

# Information to GP Practices regarding COVID-19 and patients with long-term conditions

**Update 8 | 8 June 2020**

[Authors](#)

**T**his pack is for GPs across Derby and Derbyshire in regards to managing their patients with long-term conditions and COVID-19. We are aware that the rapid developments in the recent days have led to a significant change in routine practice in addition to managing and treating patients face-to-face.

This pack covers guidance around updates to:

- [General](#)
- [Shielded Patients](#)
- [Respiratory](#)
- [Diabetes](#)
- [Cardiovascular Disease](#)
- [Gastroenterology](#)
- [Stroke](#)

## **General**

No further updates at this time.

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## **Shielded Patients**

No further updates at this time.

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## Respiratory

### **NEW: Guidance regarding Spirometry/Respiratory Function Testing During Endemic COVID-19**

[New guidance](#) via the Association for Respiratory Technology & Physiology (ARTP) and British Thoracic Society (BTS) has been released in relation to the confirmation that spirometry should not be undertaken for the foreseeable future. The guidance states that nearly all lung function tests, including spirometry are classed as an aerosol generating procedure (AGP). Spirometry is essential for assessment of obstructive lung diseases, coupled with the detailed assessments of gas transfer and cardiorespiratory exercise testing are essential for lung cancer. Spirometry coupled with gas transfer is needed in assessing interstitial lung diseases.

Conclusions from the above guidance have suggested that the following precautions must be in place:

- Full PPE should be used for undertaking testing; if this is not available tests should not take place
- Patient and staff safety is paramount, with the need to operate differently. Consider all patients to have COVID-19 infection
- “Routine” respiratory function testing should no longer occur in primary care practices unless part of a coordinated Hub, based around PCNs with all the appropriate precautions
- Recognise the inefficiencies to ensure patients are booked appropriately to allow the equipment to be cleaned. This may mean different time slots for different tests

This is an evolving field and more research into risks and procedures is needed. Hence, this document will be updated when such information becomes available.

Should you have any queries please contact [ddccg.conditionsspecific@nhs.net](mailto:ddccg.conditionsspecific@nhs.net) and we will forward to the relevant individual to support with this query.

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### **Support for GPs Available: Respiratory**

#### **Consultant Connect**

GPs can now access Respiratory Consultants via Consultant Connect at:

UHDB – Between 1pm-2pm Monday to Fridays

CRH – Between 11am-4pm Monday to Fridays

GPs can access the UHDB and CRH respiratory lines for general respiratory advice

and guidance by calling their unique Consultant Connect Dial-In Number shown on their practice poster or by using the free [Consultant Connect App](#) to call (the app can be downloaded from either the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#)). The app is the quickest and easiest way to speak to a respiratory consultant. Also embedded below is the GP start up guide. If GPs have any queries regarding using Consultant Connect, contact Grace Housden at Consultant Connect on the following email: [grace.housden@consultantconnect.org.uk](mailto:grace.housden@consultantconnect.org.uk)

### **[Consultant Connect GP Start up Guide](#)**

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**Impact+ (Community Respiratory Service (South Derbyshire GPs):** GPs in South Derbyshire and Erewash areas can also contact the Lung Line at Impact+ for general advice and support with respiratory patients – Tel 01332 788225 (select Option 1 or Option 4 if Option 1 is busy).

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## Diabetes

### Albumin Creatinine Ratios (ACRs) for people with diabetes

Derby, Chesterfield, Burton and Nottingham hospitals are all now able to process ACR samples. Many practices are giving out an ACR bottle and form at the time of a diabetes blood test and suggesting it can be posted through the practice letter box at a later date. It is not advised that a patient comes into the practice specifically to collect or deliver an ACR sample pot.

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### What foot care is available in Derbyshire currently?

Routine foot checks are not being undertaken by hospital or community podiatry during the pandemic. For a patient with an ulcer or other break in the skin on the foot, please refer urgently to the foot clinics:

#### Chesterfield

[crhft.newappointments@nhs.net](mailto:crhft.newappointments@nhs.net) [01246 512673](tel:01246 512673)

#### London Road Community Hospital Derby

[dhft.foot@nhs.net](mailto:dhft.foot@nhs.net) [01332 787292](tel:01332 787292)

Should you have any patient concerns around any redness, heat, new swelling or a new unexplained pain or any other clinical feature that concerns you as a clinician, please email podiatry direct who cover all of Derbyshire at

[DCHST.therapydirect@nhs.net](mailto:DCHST.therapydirect@nhs.net)

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## Cardiovascular Disease

### CVD at CRH

Cardiology	New and follow up appointments currently by telephone. Some procedures suspended.
Cardiorespiratory	Spirometry & Echocardiogram - Inpatients only. Monitors - Urgent appointments only. Replacement kit managed via phone/email and posted out.

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### CRH and UHDB

There is a recognised need to ensure patients that need it are calling for an ambulance and / or getting to hospital to seek urgent medical attention for any chest pain experienced for longer than 15 minutes. The hospitals have seen a drop in attendances linked to heart attacks, strokes and other associated conditions since Covid. The NHS is still open for emergency care. GPs must go ahead with referrals for emergency care for relevant patients. The Consultant will make the decision about whether the patient needs to visit the hospital urgently or not.

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For the latest support from **British Health Foundation** see the link below.

Coronavirus and your health

We're here for you in these difficult times: from the latest expert information on coronavirus and your heart to staying healthy while you're at home, plus support from specialist nurses on our heart helpline.

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/bhf-coronavirus-hub>

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## Gastroenterology

### For Gastro at CRH

Endoscopy suite	Only Inpatients and clinically urgent patients being seen.
Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) Clinic	New and follow up appointments currently by telephone only.
Gastro – Daycase	Suspended although new referrals are being triaged.

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### IBD Clinics – CRH

All clinics are currently being run via telephone contact led by the IBD Lead Nurse. All high risk IBD patients have been contacted and supported via the IBD e-mail advice line service. Five clinics are being run per week which would usually be face to face but are now via telephone contacts. In addition, the two telephone clinics run prior to Covid are continuing.

The IBD MDT reviews are continuing and the lead IBD Nurse has been reviewing the complex patients and liaising with the MDT accordingly.

Infusions are being given on the NGS unit and patients can access the hospital via the back entrance. There has been very little disruption to the infusion service and most have attended as planned with reassurance and support.

The advice line and e-mail service for GP's remains available. GP's can access via the mobile 07717700489 or [crhft.ibdadvice@nhs.net](mailto:crhft.ibdadvice@nhs.net)

Crohn's & Colitis UK Flare Pathways have been circulated to primary care.

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## Stroke

### Stroke at CRH

Stroke	New and follow up appointments currently by telephone only
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### [Stroke association connect letter](#)

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