

CHANGES TO THE PRIMARY CARE APPOINTMENT SYSTEM.

The GHA as from 1st August 2012 will be implementing two major changes to the Primary Care Centre (PCC) appointment system.

The aim of these changes is to improve immediate access with your GP of choice and therefore enhance continuity of care.

It is also hoped that the changes will reduce the number of unnecessary appointments such as missed appointments and excessive review of stable patients and so improve access where needed.

1- Registration.

To improve continuity of care, all GHA patients will be registered with a GP group (Blue, Green or Yellow group).

Change being implemented:

As from 1st August 2012 patients will be given appointments with GPs from their registered group.

If you are not registered with your group of choice please complete a '**Change of GP Group Form**' and leave it at any of the Primary Care Centre counters.

2- Booking of Advanced appointments.

In order to improve more immediate access to your own GP and reduce the number of missed appointments we will be reorganising the advanced appointments system.

Initially, this is a pilot scheme and will be closely monitored and amendments made as required to provide the best service possible. Patient feedback will be an important element of this.

Change being implemented:

- Appointment slots will no longer be released three months in advance.
- As from 1st August 2012, advanced appointments will be released one month in advance. On 1st August we will open advanced appointment slots for the month of September and this will continue at the beginning of every month that follows.

This is more compatible with advanced appointments systems in the UK.

Interim arrangements until full implementation the 1st August 2012:

To facilitate the change from three months to one month, fewer appointments slots than usual will be released at the beginning of each month between April and August 2012.

You will be advised as to when appointment slots will be released. This will be nearer the time when you need to be seen.

- The system for on-the-day appointments and the emergency clinics will remain the same.

3-Advice

The following advice to patients should facilitate the transition to an improved appointment service:

1. Please ensure you and your families are registered with your area of choice. If not, please complete a 'Change of GP group' form and leave it at any of the PCC counters.
2. Please phone the Primary Care Centre to book your next appointment when you are down to your last prescription. Appointment availability will be greater at the beginning of each month.
3. If you require items of repeat prescription before your next appointment, please go to the Prescription Pricing Advisory Unit (PPAU) where a short term prescription will be issued.
4. We strongly encourage the use of Phone lines to book appointments and this service will be improved with an increased number of telephone attendants.
Telephone Number- 20052441.
5. There is also a voicemail appointment service, where patients can leave their name, date of birth and details of the appointment required.

Telephone Number - 20078857

We understand that the benefits of these changes may take some time to become apparent and we appreciate your patience and co-operation during this period of transition.