

Coronavirus public communications materials for GP practices 6 March 2020

Action – GP practices to use the following materials and communications to advise the public on Coronavirus.

Contents

1. Posters and images	1
2. Message for GP practice telephones/answer machines	1
3. Wording for GP practice websites.....	2
4. Closed for cleaning wording for GP practice websites.....	2
5. Wording for GP practice where staff have to self isolate	3
6. Message for online booking.....	3
7. Wording for text messages to patients.....	3
8. Other communications.....	3

1. Posters and images

Public Health England have ready-made posters for GP practices to display. Please use these rather than making your own. The posters are attached to this email, are available to download from your GP intranet or the PHE campaign resource centre [here](#).

- Poster to display if your practice closes for cleaning
- Poster to display on your practice entrance and reception to advise on recognising the symptoms. Also as an image for display screens and websites/social media
- Posters on preventing the spread/washing your hands. Also as an image for display screens and websites/social media
- Advice leaflet advising on home self-isolation

Please note: An account is required to download high resolution poster if needed from PHE campaign resource centre but access is available to anyone with an NHS.net email account and the sign-up process is very quick and straightforward.

2. Message for GP practice telephones/answer machines

Please do not book an appointment, or go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital if:

1. you think you might have coronavirus
2. in the last 14 days you've been to a country or area with a high risk of coronavirus – see our [coronavirus advice for travellers](#)
3. you've been in close contact with someone with coronavirus

NHS 111 has an [online coronavirus service](#) that can tell you if you need medical help and advise you what to do. This can be accessed from www.nhs.uk.

Call [111](tel:111) if you need to speak to someone.

3. Wording for GP practice websites

If you want to put a general message on your websites to advise patients, please use this text below:

Important information about the coronavirus (COVID-19)

The NHS and Public Health England (PHE) are well prepared for outbreaks of new infectious diseases. The NHS has put in place measures to ensure the safety of all patients and NHS staff while also ensuring services are available to the public as normal.

The latest information on symptoms of Coronavirus infection and areas where recent travel may have resulted in a high risk of exposure can be found on [nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/)

NHS 111 has an [online coronavirus service](#) that can tell you if you need medical help and advise you what to do.

Use this service if:

- you think you might have coronavirus;
- in the last 14 days you've been to a country or area with a high risk of coronavirus;
- you've been in close contact with someone with coronavirus.

Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. Call [111](#) if you need to speak to someone.

Like the common cold, coronavirus infection usually occurs through close contact with a person with novel coronavirus via cough and sneezes or hand contact. A person can also catch the virus by touching contaminated surfaces if they do not wash their hands.

Testing of suspected coronavirus cases is carried out in line with strict guidelines. This means that suspected cases are kept in isolation, away from public areas of GP surgeries, pharmacies and hospitals and returned home also in isolation. Any equipment that come into contact with suspected cases are thoroughly cleaned as appropriate. Specific guidance has also been shared with NHS staff to help safeguard them and others. Patients can be reassured that their safety is a top priority, and are encouraged to attend all appointments as usual.

Everyone is being reminded to follow Public Health England advice to:

- Always carry tissues with you and use them to catch your cough or sneeze. Then bin the tissue, and wash your hands, or use a sanitiser gel.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after using public transport. Use a sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.

4. Closed for cleaning wording for GP practice websites

An individual who has been identified as a possible Covid-19 case has recently attended **xxxxxxx practice/surgery**.

To protect other patients and members of the public, the individual was kept in isolation, away from public areas of GP surgeries, pharmacies and hospitals and returned home also in isolation. In line with Public Health England (PHE) guidance, **xxx** is closed for cleaning to remove any potential risk for patients.

Once the cleaning is complete, the practice will reopen on **xxx**. Patients and staff can be reassured that their safety is the top priority, and patients are encouraged to attend all appointments as usual.

Should you need an appointment please contact **xxxxxxx**

5. Wording for GP practice where staff have to self isolate

In line with Public Health England guidance, a member of staff at **XXX** has been asked to self isolate in order to protect fellow staff members, patients and members of the public. Steps have been taken to minimise the risk to patients and staff and we are working with individual patients to appropriately manage their care. We would like to offer assurance that it remains safe for patients to attend **XXX** as normal and ask patients to attend scheduled appointments as normal.

6. Message for online booking

Please do not book a GP appointment or attend your GP Practice if:

- you think you might have coronavirus
- in the last 14 days you've been to a country or area with a high risk of coronavirus – see our [coronavirus advice for travellers](#)
- you've been in close contact with someone with coronavirus

NHS 111 has an [online coronavirus service](#) that can tell you if you need medical help and advise you what to do.

Call [111](#) if you need to speak to someone. For the latest Covid-19 advice please visit www.nhs.uk.

7. Wording for text messages to patients

For the latest Covid-19 advice please visit www.nhs.uk.

If you think you may have Covid-19, have travelled to an affected area please do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. Use the [NHS111 online service](#) to find out what to do next.

8. Other communications

- Please do not respond to media enquiries. Any media enquiries should be passed directly on to the CCG communications team who can liaise with DHSC.
- For WEL and BHR, contact nelcsu.media@nhs.net or call 020 3688 1216
For City and Hackney, contact press@hackney.gov.uk or call 020 8356 4964.
- On social media: please encourage your practice staff to only retweet official guidance on coronavirus from [PHE](#) or [DHSC](#).