Change to Urgent Appointment system

Manor Way/Lee Surgery operate a GP/Nurse Practitioner Triage system each working day. The key points to this system are as follows:

The current system to access ‘same day’ appointments will change on the 26th of March 2018. From this date all requests for same day urgent appointments will be triaged by the duty Doctor/Nurse Practitioners by phone.

What is triage?
“Triage” refers to a sorting of injured or sick people according to their need for emergency medical attention.

What is the process?
“All” requests for same day “urgent” appointments will be passed to the duty team for triage. When you call and ask to be seen on the day as your matter is urgent, the reception staff will ask for details about the nature of your problem. These details will be passed to the duty clinicians so that the duty team can respond appropriately. This process will apply if you come to the surgery without an appointment or when you request to be seen on the day you call by telephone. The duty team will contact the patients according to clinical urgency.

Will reception staff decide who gets triaged?
No, reception staff will not make any clinical decisions about who receives care. The role of the reception staff will be to pass all information relating to the patient’s presenting problem to the triage duty team so they respond appropriately.

What if I don’t want to say the reason at the desk?
The reception staff only need basic details if you would rather not say then there will be the option to write the general reason on a ‘post it note’ and then pass it to the receptionist who will then input this reason on to the duty teams triage list.

What will happen during a triage telephone call?
The duty clinician will ask you for further information about your presenting problem and medical history, depending on your symptoms they may be able to provide you with simple telephone advice or you may be advised to come to the practice for an appointment. This appointment will be with the most appropriate Clinician depending on the nature of your presenting problem.

Will I get preference if I walk in rather than telephone?
No, preference will not be given to patients who chose to walk in rather than telephone. The practice will actively encourage all patients to phone rather than walk in. This is because the ability to answer the phones in a timely manner is affected when increasing numbers of patients present at the desk.

Should I wait in the surgery to be phoned?
No, patients will be phoned in order of clinical urgency assessed by the duty clinician doing triage. The duty clinician may be able to resolve your problem over the phone without the need to attend the practice for an appointment.
The reception staff will be unable to provide information on the exact time you will be called other than it will be during the course of the day. The duty clinician undertaking triage will be unable to make frequent attempts at contacting patients. It is accepted that patients who state they have an ‘urgent’ issue which cannot wait for a routine pre booked appointment will make themselves accessible to receive the phone call from the practice on the first attempt.

If a patient has restrictions on when they can be called the Receptionist can annotate the appointment with “phone before” or “phone after” a specific time, however this is not a guarantee that it will be possible.

**Third Parties**
A third party may book a triage appointment for someone else but the Clinician will not be able to divulge any medical information to the third party unless the patient’s record indicates that they have consented to allow the third party access to their medical information. Parents will have access to their children’s medical records until their child’s 16th birthday unless the child has specifically asked for them not to and a Clinician has agreed the child is competent to make that decision.

**Withheld Number**
For Confidentiality reasons our phone number is always withheld so if your phone does not accept calls from withheld numbers please provide an alternative that does.

**Home Visits**
The doctors are required to manage their clinical workload efficiently in order to benefit the maximum number of patients.

On rare occasions the demand for home visits may exceed capacity. In these instances vulnerable patients such as cancer sufferers or those in nursing homes will be prioritised. Patients will be contacted should this apply to them.

**When Demand Exceeds Capacity**
The triage system seeks to match the daily patient demand with practice capacity, whether it is practice nurse, nurse practitioner or doctor. There will be occasions, such as over the winter months, when patient demand exceeds practice capacity. The doctors have a responsibility to ensure safe and effective clinical care at all times. On these rare occasions patients may be signposted to suitable alternative providers of primary care services, such as the walk in centre or a pharmacy.

If patient demand is excessive, only Emergency Issues will be placed on the Triage List. This is essential in order to manage patient demand and ensure safe and effective clinical care.