

SHOTFIELD MEDICAL PRACTICE (SMP)

The Process for Emergency Appointments on the Day

Shotfield Medical Practice employs a Physician's Associate (see separate leaflet available from reception or on our website for more information about this role) and we want to ensure all of our clinician's valuable time is used appropriately and effectively and that the workload is shared fairly.

For routine matters, we would encourage you to see the same clinician, if you can for long term issues. In the case of an emergency, to ensure you are seen by an appropriate clinician as quickly as possible; consequently this may not be your preferred choice, but in urgent situations this should not matter. If you prefer to see a male/female for your personal requirements we will also try to accommodate this if we can but again we cannot guarantee it.

For genuine emergency requirements, we encourage patients to telephone as early in the day as possible and preferably before 10am, and we will always ensure you are spoken to or seen by a clinician during that morning. For genuine emergencies we do not normally defer items to the afternoon. If the urgency has arisen later in the day we again ask patients to call us as early as possible so the matter can be appropriately triaged, prioritised and if necessary referred to the duty doctor where necessary. We would not normally defer urgent matters to the next day.

In future most patients who contact us in the morning will be added to a telephone triage list and will receive a call back from a suitable clinician. This will usually be the Physician's Associate (PA) and sometimes one of the GPs and this call back will usually take place between 8.30am and 11.00am. The clinician will assess the symptoms to see if the urgent issue can be dealt with in one of a number of ways. This also means the patient will need to provide us with a suitable telephone number to call them back at that time and will need to give the receptionist a brief idea of what the urgent issue is for that day.

When the telephone triage takes place, the clinician may give appropriate telephone advice; arrange to issue a prescription for collection or the patient may be asked to subsequently attend later that morning. If the patient is given an appointment to attend they may be seen by one of the GPs or they may be seen by the PA or Senior Nurse (if it's deemed appropriate).

A similar process now also operates in the afternoon where a telephone triage process is undertaken usually between 2 and 4pm.

The emergency appointment offered is **not** a firm appointment time although a guide for a time to attend will be given but there may be a delay depending on the numbers overall that day and prioritisation of particularly urgent matters, however, we will do our best to keep any delay to a minimum. An emergency appointment on the day is a short appointment for dealing with that specific urgent issue only and is not an opportunity to deal with other issues or items that are ongoing and long term; these should be referred to a normal routine appointment when more time is available. Please see our separate information sheet on 'what is an emergency appointment'.

We hope you will find this information useful and that your experience of the emergency on the day procedure will be a more positive one in future should you require it. Our aim is to ensure patients who have genuine urgent issues on the day are dealt with appropriately and quickly.

The Practice Manager (September 2014)
HS – Jan 2019