



Water Meadow Surgery

10 December 2025

Winter Pressures

Like all other GP practices, we are struggling to keep up with increased demand.

Requests for appointments have been increasing steadily in number these past few years.

This is made worse by the current upsurge in the number of young and old patients with winter illnesses.

We have been trying very hard to provide all of our patients an appointment within two weeks, where it is non-urgent, or on the same day (or next), where it is urgent.

However, with the current number of patients presenting with more urgent illness, this is severely affecting our ability to meet our two-week wait target, so we are currently fully booked – we only have enough appointments to cope with the more urgent cases.

This means that we may not be able to offer you an appointment at the moment for some routine conditions, and we ask that, where you can, you delay your request or at least be patient with our response.

Please do not unnecessarily submit urgent requests for non-urgent appointments, as this could affect our ability to treat those who need it the most.

We understand that this can be frustrating, but please bear with us for the next couple of weeks or so until we can put additional measures in place in January to provide extra appointments.

Our Diversified Services

We remain committed to providing the best care for you to manage long term health problems whilst having access to health services when you need it. To assist us we have employed some additional roles to assist our doctors.

Paramedic:

Toni works Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and provides face-to-face appointments for infections and minor illnesses, and also home visits to housebound patients, and children's vaccinations.

Clinical Pharmacist:

Tahir, who works remotely on Monday, Tuesday and Friday provides medication reviews, advice on medication and possible side effects, reviews of certain medicines such as blood thinners. He has a wealth of experience and can advise you on your medicines.

First Contact Practitioner:

Gina works on Thursday and Friday and provides assessment and advice on musculoskeletal problems such as back pain and joint pains. She can also refer on for investigations if it is appropriate. **She cannot assess an acute injury that may need an X-ray the same day;** you should attend A&E.

Admin requests

There is now a central point for you to make requests where you can choose between

- Fit note request
- Medication request
- Test result request.
- Letter request for non-NHS care e.g.
- Admin (miscellaneous) request

Please do not use the Admin request form for clinical matters

Appointment System

Our system for requesting GP appointments has been a great success.

Of course, some will not like the changes, but that is true of any system. Unfortunately, there is no such thing as a perfect system; if there were, every practice would be using it. We just have to accept that we will not please everyone, much as we would like to.

The system is being used by old and young alike, although lots of 'young' patients are still refusing to use the online system -more about this later.

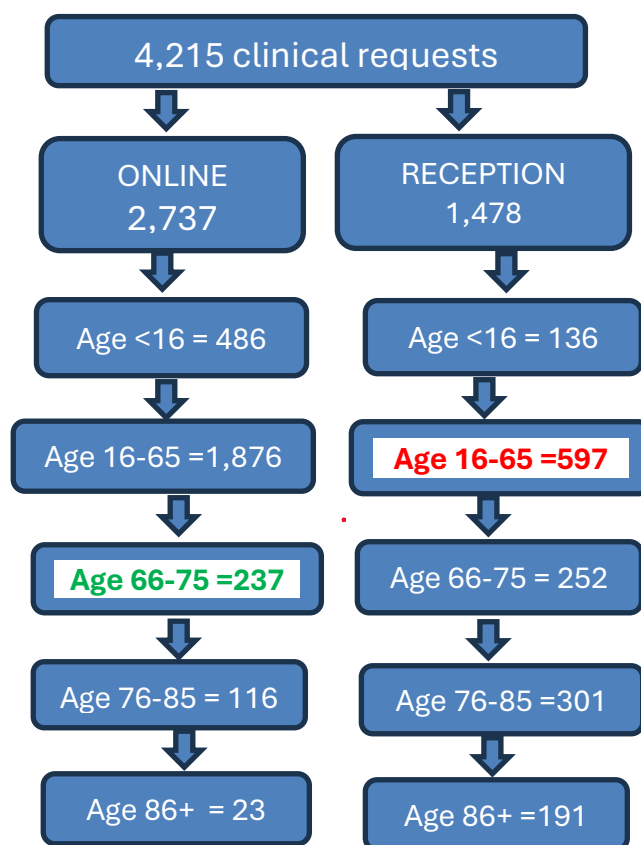
Objectives

The purpose of the new system was to help improve access to care with these specific aims

1. To ensure that those patients who need to be seen by a doctor the same day would.
2. To be able to provide everyone with an appointment within two-weeks
3. To ensure that those who need to see a GP could, and those who could be treated by another healthcare would.
4. To ensure that all requests for a GP appointment are seen and triaged by one of our doctors

Not everyone who asks to see a GP needs to. It is important that we ensure that those who do can. To do this, some patients will be referred to see another qualified healthcare professional. This helps free up GP time for more doctor-oriented consultations.

Who is using the new system Oct & Nov 25?



Average number of requests by day

| Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 187 | 133 | 123 | 119 | 116 |



Wow! 376 patients over 65 managed to fill out a form online, the oldest of which was 98



Whereas 597 younger 16-65 year olds registered their requests by contacting our reception team!

Come on, you youngsters, that's an awful lot of phone queuing. Lots of you must have access to online, either a smartphone, iPad or computer. Let's leave the phone lines for those who genuinely need it most.

However, if you genuinely don't have access to a smartphone or tablet or computer, or you just do not feel able (NOT can't be bothered), we are happy to help.

