



We're still here to help you

We want to reassure you that we are still here and we're open and seeing patients. However, the way we do some things has had to change as a result of the level 4 lockdown.

Many of these changes are here to stay for the short-term at least.

We hope that this newsletter contains the information you need to know about how to access our services and how we look after you in new ways.

As always, if you have any questions please [email us](#).



Medicine where you are

Telemedicine

The biggest change we made is to deliver the bulk of GP and Nurse consultations without patients coming into the health centre. Telemedicine, as it is called, uses telephone and video technologies to enable patients and medical staff to talk to each other without having to be in the health centre. Often, telemedicine removes the need for a patient to come into our practice completely.

What types of things can be dealt with by telemedicine?

Below are some examples of the medical conditions and tasks that work well with virtual consults.

* Chronic Disease Care – e.g. Diabetes, Asthma, Arthritis, Smoking-related issues and stop smoking advice, Alcohol-related issues and advice

* WINZ and off work certificates and some ACC work

* Discussion of test results,

* Planning for newly diagnosed conditions e.g. arthritis

* Follow-up consults

* Medication reviews

* Mental health consultations

* Sexual health and contraception advice

Booking your telemedicine appointment

There will be telemedicine appointments available each day. You will be able to book telemedicine consultations through *myindici* or you can phone our reception team to book. It is really helpful if you can tell us the reason for the telemedicine appointment when you book it.

We can offer you telephone or video consultations – whichever you are most comfortable with.

Costs and how to pay

Telemedicine consultations are charged at the same rate as a face-to-face consultation and include a prescription if required. You will get an invoice and payment instructions by email after your appointment.

REMEMBER:

Even under Level 4 Lockdown, you can come to the health centre if we need you to. We are still seeing patients face to face, if needed. If you are at all unsure about whether you should have a face to face appointment or a telemedicine one please call us and our team will help you.



Health and Safety

Keeping our staff and you safe

We are doing everything we can to help you and our staff stay safe and to reduce the risk of getting COVID-19. Our staff use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as gloves, gowns, masks and eye protection. Soon you will see our staff wearing surgical scrubs in much the same way as you would see at other medical facilities.

Not all consultations need staff to wear full PPE, but people with respiratory symptoms need to be seen by staff wearing full PPE, so don't be alarmed, it doesn't mean you have COVID-19 but we are dedicated to keeping us all safe. We know it can be unsettling to see us wearing these items, but they are for everyone's safety.

There are other things you can do to help keep our staff and yourself safe when you visit us:

1. Please don't arrive unannounced – Book an appointment or call ahead if you need to see us.
2. Use our Telemedicine Service for a virtual consultation if appropriate
3. Use the hand sanitiser when you come into the practice and when you leave and practice safe distance behaviour whilst in the waiting room.
4. Please wear a mask if you are asked to.

Flu Vaccines and Childhood Immunisations

We currently have limited flu vaccines in stock and supply is at best limited and unreliable. If you are not already booked into a clinic for a flu jab, the next clinics will probably be mid-April depending on when we get another delivery.

We have made the decision to only schedule clinics when we are sure we have vaccines. We will try to notify eligible patients by text or email when we have more vaccine. Generally, people aged over 65 years or those with certain medical conditions are eligible for the vaccination. You can check your eligibility at fightflu.co.nz.

If you are not eligible for a funded flu vaccine, paid for flu vaccines should be available from mid-April and we will open bookings then.

Other Vaccinations

We are still recalling all children for their normal immunisations. We are also able to do MMR vaccinations again so if you think you need one, please get in touch.



CBACs and COVID-19 Bubbles



@SIOUXSIEW @XTOTL thespinozz.co.nz



CC-BY-SA

Unite against COVID-19

If you are looking for advice around bubbles or COVID-19, the [COVID19](#) website has everything you need.

Remember the symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- a fever (at least 38°C)
- a cough
- shortness of breath.

These symptoms do not necessarily mean you have COVID-19. The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as colds and flu.

I have the symptoms who do I call?

The dedicated Healthline number **0800-358-5453** (or for international SIMs, **+64 9 358 5453**) is still the first health service to contact if you are concerned that you or someone you know has COVID-19 symptoms.

If you can't get through, give us a call.

Testing for COVID-19

Testing for COVID-19 is primarily being done at the Community Based Assessment Centres (CBACs) in the region. If you meet the testing criteria and we have assessed you over the phone, you will be sent there.

Alternatively, we can test you at Hauora Health Centre if you meet the criteria. Please call ahead, do not just turn up at the health centre.

You will not be charged for any consultation relating to COVID-19.

What are we not doing at the moment?

As a result of the Coronavirus outbreak and the Level 4 lockdown there are some services we are unable to offer at the moment. These include:

* Cervical smears.

* MedLab has asked us to stop sending patients for routine blood tests for the meantime.

* Cryo clinics are cancelled until the lockdown is lifted.

And finally...

Please remember that we, including our local pharmacies, on the frontline are doing everything we can to ensure your health remains our priority. We are working in very challenging circumstances. With that comes anxiety and uncertainty about the virus and our new way of working. Please be patient with us. Things may seem slower than normal but we will all get there.

Be kind. Stay safe. Kia Kaha Aotearoa

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