



Dear Patients,

Thank you for bearing with us during this extremely difficult time.

The COVID 19 Pandemic has been devastating for many of us, and although social restrictions are lifting, we are not yet back to normal.

GP practices have been required by NHS England to undertake telephone triage, and we have been unable to book patients straight into face to face appointments. We have also been operating an intercom system at our door to protect vulnerable patients in our waiting rooms.

Society is opening up, and many of our patients have problems or concerns which they have been dealing for weeks and months; and now you are asking for our help.

Like most of General Practice in the UK, we are experiencing a significant increase in telephone calls and online requests, and are receiving over 40% more requests for our services than is usual.

We are employing more staff, and offering more appointments than ever, and have increased our clinical capacity by over 30% over the course of the last year to support our patients at this difficult time. However, this is still not enough to meet the recent increase in requests. Unfortunately this means that you are likely to experience longer waits on our phone lines and desks, and longer waits for appointments than you are used to.

We strive to provide best care for each patient and we appreciate that it is frustrating when accessing our services takes longer than usual.

Some patients are causing a huge amount of distress to our staff by being rude and abusive, particularly to those of our team who are answering phone calls or dispensing medication.

This is demoralising for our staff at a time when our work load is higher than ever. We ask that you treat us with respect and consider your tone of voice and language when speaking to our team. We will not tolerate abuse, and we will take action when events occur.

Please try to understand that we are doing our best to help you with the resources that we have.

Kind Regards,

Staff of The James Cochrane Practice