

Phlebotomy in West Suffolk – Move to an Appointment Based System from 6th April 2021

From the start of April, outpatient and GP phlebotomy services at **West Suffolk Hospital, Newmarket Community Hospital and Mildenhall Health Centre** moved to an appointment-based system, following on from similar arrangements already in place at **Sudbury Community Health Centre. West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust** would like to apologise for any disruption caused to GPs and patients by these changes, introduced in response to a significant increase in demand that has created unpredictable waiting times for patients and made it difficult to maintain social distancing in clinics. The trust believes the new appointment system – which is similar to that used in other local phlebotomy clinics - will help us address these issues and improve the overall patient experience. The trust is grateful to those GPs who have given feedback on the changes and is continuing to review the service to introduce extra capacity to make more appointments available.

When using Swiftqueue, GPs do not need to take any special steps to book urgent appointments. All available slots - including for the same day - will be automatically shown to you when you are logged in. Simply book the first available slot. For non-urgent appointments, patients should book directly online or by phone at a time convenient for them. The trust would like to assure GPs that every patient arriving without an appointment has been seen and given information on using the new system for their next test. As ad hoc demand reduces, it will continue to open up new near-date appointment slots. It is also looking to restore Saturday appointments and extended operating hours at West Suffolk Hospital, and will provide more details on this as soon as possible. The trust says it looks forward to working with GPs and the **NHS West Suffolk CCG** on a piece of transformation work to address what it can do to support phlebotomy services across the region. Patient-facing details for the new arrangements are available [here](#). If you would like to provide feedback or need help with booking, please contact path-managers@wsh.nhs.uk for assistance.