



May 2021 Newsletter

UNSUSTAINABLE. UNSAFE. UNFAIR. UNPRECEDENTED.

Across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, GPs and practices are under unprecedented pressure:

Key Facts – March 2021*

Number of appointments: **461,859** (equivalent to 46% of population)

Number of Face-to-Face appointments: **258,691 (56%)**

Patients seen on the same day: **54%**

Patients seen in less than a week: **84%**

Patients seen in less than 14 days: **92%**

Only **2.67%** Non-attendance rate - **97.3%** appointments attended

In addition, **over 90,000 Covid vaccinations** were delivered by Cambridgeshire & Peterborough GPs & their Practice teams in March – **in total over HALF A MILLION patient appointments that month**

Don't believe the media spin.

*NHS Digital <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/appointments-in-general-practice/march-2021> April data to be published 11.06.2021

Key Messages

- **GPs and their practice teams are delivering a far greater number of consultations now than they did in the winter peak of January 2020 – and they have been working hard throughout the pandemic**
- **This not just due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, but also the major NHS backlog of patients waiting for treatment, combined with the lowest numbers of GPs per capita in decades**
- **This is on top of the GP-led COVID vaccination programme which has been hugely successful**
- **It is unsustainable, unsafe, and unfair for GPs and their teams, whether in practices, urgent care centres or other services, to be working such excessive hours at such intensity**
- **This is putting patient care at risk**
- **GPs are breaking - at the expense of their own physical, mental, social and families' health**

Face-to-Face appointments:

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough GP practices saw 258,691 patients face to face in March. A doctor's first duty is to do no harm. Practices must, therefore, take all steps possible to deliver care that is safe for their patients and protects their staff. Social distancing, infection protection and control measures are still applicable, *so patients should only receive a face-to-face appointment if they NEED one, not simply because they demand one.* Many surgeries have restricted and unventilated reception areas – these are not yet safe for patients to walk-in without an assessment. Everyone must be triaged.

Patient Safety:

Practices are already working well beyond their safe daily limits – the impact of this on patient care is not yet fully appreciated or recognised. GPs and their practices, with the support of GPC England, and Cambs LMC, should continue to deliver care to their patients in the way they determine that best protects and cares for their population.

Cases of the B.1.617.2 variant in the UK are rising exponentially, having risen by more than 160% in the past seven days. It is this clinical context, that should determine the key priorities for General Practice in the coming days and weeks, not false and dangerous politically-driven, media-fuelled edicts.

Please support your GP and practice team at this difficult time.