

**Datganiad I’r Wasg / Press Release**

*22 September 2021*

**Help Us Help You – only use your GP when you really need to.**

GPs in Powys, along with GPs across Wales and the rest of the UK continue to be under incredible pressure and need your help to ensure that they are able to help those in most need.

Patients don’t always need to see a GP to get the help they need. There are many other sources of help within the practice team, including Practice Nurses, advanced practitioners, Pharmacists and others.

Since the onset of COVID we have also seen that we don’t always need to see these healthcare professionals face-to-face. Regardless of who you see, telephone and video consultations have proven to be extremely effective and have a number of important benefits including:

* More consultations can take place
* Patients don’t have to travel
* Risk of spreading infection is massively reduced

Wales First Minister, Mark Drakeford, confirmed last week that these remote consultations are here to stay, enabling GPs to concentrate on only seeing those face-to-face patients that really need it.

***Accessing primary care services***

Alternatives to your GP include:

* Pharmacists – your high street pharmacist can help with many minor illnesses and ailments and you don’t need an appointment.
* Physiotherapists – did you know that you can self-refer to physiotherapy services in Powys? Just visit our website [www.pthb.nhs.wales/find/physiotherapy](http://www.pthb.nhs.wales/find/physiotherapy) or call your local hospital for details.
* Occupational Therapists – you can also self-refer to Occupational Therapy. Call your local hospital for details
* Practice Nurse and Advanced Practitioners – If you do call your GP your needs will be assessed and it may be that a Practice Nurse or Advanced Practitioner is the best person to help you. They are highly trained and are able to support patients with a wide range of needs.

***COVID vaccine boosters***

COVID vaccine boosters started to be rolled out in Powys at the weekend and invitations for the booster vaccine are being sent by the health board to those eligible priority groups now. Most GPs are not able to book these boosters and therefore we kindly ask that you do not contact your GP practice regarding the COVID vaccine unless they have specifically asked you to do so, as they need to keep their phonelines clear for patients needing to access their services.

***Busy phonelines***

At present phonelines are being inundated with calls meaning that those that really do need to get through are having difficulty doing so. Please be assured that lines are not faulty and you will get through. Please do not attend the practice without an appointment.

***Treat people with respect***

We know that at times it can be frustrating if telephones take a little while to be answered, both in the NHS and in other situations. However please treat everyone with respect; they are trying their best to help you and everyone else. The NHS has a zero-tolerance policy on aggression and abuse.

**Ends**

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**Nodiadau i'r Golygydd / Notes to editors:**