



Covid-19 A local GP's perspective

So much has happened since our last update. The best news is that all of our over 80s will have had their first dose of Covid-19 vaccine (and some 2 doses) by the end of this week (i.e. by 23rd January). This is apart from a tiny number that we are struggling to get hold of (less than 10 patients!). If you know of anyone over 80 who has not yet been contacted please ask them (or someone representing them) to ring Burwell Surgery reception. Vaccines continue to be administered at The Staploe Medical Centre, which is the GP surgery in Soham.

We will be working our way through the groups as per government guidance as quickly as we can - see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/priority-groups-for-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-advice-from-the-jcvi-30-december-2020/joint-committee-on-vaccination-and-immunisation-advice-on-priority-groups-for-covid-19-vaccination-30-december-2020#vaccine-priority-groups-advice-on-30-december-2020>

Health and social care workers are next, then the over 75's. The speed that we can go is largely dictated by the vaccine supply to this area.

Q: How will I be invited for my Covid-19 Vaccination?

The message is: if you have a mobile phone - especially a smart phone - please could you ensure that we know the correct number and consent to text messages from us?

This is because, when it is your turn to be invited, if we have a mobile contact number for you, you will be contacted by SMS text message. This will enable you to book your appointment online yourself. If you do not have a mobile, we will contact you to offer you the appointment. If we miss you when we call, you will also receive a letter from NHS England providing details on how to book.

If you are housebound arrangements are being made for your vaccinations at the moment. These are a bit more complicated because of issues regarding the movement of the vaccinations. We will contact you when arrangements are in place to give you your vaccination.

The local picture (as of week commencing 11.1.21)

As of 16th January 2021 Addenbrookes' are currently caring for 244 patients with Covid.19. 60 of these patients are in critical care.

In patients registered with the practice, in November we were notified of 13 positive tests, December 112 and so far in January 53.

The picture in Addenbrookes and I think in the village is that this wave is levelling off but clearly more than 100 cases per month represents a lot of Covid activity in our patients. This new variant is very contagious. We have to be very careful still. Many of the patients that I have spoken to recently with a new Covid diagnosis could not think how they had caught it. I know people are trying really hard but I think particularly over the next few weeks if we can all stick to the guidelines (or more so) it will help us reduce numbers of new Covid cases more quickly.

Q: What urgent work is still carrying on now we are in National Lockdown (again)?

I think that people are familiar with the triage process that we use - now mainly through askmyGP. We have again stopped doing some procedures (like fitting coils and contraceptive implants) and face to face medicals. However, we are otherwise operating a full service. From time-to-time things may take a little longer because of staffing issues.

If you are worried about something please **don't wait**. Contact us and we will try to assist you in making the best plan to address your concern. We are working very closely with hospital colleagues to try and provide the best care we can for you. This might involve more telephone or virtual discussion than face to face however we can still provide effective care for you using these tools.

- **We will absolutely, definitely, see you face to face if it is needed!**
- **We are not (and have never been) closed!**
- **We do like to speak to you first to make sure that face to face is the best option (considering the current issues of the Covid pandemic)**

Local hospitals are seeing 'urgent' referrals (usually for cancer pathways) as they would do normally but have suspended face to face 'non urgent' referrals. They are doing what they can remotely. I'm afraid that there is no doubt that there will be significant waiting lists for most outpatient work when services open up after the lock down.

Burwell Community Radio interview

If you feel that you would like to listen to some more of my musings, in particular with some more information on the vaccination programme...

I recorded an interview with Sally Lander for the Burwell Community Radio wellbeing slot on Saturday, 16th January 2021. The interview will go live on Tuesday, 19th January 2021 at 8.00 pm. Listen on any browser: <https://burwell.radio/player/> and also available on ALEXA (apparently it works if you shout Burwell Radio at her!)

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