

Westgate Practice – Working safely during COVID – Shenstone Branch Update

During this last year the Westgate Practice, in accordance with NHS guidelines and as a matter of safety, took the decision to deliver all our services via a triage first model. This meant that all patients received a telephone call prior to a face-to-face appointment. Any face-to-face appointments that were required took place at our main site, Greenhill Health Centre, Lichfield. As a result, our branch site at Shenstone was closed to patients.

This has been constantly reviewed as part of our operating procedure over the course of the last 18 months as COVID measures have been amended or changed. The safety of our patients and staff remains our top priority.

The NHS is currently at alert level 3, with the virus still widely in general circulation. Whilst there has been a gradual relaxation of restrictions, the number of positive Covid cases nationally has fluctuated with a recent surge in positive cases locally. **As a practice we have had 286 patients with a positive PCR COVID result in the last 28 days, compared with 16 positive cases in the 28 days prior to this, an 18 fold increase in the number of positive cases.** Therefore, at a recent review it has been agreed that in order to protect both our patients and staff, our Shenstone site will remain closed to patients for the foreseeable future.

Why are we opening Greenhill but not Shenstone?

- The main site provides adequate space and a safe queue management and flow system in and out of the practice.
- It affords for the same level of access to services for all our patients
- Processes are constantly evolving, and we can ensure a more consistent approach with all staff being on one site. All paperwork including medication requests will now be processed at the main site.
- The practice can follow strict guidelines around social contact when booking appointments and adjusting how people move through the premises and contact between patients
- We are able to continue to operate a “HOT” room at Greenhill to see all those patients with a high temperature or respiratory symptoms.

The Westgate Practice would like to thank all our patients for their understanding and support during the pandemic. As a reminder the majority of our services can be accessed remotely either by the telephone or via our website.