

Dear Patient,

Thank you for bringing your concerns about your health problems to our attention during this difficult time.

The government has advised that everyone (no matter their health conditions) should limit social contact and maintain social distancing.

Those with further health concerns or are defined as 'Clinically Extremely Vulnerable' should minimise contact as much as possible.

#### What is the definition of someone who is Clinically Extremely Vulnerable?

This is defined in 2 ways:

- You have one or more of the conditions listed below
- Your hospital clinician or GP has added you to the [Shielded patients list](#) (now known as those who are clinically extremely vulnerable) because, based on their clinical judgement, they deem you to be at higher risk of serious illness if you catch the virus.
  - Please note, the new national restrictions that came into effect on 5<sup>th</sup> November, do NOT advise people to shield in the same way as in the first lockdown.

If you do not fall into either of these categories and have not been informed that you are clinically extremely vulnerable, continue to follow the new [national restrictions from 5 November](#).

Adults with the following conditions are automatically deemed clinically extremely vulnerable:

- solid organ transplant recipients
- those with specific cancers:
  - people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
  - people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
  - people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
  - people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
  - people having other targeted cancer treatments that can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- those with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- those with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell disease)
- those on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection
- adults with Down's syndrome
- adults on dialysis or with chronic kidney disease (stage 5)
- pregnant women with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired
- other people who have also been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on clinical judgement and an assessment of their needs. GPs and hospital clinicians have been provided with guidance to support these decisions

The new guidance released from the government on 4<sup>th</sup> Nov 2020, for patients who are clinically extremely vulnerable can be found on the government website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/clinically-extremely-vulnerable-receive-updated-guidance-in-line-with-new-national-restrictions>

This guidance covers:

- Keeping safe
- Staying at home (and the exceptions to this)
- Support available

There is a second group of people with more general underlying health conditions or who are over 70, who are deemed as Clinically Vulnerable.

The guidance for this group of people is to stay at home as much as possible and to carefully follow the national rules and minimise contact with others.

#### What is the definition of someone who is Clinically Vulnerable?

- age 70 or older
- have a lung condition that's not severe (such as asthma, COPD, emphysema or bronchitis)
- have heart disease (such as heart failure)
- have diabetes
- have chronic kidney disease
- have liver disease (such as hepatitis)
- have a condition affecting the brain or nerves (such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis or cerebral palsy)
- have a condition that means they have a high risk of getting infections
- are taking medicine that can affect the immune system (such as low doses of steroids)
- are very obese (a BMI of 40 or above)
- are pregnant

Everyone has been advised to minimise social contact and maintain social distance from others. To keep up to date with the government guidelines, please visit the website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november>

Please ensure you read this information provided by the government carefully and understand the government's expectations of the public during this difficult time.

GP practices have not been given any 'inside' information from the government – we receive our guidelines at the same time they are released to the public.

If you are worried or concerned about working or attending an education setting due to a health condition, it is recommended you discuss your concerns with your employer or educational setting. Responsible parties should be reasonable and provide a risk assessment based upon the government guidelines.

GP services are already operating at maximum capacity, treating those who are currently unwell. Unfortunately we cannot increase that workload by providing letters about health conditions or sick notes if you feel you cannot attend work or education due to national restrictions.

#### What has your GP practice been doing during this crisis?

We are committed to providing healthcare to our local population and continue to be available to those patients who are unwell and require the use of our medical services.

Between 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> Sept we saw an increase in workload throughout the practice and hope that if you needed it, you were able to connect to a healthcare professional, either on the phone or online.

We continued to be as available as possible, and during the 6 months April – Sept we provided 21,247 prescriptions, our receptionists answered 46,242 telephone calls, we received 16,201 website enquiries, our Paramedic visited 344 patients at home, we were able to provide 6,950 face to face appointments and our clinical team telephoned in the region of 27,102 patients for appointments or health reviews.

During the first lockdown, here at Sunbury Health Centre, we received a large number of enquiries and requests to help patients with delivery of medication, sourcing food delivery slots from supermarkets and requests for transportation.

As a clinical healthcare provider, these are not requests we could accommodate, and we will continue to direct our patients to local voluntary groups (see below) who have the means available to help during this time.

Thank you, our patients, for your continued support during this time. We have strived to keep our doors open, and have also not been immune to staff being required to isolate, shield and work from home during this crisis. Although we have changed the way we are working, we will not change our commitment to you.

## Sunbury Health Centre

Find us on 

### Local support while at home

Company	Support Offered	Website	Telephone
<b>GoodSAM / NHS Volunteer Responders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check in and Chat</li> <li>• Community Support</li> <li>• Patient Transport</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.goodsamapp.org">www.goodsamapp.org</a>  Practice staff can refer patients to this service	0808 196 3382
<b>Surrey Coronavirus Helpline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shopping</li> <li>• Prescription collection</li> <li>• Telephone friend</li> <li>• Register as community support</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.customer.surreycc.gov.uk/covid-19-help-request">www.customer.surreycc.gov.uk/covid-19-help-request</a>	0300 200 1008
<b>Spelthorne Voluntary Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shopping</li> <li>• Prescription collection</li> <li>• Telephone friend</li> </ul>	<a href="https://spelthorne.isprepared.uk/">https://spelthorne.isprepared.uk/</a>	01932 571 122
<b>Support4Spelthorne</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Parcels</li> <li>• Money advice</li> <li>• Wellbeing calls</li> <li>• Medication support</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/19252/Support4Spelthorne">www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/19252/Support4Spelthorne</a> Email: <a href="mailto:COVID19welfare@spelthorne.gov.uk">COVID19welfare@spelthorne.gov.uk</a>	01784 446 446
<b>St Marys Church (Sunbury)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shopping</li> <li>• Prescription collection</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.stmarys-sunbury.org">www.stmarys-sunbury.org</a>	07939 290 265
<b>Sunbury Neighbours</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shopping</li> <li>• Prescription collection</li> <li>• Telephone friend</li> </ul>		07956 822 546
<b>Crossroads Care Surrey</b> (support for those who care for others)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shopping</li> <li>• Prescription collection</li> <li>• Telephone friend</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.crossroadscaresurrey.org.uk">www.crossroadscaresurrey.org.uk</a>	07873 387 460
<b>Age UK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Shopping</li> <li>• Check in and Chat</li> <li>• Computer Drop in (telephone service)</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.ageuk.org.uk">www.ageuk.org.uk</a>	01483 503 414
<b>Gov.uk</b>	Register for support as an extremely vulnerable person	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable">www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable</a>	Online only