

## Email received by South Hams Parishes Emergency Response teams 18 June 2020

Dear Volunteers

Firstly, can I thank you sincerely on behalf of the Partners and staff at Yealm Medical Centre for all the help you have provided to the practice and patients over the recent challenging time. The Covid-19 pandemic created unprecedented challenges for us to deal with in a short space of time with the need to be able to deal with increased demand in a safe and effective way. Your help with medication deliveries has been a vital part in this process and we are truly grateful.

We are now in “phase 2” of the lockdown process, and as a result we are aware that many volunteers are returning to work and have less availability to continue with the community response. We therefore need to work together to return to a “new normal” way of operating medication collections.

To put this in context, at the start of the outbreak the government identified 2 groups of people that would need to be particularly cautious – a higher risk group (essentially the group of patients that are offered an annual flu vaccine) and a shielded group (who were deemed to be at the highest risk of complications of covid-19 and were therefore advised to remain isolated at home).

Until the shielding process has been reviewed, those patients who have had a letter from the government or practice to inform them that they are at highest risk need to remain isolated at home until an announcement that this process has ended. We are already delivering to most shielded patients through our own practice delivery service. Any shielding patients who have been receiving deliveries from your volunteer service should speak to Corinna Murray at the Yealm dispensary as soon as possible so that we can have their details to add to our delivery service, until such time that the shielding process has ended.

Those patients who are not on the shielding list, but have taken their own decision to self-isolate should now be safe to resume collection of their medication as we have stringent safety and social distancing measures in place at the surgery. Patients and staff are asked to wear face masks, and we have perspex screens in reception and at the dispensary hatch.

We expect that within the next couple of weeks, all patients should be able to go about their daily lives whilst maintaining caution and social distancing and therefore expect most/all patients to return to their previous arrangements for ordering and collection of medication from the dispensary. However, if anyone has concerns then they should speak to Corinna.

At the start of the outbreak we encouraged the volunteer groups to set up and coordinate their activity as you were best placed to respond to your individual communities. We would therefore ask you to decide how and when you wish to stand down from this, and how you will communicate this to your community.

We do have a dispensary delivery service that has been in place for a number of years for housebound patients who request this, and we would be very happy for you to inform your

community that if they are expecting any difficulties with medication ordering/collection moving forward that they should speak to Corrina Murray, Dispensary Manager, who will be able to help. We can then base our response and capacity of the delivery service on individual feedback and adapt as necessary to meet any additional demand.

Finally, we really appreciate the support and use of the practice dispensary, which in turn helps to provide resource to the practice and the services that we can offer to patients. I have attached a copy of a poster advertising the dispensary that I would be very grateful for you to post on to your village facebook sites or magazines.

Thank you all once again for your sterling efforts over the past 3 months.

Kind regards

Dr Tom Davies

**Dr Tom Davies**  
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