

Friends & Family Survey - April 24 to June 24

Frequently Asked Questions

Once again the practice would like to thank patients for taking the time to complete the Friends & Family Survey over the past quarter.

This allows us to understand patients' thoughts, regarding the service we provide and to enable us to give additional information where necessary to keep patients informed of services and processes we follow.

Specific issues/problems with our services – we ask that patients not use the Friends & Family Survey to address any particular issues/problems with our services, as responses to this survey are anonymous and we are unable to look into the issue without full details to understand where the patient felt the practice had let them down.

In these circumstances, we ask patients to complete the complaints process available via the practice website www.northbrink.com or put in writing their concerns, so that we can recognise the problem and investigate fully, to understand if a change of process is necessary or not.

Again, the most common areas mentioned are as follows.

Getting an Appointment

We have a dedicated clinical and non-clinical team working hard behind the scenes daily to ensure we offer you the best care possible. If you are not sure how to get the help you need then please use this checklist to guide you:

1. Call 111 if you need medical help or advice but it is not a life threatening situation. You can also call 111 if you are not sure of which NHS service you need. Alternatively, you can also use the 111 online symptom checker, 111.nhs.uk.
2. Call 999 if someone is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk. Go to the local Minor Injuries Unit (North Cambs Hospital) if you have a minor illness or injury (cuts, sprains or rashes).
3. Your local pharmacy can give you advice about many common minor illnesses such as diarrhoea, headaches and sore throats.

4. Submit a triage request through our website if you are feeling unwell and it's not an emergency. Alternatively, you can call us or visit the reception.

Klinik Triage System

From the 17th January 2022, North Brink Practice implemented Klinik, a new triage system that helps us to manage our patient's needs and the increasing demand on primary care. Patients are no longer able to book an acute appointment on a first come, first serve basis. Traditional GP based appointment systems are no longer able to meet patient demand and therefore alternative ways of working are necessary.

The Klinik Triage system allows us to guarantee our on-the-day acute appointments are prioritised to those patients that require them whilst ensuring that adequate advice and support is given to those patients with minor ailments and conditions. Additionally, this new system will allow us to treat more patients on a daily basis.

How to submit a triage request

As the klinik triage service opens at 08:00am each working day and closes when our daily capacity is reached, patients are advised to take action at 08:00am on a day they can attend the practice, via one of the following three ways:

1. On-line via the practice website - To submit a triage request on-line via our website www.northbrink.com, to be directed to our online triage form. This allows you to put your request in without the need to call us. The form will require you to answer questions relative to your health matter, to ensure that we have all of the information that we need to safely and effectively triage you. There is also an additional comments box at the end if you feel you haven't been able to add something you feel is necessary for the clinical team to be made aware of.
2. Contacting the practice by phone - Alternatively, if you do not have access to the internet then please call us on 01945 660460 and press option 2 to be directed to one of our call centre operatives.
3. By attending the Reception desk - You can also visit us and speak to one of our receptionists who will support you with the screen at Reception.

How your request will be processed

As soon as you have submitted your triage request, it will be sent through to our clinical team comprising of a GP and nurse. Together, they will triage your request, using a combination of the information that you have provided and your medical records. Once a decision has been made, a member of our patient services team will contact you (either by phone or SMS) to inform you of the outcome.

The outcome of your request may vary depending on a number of factors and may range from an on-the-day appointment, to a prescription or a blood test. Alternatively you may be referred on to an external service if clinically appropriate, such as accident & emergency (if it is an emergency), minor injuries, a local pharmacy or a physiotherapist.

This is to ensure that we are providing the right care at the right time, and prioritising our appointments to those who clinically need them whilst ensuring that our patients are treated safely and effectively.

What happens if we have no capacity when you contact

Our appointment capacity can change daily with clinical staff reporting as unable to attend work, creating last minute changes to the rotas. If we have already reached capacity when you attempt to complete the Klinik triage on-line, contact via telephone or attend the reception desk, you will be advised of the following options:

1. If you feel your health matter cannot wait until the following working day - you will be asked to contact the NHS 111 service, who will be able to triage your medical need. The NHS 111 service also has access to six protected slots on the North Brink system and can book directly into these appointments
2. If you feel your health matter can wait until the following working day – you will be asked to contact us again the following day from 08:00am to submit your Klinik triage request

Why can't I see my GP?

There still is and has been a national shortage of GP's for a number of years now and to help us deal with the demand for appointments versus the capacity of staff, the practice decided in 2015 to work a Nurse-led service, which allows patients to be seen by a Nurse, trained specifically for this role and to be supervised/overseen via a GP.

By operating this way, **four times the number of patients** can be seen and we would not have sufficient appointment numbers to cope with the appointment demand if we didn't work in this way.

The North Brink team

- General Practitioners – our GPs act as clinical directors of care overseeing our team of nurses in the Nurse Led Clinic, providing support for acute conditions and follow-up treatment.
- Advanced Nurse Practitioners - our nurse practitioners are trained specialist nurses who have undertaken additional education in order to provide advanced care with the ability to prescribe medication. They provide the North Brink Practice visiting service, working autonomously to manage our most complex housebound patients & care home residents.
- Practice Nurses - registered nurses who triage patients and work within our Nurse Led Clinics, seeing patients for all issues, supported by our GPs. They have received comprehensive training, with the opportunity to earn a prescribing master's degree, to assess and treat minor illnesses independently and are able to take a thorough consultation to identify the issues and concerns, collaborating with GPs as needed. Additionally, they provide and oversee administration of medications, wound care and other healthcare interventions.
- Health Care Assistants - support Practice Nurses and GPs and have trained in multiple areas to help patients with chronic diseases such as asthma and diabetes as well as giving injections, performing tests and providing wound care under the supervision and delegation of registered health care professionals.

Additional Extended Access Service provided at Clarkson Surgery

The Wisbech Primary Care network service provides additional appointments for all patients of the Wisbech PCN practices, which include North Brink/Trinity/Clarkson & Parson Drove. These clinics run **Mon to Fri 18:30 - 20:00 and Saturdays 09:00-17:00** and consist of a variety of specific clinic types, along with GP and Advanced Nurse Practitioner appointments for new problems which have not already been addressed with the patient's own practice.

The clinical staff manning this service also work across the four Wisbech practices.

Have More Phone Lines & Staff Answering the Phones

The practice does have all available patient service staff (usually 8-10 staff members) answering calls between 08:00-09:00am, which is our busiest hour of the day. Our phone system accommodates up to 10 call lines to be answered at any one time. Once the 10 lines that come directly into the practice are full, our telephone system can hold a further 50 calls in the queue facility and these drop down in position order, should the queue be full, patients are advised to hang up and call back.

Once the patient hits the 10 lines that come into the practice, they can then receive the call back option, but only when they have heard this message.

Unfortunately the demand by phone remains very high.

Additional Comments:

- **Have additional surgery parking for patients/I find parking very difficult -**
Unfortunately due to the location of the practice, we are unable to provide any further direct car parking facility. We have 3 dedicated disabled parking slots in our rear car park along with the free public Chapel Road car park directly opposite the rear entrance to the practice.
There is also limited parking on North Brink at the front of the practice.
- **A bigger reception** - Unfortunately we do not have any further space within the practice to accommodate a bigger reception area. The current reception desk is situated centrally in our building which we believe to be the best position for it.
- **Hospital waiting list times** – Unfortunately, we have no control over waiting lists for services provided outside of the practice.
- **Have to stand in reception and let everyone know your personal problems -**
Patients can discuss in private with the Receptionist if they ask
- **Allow people to continue to submit on line requests longer** – unfortunately we are not in a position to keep the Klinik triage open beyond reaching our daily appointment capacity.
- **Not happy with my triage outcome** – The clinical team will use the information provided and the patient's medical record to decide on the best outcome for the patient.

However, patients can contest the outcome of their Klinik triage and the clinical team will re-visit the information provided.

- **Physiotherapist not showing up on time along with other late staff** – the physiotherapist team are contracted by the Wisbech Primary Care Network, so we will pass this information to the Manager. Not all clinical staff that work in the practice are contracted via the practice and many have varying working patterns, not necessarily starting work at 08:00.
- **The reason for the review was not stated and only covered one of the three medical conditions that I suffer** - Long Term Condition reviews are for specific conditions which fall into this category Asthma/COPD/Diabetes/Heart Failure, ongoing issues with emphysema/MS/urinary issues do not fall into this criteria and any concerns regarding these ongoing problems need to be addressed via the Klinik triage process
- **It would have been nice to have been seen face-to-face** - All patients have the option to be seen face to face, even if informed we have been asked to arrange a telephone consultation the patient can request that this be a face to face consultation.
- **Open a bit earlier, my appointment was at 8:00 am, door opened a few minutes before** - The core hours of the practice are 08:00-18:30 and sadly due to recent security issues we have to ensure the safety of our building and for our staff, so unfortunately will no longer be able to open the doors until we open.