HOW TO ACCESS TWYFORD SURGERY SERVICES

Directly through anima – registered patients can submit an anima request, and our duty clinician triages these to appropriate appointment slot or directs query to an appropriate administrative team.



Over the phone – if a registered patient is unable to complete an anima themselves, our reception team will take relevant details over the phone and complete an anima submission on the patients' behalf.

Routine screening appointments or routine annual review appointments can be booked in directly by reception over the phone, e.g. blood tests (where test already requested by clinician and mobility issues require surgery appointment) and most health care assistant appointments, and general nursing appointments.

If you have been booked into an appointment via anima and are unable to make it, please call to reschedule it, or cancel the appointment via anima and submit a new generic anima stating you need to reschedule an appointment.



In person at the surgery – there may be times when we feel it is appropriate to allow a patient to be taken into a private area to complete the anima for them in person. Due to the nature of providing more detailed information and staffing restraints, this will be reserved for the most vulnerable or frail in our community and most others will be encouraged to use the online system themselves or telephone.

TYPES OF APPOINTMENT OFFERED

GP/allied health professional – telephone, face to face, or online consultation (through anima)

Nursing appointments – telephone or face to face

Due to service high demand, we will offer the most appropriate appointment type based on clinical need. It may therefore be that you have your medical query dealt with directly through anima. This allows us to maintain open access and is only done where it is felt clinically appropriate to do so.

There may be times when you would specifically like to see a particular clinician or be dealt with specifically by phone, face to face or online and it is important to state this in your request. Wherever possible we will endeavour to meet this request, but it may not always be possible depending on capacity, or the clinician's assessment of your clinical need e.g. you may request a call but actually need to be seen face to face, or if it is assessed as more urgent and a requested clinician is not available.

We may also sometimes not deal with your concern directly but instead signpost you to a community service. This is because these are the most appropriate services to deal with your complaint and are services that have been commissioned and funded by the government with the aim of reducing demand on GP services to free time up for more complex issues. The most common examples of these will be pharmacy first and suggesting a self-referral to physiotherapy (more information below).

Sometimes you may request an appointment for an administrative issue. On these occasions the request will be passed to the appropriate administrative team member or clinician as appropriate, and you will be notified that this has occurred. They will be in touch with you by email or phone in due course once they have reviewed the query with advice on the outcome or next steps.

Please help us to triage effectively by completing the most appropriate anima request. We are aware this can be repetitive or seem irrelevant, but the information provided allows us to be able to effectively and safely triage your concerns into an appropriate outcome – in terms of clinical timeframes and getting you to see the best person for your concern.

There may be times when we will reject requests – for example when a medical concern has been entered into a 'general admin' request with little clinical information attached. Unfortunately, on our side, these requests will be labelled as 'green' within the triage system and will therefore not be seen as quickly as if they were put into a medical request. This can be unsafe without enough information and a request not being seen until later in the day when there may not be any on the day appointments left to offer.

Please note that as a general practice provider we do not review dental issues:

GPs are not trained in dental healthcare, and so it would be inappropriate for us to comment or advise on management of dental issues. Neither are we indemnified to provide advice or treatment for dental issues and so it would be medicolegally inappropriate for us to do so.

This includes pain relief – whilst this may seem obstructive on our part, this is clinically sound practice since any significant pain not resolving with simple over the counter pain

relief needs to be reviewed by a dentist to ensure no other treatment is necessary, which we are unable to assess ourselves.

We appreciate your understanding on this, and where a request is submitted that we feel relates to a dental issue you will be signposted to seek review with a dental practitioner.

COMMUNICATION ROUTES

Please be aware that we may communicate with you in several ways so if you are expecting contact from us for any reason, please be mindful that this may be by phone, email and more rarely text message.

Urgent contact from us will likely be by telephone.

For routine contact the most likely contact will be by email.

TRANSLATION SERVICES

It is policy that any patient who does not speak fluent enough English will have a consultation with a professional interpreter present via phone link (or in person where available/more appropriate). It is unfortunately not appropriate for us to use informal interpreters such as family or friends in the majority of scenarios, please be aware that this is our best practice policy and will only be adjusted where the clinician feels it is appropriate to do so.

PROCESSING TIMES

Each week the surgery receives over 500 letters and emails from outside agencies or other healthcare providers contacting regarding patients and their care. For example, NHS letters, private provider letters, community pharmacy notifications, emails, and out of hours notifications.

These communications include advice on management and suggestions regarding changes in regular medications, or requests for referrals or reviews, or providing information on new diagnoses. Each letter needs to be processed in line with our internal policies and be reviewed by the appropriate teams to action as needed and filed accordingly.

Given the volume of information received, this processing can take time, and we appreciate your patience in allowing us to process these accordingly. Furthermore, sometimes there may be a delay in a letter being sent to us following your hospital appointment. This means estimated processing times below may be longer from the date of your actual appointment with the outside agency.

Where something is more urgent this will be marked as so by the communicating agency, and we will prioritise these letters/emails.

Otherwise, please see below for expected maximum timeframes from receipt of letter/email/communication. We'd be grateful if you can wait until this time has passed before contacting the surgery if you were expecting contact or a change in medication that has not occurred as anticipated.

Hospital letters: up to 3 weeks, unless marked as urgent, including medication changes or management suggested by hospital.

Communication from other healthcare providers: up to 3 weeks, unless marked as urgent

Private letters: up to 4 weeks, unless marked as urgent with valid clinical reason

Private prescriptions: up to 4 weeks, unless marked as urgent with valid clinical reason

Other processing times

Prescriptions: 2-3 days processing in surgery, 2-3 days at pharmacy

Blood results: allow 1 week before checking NHS app for results and comment, or calling reception/submitting an anima for results. This applies to routine blood tests, some more specialist tests take longer and so may not be available after 1 week and timeframes for these can vary significantly.

Urine results: allow 5 working days before checking NHS app for results and comment, or calling reception/submitting an anima for results. If symptoms have not resolved/have worsened, contact for clinical review.

Swab results: allow 1 week before checking NHS app for results and comment, or calling reception/submitting an anima for results

Spirometry results: allow up to 3 weeks

If you contact the surgery to query the above before this time has lapsed, you will be advised to wait for usual processing times.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

SELF REFERRAL PHYSIOTHERAPY

Self-referral physiotherapy allows individuals to directly access physiotherapy services without a GP referral. This is a quicker way to get help for musculoskeletal issues like back pain, joint pain, or recent strains/sprains. It's a way to promote self-management and potentially speed up recovery.

Physiotherapists are experts in musculoskeletal conditions and assessment and diagnosis of these conditions. They liaise closely with us and when they feel further investigation is required such as X-rays or blood tests, or if onward referral is needed to secondary (hospital) specialists they will request this and we will action.

You cannot self-refer to physiotherapy if you have consulted with us already about a condition. Waiting times for physiotherapy are shorter when self-referring than when we refer you. This is why we encourage and may signpost you to this service directly from anima as we believe it will get you to see the most appropriate clinician for your need in the shortest possible timeframe.

Musculoskeletal - Stay Well

PHARMACY FIRST/LOCAL PHARMACY

Patients can now get treatment for seven common conditions directly from their local pharmacy, without the need for a GP appointment or prescription.

The Pharmacy First scheme was launched by the government and NHS England on 31 January 2024 to give patients quick and accessible care and ease pressure on GP services.

How can I access treatment from my pharmacy?

You can get treatment for these conditions by walking into the pharmacy or contacting them virtually. GP receptionists, NHS 111 and providers of emergency care will also be able to direct patients to pharmacies, that offer the service, if contacted.

What are the seven common conditions?

- Sinusitis
- Sore throat
- Earache
- Infected insect bite
- Impetigo (a bacterial skin infection)
- Shingles
- Uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women.

Locally information available here:

Pharmacy First Service - Fields Pharmacy

Pharmacy Page - Day Lewis

Specialist Pharmacy Services Twyford | Newdays Pharmacy

HEALTH VISITOR

A health visitor will usually visit you at home for the first time around 10 days after your baby is born. Until then you'll be cared for by local midwives.

A health visitor is a qualified nurse or midwife who has had extra training. They're there to help you, your family and your new baby stay healthy.

Talk to your health visitor if you’re struggling with your mental health. They can give you advice and suggest where to find help.

Child health clinics are run by health visitors. They offer regular baby health and development reviews.

You can also talk about any problems to do with your child, but if your child is ill and likely to need treatment, contact us via anima/as above.

Some child health clinics also run parent and baby, breastfeeding, and peer support groups.

Local information available here:

Health visiting clinics | Children Young People and Families Online Resource

SOCIAL SERVICES

More information on care and social help is available here:

Social care and support guide - NHS

The Adult Social Care service supports people aged 18 and over living in the Wokingham borough who need extra help due to an illness, disability, or frailness. This may be both short and long-term.

The aims of the service

- Help vulnerable adults live healthy, independent, and fulfilled lives
- Prioritise community empowerment and support those at risk of isolation and social exclusion
- Provide support for those helping you with care and support, needs such as friends or family
- Address the well-being and safety concerns of vulnerable adults
- Prevent, reduce, or delay the need for ongoing care
- Give people choice and control
- Make a positive difference to their lives
- Maximise their well-being and independence in the local community.

The process

In order to help you access the care you need, the council will:

- Have a conversation with you to understand what your needs and concerns are
- Explore with you what's working well, what you have already tried, any support you may need, how we can help you find a way forward
- Listen carefully to what matters most to you to try and achieve the best outcome possible
- Work together with other organisations to find the right solution for you
- Work with you to protect you from harm where you have care and support needs and are at risk of abuse or neglect.

Local information is available here:

Care and support for adults | Wokingham

Wokingham Directory | Adults and communities

Call: **0300 365 1234**

WOKINGHAM WELLBEING HUB

The Wokingham Wellbeing hub is a central point of contact for young people, families, and professionals to access mental health services.

The Emotional Wellbeing Hub provides free support and advice to children and young people up to their 19th birthday.

They will:

- Offer you advice and guidance.
- Discuss your concerns / needs
- Provide advice about appropriate local support services. In some cases they will support onward referrals.

Get help from the Emotional Wellbeing Hub

TALKING THERAPIES

A service for people aged 17+ with low mood, anxiety or stress.

You can refer yourself:

1. Sign-up online
2. Call **0300 365 2000** (press 2)

Therapists can support you if you're coping with challenges such as:

- Depression including postnatal depression and seasonal affective disorder (SAD)
- Stress
- Sleep difficulties
- Anxiety disorders, including:
    - General anxiety disorder
    - Specific phobias
    - Panic attacks and panic disorders
    - Social anxiety
    - Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)
    - Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
    - Health anxiety

They can also guide you if you're experiencing difficulties caused by a medically unexplained symptom (MUS) or long-term condition (LTC), including diabetes, lung conditions such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or coronary heart disease (CHD).

NHS Berkshire Talking Therapies, for anxiety and depression