

Friends & Family Response Summary

Quarter 4

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

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

The following information has been compiled in response to the concerns and trends outlined in the surveys.

Getting an Appointment

We have a dedicated clinical and non-clinical team working hard behind the scenes 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:

- 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.
- 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).
- Your local pharmacy can give you advice about many common minor illnesses such as diarrhoea, headaches and sore throats.
- 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

The Klinik triage service opens at 08:00am each working day and closes when our daily capacity is reached. Patients are advised to submit a triage request at 08:00am on a day they can attend the practice:

1. **Online via the practice website** – visit our website, www.northbrink.com, and click on the button to be directed to our online triage form. This will allow 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.
4. **If the patient specifically has difficulty in completing the online form/ phoning / attending the practice at 08:00am** - a third party can complete/call/attend on their behalf.

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 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.

If you are not happy with the outcome provided, this can be challenged and the clinical team will take a further assessment of your triage.

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 online, 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

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 Practice, Trinity Surgery, Clarkson Surgery & Parson Drove Surgery.

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.

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 the practice decided in **2015** to operate using a Nurse-led service. This allows patients to be seen by a Nurse, trained specifically for this role, and to be overseen via a GP.

By operating this way, we can effectively see **four times the number of patients** compared to a standard GP-led model.

The North Brink Practice 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.

Phone Lines

All available patient services staff (usually 8-10 staff members) are 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. If this queue is full, patients are advised to hang up and call back.

Call Back Functionality

The practice offers a call back functionality, which is available for patients to use when they are in the queue. A message will play offering the service, please follow the instructions should you wish to use it.

Unfortunately the demand by phone remains very high.

Long Term Condition Reviews

From May 2024 the practice commenced a new long term condition review clinic, inviting patients with long term conditions to attend an annual review appointment.

This is a single 30 minute appointment for the patient to attend a face-to-face review and will cover all of their long term conditions, making the process more efficient for us but also more convenient for the patient.

These appointments are specifically to cover the patient's long term condition and cannot be used as an opportunity to raise any other non-related health concerns.

Phlebotomy Service

From August 2024 the practice has been providing its own phlebotomy service for our registered patients aged 18 years and over. Appointments can be booked by calling the practice or visiting the reception desk.

Additional Comments from the surveys

- **Sick notes (Med3)** – you can request a sick note over the phone, visiting reception or through our website, www.northbrink.com, and selecting 'General Enquiries'. The request is then passed to the GP to approve the following working day. The Duty GP will assess the request and advise of the appropriate length of time.
- **Unexpected booked appointments appearing on the NHS app** – sometimes it is necessary for 'virtual' appointments to be booked onto a patient's record. This allows time for the clinician to complete necessary administration work for the patient. Unfortunately, these appointments also appear on the NHS app for patient's to view. Please do not be alarmed should you see one of these appointments on your record.
- **Sending letters and communications via email or SMS** – we will always try to send letters via email or SMS however, if we do not have this information then we will send a letter through the post.
- **Concerns regarding North Brink Pharmacy (Brink Medicines)** - if you have any concerns regarding the service that you received from North Brink Pharmacy, please direct your concerns through to them. As they are a separate business we are unable to comment on their processes or provide feedback to customers.
- **Receiving letters from hospitals** – unfortunately, the hospital and GP medical systems are not linked meaning that we are unable to view any data on hospital records. Additionally, there is usually a delay in receiving letters from the hospital which may further treatment. If this is the case then will always advise patients to chase with the hospital directly, in the first instance.