



### **How do I get an appointment?**

The way your GP surgery operates has changed significantly in the last few years for a number of reasons:

There are now fewer GPs per head of population<sup>1</sup> and people are living longer with more chronic conditions than ever before. Advances in medicine now allow people to live longer and healthier lives, which has in turn increased the complexity of GP work. As a result, the non-GP workforce in general practice has increased significantly to provide the increased support that patients need. There are now many roles working in your GP surgery that may have greater expertise in certain areas than your usual GP.

Consultations can now be by email, video or telephone as well as face to face in the traditional way. The best person to help you with any particular issue may in fact be another healthcare professional.

1. The BMA notes “as of April 2023 (latest data) we now have the equivalent of 2,133 fewer fully qualified full-time GPs compared to the September 2015 baseline”.

### **How do I know who is the best person to deal with me?**

We aim to allocate you the most appropriate person to deal with your issue. For example, this might be a physiotherapist for back pain, an advanced nurse practitioner for a chest infection or a clinical pharmacist for a review of your diabetic medication. For some people with complex problems the usual GP may still be the best person to see. Please let us know if you think this is the case.

Every day in our reception office we have a “triage GP”<sup>2</sup> working alongside our reception team of patient coordinators. All telephone calls and online consultation (E-Consults) are reviewed by this “triage”<sup>2</sup> team to come up with the most appropriate solution or person to address your need. For this reason, we ask you to give as much information as possible about what you would like help with. This information will always be treated in the strictest of confidence.

For the same reason we ask that, if you are able to do so, you contact us by E-Consult or telephone (rather than queueing at the reception desk for an appointment) as this allows for the most effective and timely “triage”<sup>2</sup> by our team.

2. “Triage” is the preliminary assessment of patients in order to determine the urgency of their need for treatment and the nature of treatment required.



## **Who are the non-GP roles providing care that I might have contact with?**

### **Advanced Nurse Practitioner**

Our Advanced Nurse Practitioners are prescribers who can assess and treat a wide range of conditions and also have specific areas of expertise such as diabetes and asthma/COPD.

### **Care Coordinator**

Able to undertake a range of work helping to coordinate the care of patients. Our care coordinator works in our “Neighbourhood Multi-disciplinary Team” helping support people who have recently been discharged from hospital, are at risk of admission, are housebound, have complex and significant needs or may be terminally ill.

### **Clinical Pharmacist**

Our clinical Pharmacist is a registered prescriber who can assess and treat a large range of minor and serious conditions as well as having a particular expertise in the management of diabetes. Clinical pharmacists are ideally placed to undertake comprehensive reviews of your conditions and medications. We also have some clinical pharmacists working remotely.

### **Dispenser**

For some patients who are living outside Bicester we are able to offer a dispensary service. Our dispensers prepare your medications and may contact you about prescription related matters.

### **First Contact Physiotherapist**

Able to assess a wide range of muscular and joint problems, provide a management plan and arrange for further investigations or specialist assessment if needed.

### **GP Assistant**

Works alongside our triage GP to direct people to the most appropriate support or person to help them. In our practice this is a non-clinical role.

### **Health Care Assistant**

Performs a range of procedures which may include blood tests, heart tracings (ECGs), diabetic foot checks, dressings, NHS health checks, other physical checks (such as blood pressure), some injections and immunisations.

### **Mental Health Practitioner**

Our Mental Health Practitioner is an experienced psychiatric nurse who is able to assess and support people with severe mental health problems.

### **“Mind” Wellbeing worker (also known as a “Social Prescriber”)**

Our Wellbeing workers are employed through the charity “Mind”. They are able to assess and support people aged 16 and over with mild to moderate mental health concerns.

### **“Mind” Children and Young Persons Wellbeing Worker**

Assessment and support for 7- to 17-year-olds with mental health or behavioural concerns as well as neurodiverse conditions such as ADHD and Autism.



**Paramedic**

Our paramedic is a registered prescriber who can assess and treat a wide range of conditions.

**Physician's Associate**

Able to assess and treat a wide range of conditions. Not currently able to prescribe, so will liaise with a GP if a prescription is needed.

**Pharmacy Technician**

Supports the prescribing team so may contact you about your medications, particularly if changes have been made or monitoring is required.

**Practice Nurse**

Undertakes a wide range of procedures from injections and immunisations to cervical smears and wound dressings. Supervises and supports our Health care assistants.

**Social Prescribers (Age UK)**

Bicester has Age UK social prescribers working within the "Neighborhood Multi-disciplinary team" helping support people who have recently been discharged from hospital, are at risk of admission, are housebound, have complex and significant needs or may be terminally ill.

**Other Practice Staff**

There are other mainly non-patient facing roles who are also vital to the running of our practice. These include our secretaries, scanning, coding, and finance team as well as our practice managers and other administrative support staff. It is possible that from time to time you may be contacted by any of these regarding clinical or non-clinical matters. In all cases our staff work under the strictest standards of confidentiality, whether they are clinical or not.