

# Important information about booking appointment changes from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2025.

**Dear St Elizabeth patients,**

We wish to share some very exciting news about a significant change to our appointment system that will improve the way our surgery delivers care to all of our patients.

All GP practices across the Country are moving to a 'Modern General Practice' model to make access to care and treatment easier for patients and help improve patient satisfaction. This is a national NHS project, and all general practices must adopt the system by October 2025.

From the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 we are moving to a Total Triage model.

## **What is Total Triage?**

Total triage is a General Practice workflow where every patient contacting a practice first provides some information on the reasons for contact and is triaged before making an appointment.

All patient requests will be triaged by one of our experienced clinicians who will decide what the best course of action is. Where necessary, we might ask you to answer a few additional questions to help our doctor prioritise those patients who need more urgent care.

You could be given a face to face or telephone appointment; you could have a reply from the GP with self-care advice or you could be signposted to a more appropriate service.

This does not affect how you book the Nurse, Clinical pharmacist or HCA assistant for long term conditions reviews, medicine reviews, blood tests, childhood immunology, flu and covid vaccinations etc. and home visits will be booked in the usual way.

## **We will have three types of appointments:**

Same day – for emergencies (A link will be sent to your phone to book or a member of staff will contact you to book the appointment)

Within 2 days – for patients that need to see or speak to a healthcare professional soon, but not urgently (You will receive a self-book link to book your appointment)

More than 2 days – for routine appointments (You will receive a self-book link to book your appointment)

**The main purpose of the Total Triage model is to:**

enhance the quality of care our patients receive.

ensure they are given the most appropriate appointment or advice to meet their needs.

communicate with patients in a timely way.

**How does it work?**

All patients need to submit their request via the surgery's website by filling the 'Get help for any health problem' form.

Ideally, patients will submit their own request however we appreciate that this may not be possible for some patients. If you are unable to use or access the online form then please contact the surgery in the usual way and we will complete the request for you, which will be added to the triage list to be reviewed by the clinician. This may increase the wait time to calls so we advise you use the online service if you can.

After the clinician reviews your request you will either receive a link text to book an appointment or a call to be offered a same day appointment, receive a self-book link or you might receive a message with advice from the GP.

Please note that in order for the clinician to triage your request in a timely manner it is very important to provide detailed and accurate information about your symptoms.

For example, if a patient has a cough, it would be much easier for the clinician to triage the request with the following information: 'I had a cough for 10 days. I have already used over the counter medicine, but it is not helping and in the last couple of days my cough has been worsening, and it feels more chesty. I also have a high temperature.'

If the information given is less detailed, such as 'I had a cough for 10 days', it makes it harder for the clinician to triage and we will need more information.

The Total Triage service will be open Monday to Friday. During the weekend or bank holidays please continue to use the 111 service or call 999 for life threatening emergencies.

### **How does this benefit you?**

We know that change can be difficult sometimes, but we are confident that Total Triage will bring many benefits to our patients – for example:

Total Triage has been shown to reduce waiting times and it enables us to attend to your medical needs more promptly.

Using digital communication will mean that you can engage with us from the comfort of your home or workplace.

Triage ensures that limited healthcare resources are allocated to patients who need them most urgently.

Total Triage will address the increasing demand for appointments and reduce the frustration of having to call and be in a long queue at 8am.

If you have any questions or concerns our team is here to guide and support.

Please ensure that the practice has your current mobile telephone number. If you are unable to access the online links, please let the reception team know when you call for an appointment.

As we will be filling the same form online for patients that call the practice, the telephone calls will take longer. Calling in to get the forms filled in will NOT prioritise your form. Priority is on clinical need only.

All patients wanting advice or an appointment with a GP will have to fill in a form there is no exceptions.

Thank you for supporting us with this new project.

Sincerely,

The team at St Elizabeth Medical Centre.



Patient submits an enquiry or request for an appointment via online form on NHS app or practice website.



Patient phones the practice and the administrative staff will complete the form online on behalf of the patient.



Patient comes to the practice and the administrative staff will complete the form online on behalf of the patient.



The forms are then assessed by one of the clinical team and takes the most appropriate action.



The patient will be contacted by message or phone to the outcome.

## Possible outcomes

Book at Community Pharmacist

Book or send link to self-book into Minor Ailments Clinic

Send health info and self-help information.

Book or send link to self-book into GP Clinic.

Book or send link to self-book for Physiotherapist /Social Prescriber or other health care professional.

Book or send link to self-book into Nurse Clinic

Book or send link to self-book into HCA for blood test or other tests.