, and we are still having patients quite unwell, and going into hospital.

Covid.

We are keen to proceed with Covid booster (3rd) vaccination, which is starting in the next few weeks, and we have started the annual flu vaccines for all over 50s and vulnerable groups already, as well as nasal flu vaccine for under 6ys. You will be called for your Covid 3rd vaccination, which has to be at least 6 months after your second one. It will be Pfizer or Moderna, and we will be working down the age cohorts much as we did in the first wave, in co-operation with other local practices. You might either choose to have your flu vaccine soon, in the practice and attend for your covid vaccine separately when called, or have the 2 vaccines together in the vaccine centre, but this won't be at Maswell Park.

IT IS EASIER TO CONTACT YOU IF WE HAVE YOUR UP TO DATE MOBILE PHONE AND EMAIL. Please let us have these if you haven't done so already.

If you are over 16, and have not yet had your 2 doses of vaccine, we urge you to do so. You can book via 119, or visit any of the walk-in centres, see www.nhs.uk/coronavirus All of our practice staff have received their vaccine!

NHSE has now decided to proceed to vaccinate 12-15-year olds with one dose of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. This age group develop a very good immune response so one dose is deemed sufficient. The NHS website has information so please have a look. A reminder that 1 in 10 children might suffer prolonged symptoms after covid. It isn't always a 'minor illness'. 'Side effects' after covid vaccination are uncommon, and much less common than persistent symptoms after getting covid! Although it can be argued that health benefits for this age group are marginal, we also need to consider the enormous disruption to young peoples' education and social development. A good uptake in the secondary school population will help to avoid repetition of last year's school closures, and avoid catching, and spreading this unpleasant illness.

Making an appointment.

Despite much negative media misinformation, we want to stress, we ARE open, we WANT to be seeing patients in the practice, as well as consulting by phone if appropriate.

You can choose whether you wish to be seen face to face, whether you would prefer a phone-call, or maybe a video if appropriate. You can book by phoning reception, or, from the beginning of October we will be opening up some appointments for on-line booking. We will assume an on-line booking is for face to face, unless you state otherwise in your booking information.

If attending the health centre, please continue mask-wearing on entry, and if you have any symptoms that might be covid related, please speak on the phone first. IF ANY DOUBT PLEASE BOOK A PCR TEST, on line via <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>, or by calling 119

There is also e-consult. (see website) We want to stress, this is NOT for potentially urgent problems such as chest pain, abdominal pain, feverish children, etc. It is best used for simple 'one question' type problems such as needing renewal of a certificate. Repeat prescriptions should not be requested on e-consult, as the response might be delayed, but via the on-line repeat prescription channel.

We have two new GP registrars who started 3rd August, Dr Tome Andonov, and Dr Priyanka Thapa. Our new receptionists, Reuben, Eva and Courtney are settling in well. We also have new health care assistant, Ravi. It has been a steep learning curve for all new staff members. They do a challenging job! Welcome to all.

Blood bottles

We share everyone's frustration at this unprecedented mess-up, just as we were making inroads catching up with annual reviews etc. If you are on high risk medication such as rheumatoid arthritis drugs, or have serious conditions requiring frequent monitoring you CAN have your blood test. We are just in the situation at the moment where non-urgent ones have to wait a bit longer. We apologise on behalf of NHSE!

Routine Repeat Prescriptions

Please use the on-line system via website, or in writing. We are now reverting to not taking requests over the phone unless prior agreement for very elderly housebound, or palliative care situations.

Bone joint muscle tendon problems etc.

We have a First Contact Physiotherapist whom you can consult about such problems, so please tell reception if you feel this would be more appropriate than speaking to a GP. This is primarily for advice and not a hands-on service, but referrals on to secondary care can be done if necessary.

Diabetes group consultations.

This is a new venture hopefully getting started soon, and has been shown to improve outcomes and motivation to persevere with the difficult lifestyle changes. Let us know if you might be interested.

Patient participation Group

David Loftus, who has been chair of the Maswell Park PPG since its inception, is now relocating to another part of the UK so will be stepping down. We thank him for all his hard work over the years, and wish him and his wife well. We hope that some of the successful ventures, such as the health walks, and encouraging people to volunteer in community matters, will resume at some point.

Finally!

Some advantages of 'remote consulting' which has developed during the pandemic.

We can text you with information on conditions, documents including medical certificates and letters. You can text us a reply if we ask for one. You can text a photo of a skin problem for example, or of your home blood pressure diary, and much more. Low carbon footprint and no parking problem.

Great advantages of face to face consultations remain however. Especially for elderly, people struggling with hearing or language difficulties, people with one or more long term conditions, mental health issues, and memory problems.

We continue to offer both!

Best wishes

From all the clinical and admin staff



If you would like to make constructive comments about the services we offer log on to NHS Choices website and enter the practice postcode
TW3 2DY
and then select the appropriate practice.



NHS 111 is a service that's been introduced to make it easier for you to access local NHS healthcare services. You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is a fast and easy way to get the right help, whatever the time.

Why can't I get a prescription for an over-the-counter medicine?

Your GP, nurse or pharmacist will generally not give you a prescription for over-the-counter (OTC) medicines for a range of minor health conditions. The team of health professionals at your local pharmacy can offer help and clinical advice to manage minor health concerns. If your symptoms suggest it's more serious, they'll ensure you get the care you need.

The NHS currently spends around £136 million a year on prescriptions for medicines that can be bought from a pharmacy or supermarket, such as Paracetamol and hayfever medicines. By reducing the amount it spends on OTC medicines, the NHS can give priority to treatments for people with more serious conditions, such as cancer, diabetes and mental health problems.

Shingles

A vaccine to prevent shingles, a common, painful skin disease is available on the NHS to people in their 70s. The shingles vaccine is expected to reduce your risk of getting shingles. If you do go on to have the disease, your symptoms may be milder and the illness shorter.

Shingles can be very painful and uncomfortable. Some people are left with pain lasting for years after the initial rash has healed. Shingles is also fatal for around 1 in 1,000 over-70s who develop it. It's fine to have the shingles vaccine if you've already had shingles. The shingles vaccine works very well in people who have had shingles before and it will boost your immunity against further shingles attacks.

Pneumovax

If you're 65 or over, you should be offered a type of pneumococcal vaccine. This one-off vaccination is very effective at protecting you against serious forms of pneumococcal infection.

