

## A new system called Total Triage is starting at Sidcup Medical Centre from 15 June 2020.

The clinicians, reception staff and our administrative team at Sidcup Medical Centre believe that we can offer patients a better more efficient service if we use eConsult as a Total Triage system for all requests whether it be for an appointment or any other type of request both clinical and administrative. The exceptions to this are appointments with the Practice Nurse.

### **What is Total Triage?**

**It means that your requests received by eConsult, both clinical and administrative will be assessed and a decision will be taken to the most appropriate course of action**, for instance an appointment arranged, an investigation organised or an administrative task carried out.

### **What is eConsult?**

**It's an online form that you complete to detail your request both clinical and administrative. It can also be completed on your smartphone via the NHS App**

We have been using eConsult for some time now so many of our patients will be familiar with using this already although in future **all** requests will need to be made using eConsult. For patients that have not used it yet, it is an NHS-approved 'digital triage and patient history-taking tool', or it could be described simply as a form on the website that guides the patient through specific questions in relation to the issue that has been selected. The eConsult form has been designed to enhance patient access, improve practice efficiency and signpost patients to the right place at the right time for their care. You can find it on the home page of our website: [www.sidcupmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.sidcupmedicalcentre.co.uk) for more information.

For anyone in our patient population that is unable to use or complete an eConsult there will be dedicated administrators who will be able to complete an eConsult on their behalf, contact the surgery and this will be arranged for you.

### **What are the benefits of using eConsult and a total triage system being used for all my requests both clinical and administrative?**

#### **Saves you time:**

- save a trip to the surgery – your query may be resolved with a phone call, video consultation or text.

#### **User Friendly:**

- you can access eConsult wherever and whenever you want: at home, at work, on holiday or on the move.
- you can access it via a PC, laptop, tablet or smartphone. It is also available via the NHS App, which we strongly urge you to download to use. Please see our website for more information.
- you complete an eConsult form at a pace that suits you. It asks the same questions that a doctor would in a consultation, but you have more time to think about your answers. You can also add pictures if appropriate.
- you can complete an eConsult query for a child over 5 years of age. For under 5's please contact the surgery and an eConsult will be arranged for you.

#### **Examples of where eConsult can make your life easier:**

- requests for letters and sick notes
- diagnosis and advice about treatment without the need for a face to face appointment
- opportunity for you and your doctor to plan investigations before seeing a GP – meaning one appointment rather than two.
- when (after lockdown!) you are planning a trip and want advice on travel health and vaccinations
- contraceptive pill checks and some other long-term condition reviews

#### **Supports self-care:**

- medical advice is available via eConsult at any time. It includes NHS self-help information, pharmacy advice, signposting to other services and an on-line symptom checker

#### **Clinically-supported and digitally safe:**

- eConsult was created by NHS GPs for NHS patients and is under constant review
- the robust 'red flagging' system applied to every eConsult enquiry ensures that patients with urgently worrying symptoms are directed immediately to a person-based service
- eConsult uses the highest security standards to ensure patient information is always secure

#### **Why eConsult is great for the Sidcup Medical Centre team?**

- knowing a patients symptoms upfront helps the practice get you the help you need from the right person straightaway
- gathering information in a standard format helps doctors address patient needs efficiently
- admin queries get filtered direct to the team that handles them

#### **Why eConsult is great for our patients?**

- Total Triage ensures that your eConsult is directed and dealt with appropriately making this a better and more efficient experience for you!